Journal of Germanic Linguistics **25.2** (2013):137–192
doi: 10.1017/S1470542713000019

Wh-Optatives in Danish: Compositional and Noncompositional Aspects

Bjarne Ørsnes

Copenhagen Business School

Danish has an optative taking the form of a *wh*-clause with embedded word order: *Hvem der var rig!* lit. 'Who there were rich!' with the intended meaning *Wish I were rich!* Such *wh*-clauses cannot be used as optatives in German or English (or only marginally so). On the basis of a detailed analysis of the syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of this little-studied phenomenon, this article seeks to explain why a *wh*-clause with "embedded" word order can be used as an optative. I argue that *wh*-optatives are compositional in many but not all respects. It is a special construction whose interpretation is determined to a large extent by its grammatical properties but which also has completely idiosyncratic properties. In German and English, such *wh*-clauses are only potential optatives: They are not used as optatives, but nothing would preclude it.[*]

1. Introduction.

It is a primary goal of linguistic theory to explore how natural language expressions are interpreted. All natural language users are able to assign meanings to expressions never encountered before, so it is natural to assume that there is some correlation between form and meaning. However, what is the nature of this correlation? A prevalent view has been to assume that interpretation proceeds in a compositional fashion: The meaning of a natural language expression is derived on the basis of the lexical items and the mode of their combination (The Fregean Principle; see, for example, Heim & Kratzer 1998 and Partee 2004). A compositional view of language interpretation runs into trouble when language

[*] I wish to thank the audience at the workshop *Information structure in non-assertive speech-acts* at DGfS12 in Frankfurt-am-Main, as well as two anonymous reviewers for thorough and very valuable comments. All remaining errors are mine. This work was supported by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* under grant MU 2822/2-1.

© Society for Germanic Linguistics

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

expressions contain semantic components that cannot be traced back to individual lexical items and their combination. An example is the illocutionary force of so-called verbless directives (Jacobs 2008, Wilder 2008). Verbless directives such as in 1 are—as the name suggests—associated with a directive speech act, but as shown in Jacobs 2008, it is far from clear how this interpretation arises in a compositional fashion (see, however, G. Müller 2010 for an alternative view).[1]

(1) Ned med diktaturet[DK]
down with the.dictatorship
'Down with the dictatorship'

A way to account for examples such as 1 is to assume constructions. A construction is an (arbitrary) association of form and meaning, where the form need not be a lexical item; it can also be a whole syntactic structure, such as a directional particle followed by a PP headed by *med* 'with' in 1 (it is "constructions all the way down" as in Goldberg 2005: 18). When an interpretation is associated with a whole syntactic structure it is not imperative to state exactly how or why a particular interpretation arises. One can simply state that a directional particle followed by a PP headed by *med* 'with' triggers a directive interpretation.

However, this approach runs the danger of overlooking the fact that the meaning associated with a given form need not be wholly arbitrary, even though some aspects of the interpretation do appear not to follow from the grammatical properties of the expression or from established pragmatic principles. So the linguist should be careful to state exactly what properties of a construction are indeed predictable in a compositional fashion (for example, by compositional inheritance from other constructions; see Goldberg 2005:224) and what properties are unpredictable. In this way one can show how certain properties of an expression determine or motivate its interpretation (see also the discussion of motivation in Goldberg 2005:217ff.), even though the expression may

[1] Examples marked with a superscripted *DK* are extracted from the 56-million-word corpus *KorpusDK* of *Det Danske Sprog- og letteraturselskab*: http://ordnet.dk/korpusdk. Examples with no indication of source are constructed. The original punctuation and capitalization is retained in the examples from the corpus.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

have acquired specialized (unpredictable) meanings or other idiosyncrasies that necessitate positing a particular construction.

In the present article, I illustrate this approach to constructions using Danish *wh*-optatives as an example. Optatives challenge the compositional view of language interpretation since they express the wishes or hopes of the speaker without containing a lexical item expressing wish, desire, or hope (Scholz 1991, Rosengren 1993, Grosz 2012). The canonical optative clauses take the form of reduced conditional clauses: They look like the antecedent of an unexpressed consequent, as in the examples in 2.

(2) a. Hvis bare jeg var rig! (Så kunne jeg…)
if only I were rich then could I
'If only I were rich! (Then I could …)'

b. Var jeg bare rig! (Så kunne jeg…)
were I only rich then could I
'Were I only rich! (Then I could …)'

A nonconstructional approach would either have to assume that these optatives are elliptical—and thus the consequent is to be reconstructed (Biezma 2011)—or that they contain a covert expressive/optative operator (Grosz 2012). A constructional approach would assume that the optatives in 2 instantiate a special construction with an optative semantics.

I examine the interaction between predictable and unpredictable semantic components using another optative in Danish shown in 3 and I argue that the constructional approach is better equipped to capture this phenomenon.

(3) Hvem der bare var rig!
who there only were rich
'Wish I were rich! / Wish one were rich!'

The optative in 3 is a *wh*-clause consisting of the *wh*-word *hvem* 'who', the expletive subject *der* 'there', and (canonically) a verb in the past or past perfect. The interpretation is *wish I were rich!* or *wish one were rich!* Throughout the paper, I paraphrase *wh*-optatives like the one in 3 as *wish I X* since a *wh*-optative is always speaker-oriented. Note that this

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

paraphrase is only an approximation. The *wh*-optative also receives a generic interpretation to be discussed in section 5: The *wh*-word is interpreted as the inclusive impersonal pronoun *man* 'one'. However, an English paraphrase with *one* does not necessarily include the speaker (van der Auwera, Gast, & Vanderbiesen, forthcoming:23). For that reason I use a paraphrase with the 1st person singular pronoun even though this is not quite accurate. The optative in 3 is only near-synonymous with the optatives in 2, and it has specific properties and specific felicity conditions to be uncovered below.

This particular optative construction appears to have received very little attention in the literature. It is frequently mentioned as an optative, (see, among others, Hansen 1967, vol 2:200, Christensen 2009:124, and Christensen & Heltoft 2010:88), but no analysis is provided; it is not discussed as an optative clause in Hansen & Heltoft 2011 either. Interestingly, this kind of optative is not observed in German or English even though both languages have *wh*-clauses of this kind as free relatives and embedded interrogatives.[2] The absence of this kind of optative clause in German and English is unexpected if the optative semantics can be derived in a compositional way. If the *wh*-optative is a construction specific to Danish, one still should address the question what motivates the use of a *wh*-clause as an optative.

The article is structured as follows: In section 2, I give a brief survey of optative constructions in Danish since the *wh*-optative is being compared to other kinds of optative clauses throughout the paper. In section 3, I present the basic properties of *wh*-optatives given the lack of previous thorough accounts. In section 4, I discuss the syntax of *wh*-optatives. Specifically, I address the relationship between *wh*-optatives on the one hand, and free relative clauses and embedded *wh*-interrogatives on the other. In section 5, I discuss the interpretation of *wh*-optatives, and in section 6, I present the problems for a compositional

[2] Scholz (1991:108) gives some examples of *wh*-optatives from German:

(i) Wer so blaue Augen hätte!
who such blue eyes had
'Wish I had such blue eyes!'

However, these examples are considered marked, and they are not accepted as optatives by my informants. The Danish construction shows no markedness effect at all.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

account of *wh*-optatives. I conclude that the interpretation of *wh*-optatives is determined by the grammatical properties of the construction only to a certain extent, and that not all aspects are predictable. Thus, in section 7, I outline a constructional account of *wh*-optatives. Under this account, their idiosyncratic properties are inherent to the optative construction, while their predictable properties are inherited from the construction for embedded *wh*-clauses and the construction for counterfactuals. In section 8, finally, I reach a conclusion.

2. Optatives in Danish.

An optative clause is a clause that expresses a wish, a desire, or a hope on the part of the speaker without actually containing a lexical item meaning *wish*, *desire*, or *hope* (Grosz 2012:1). Of course, it is possible to express a wish by embedding a proposition under the matrix verb *ønske* 'to wish' or *håbe* 'to hope' with a 1st person singular subject as in 4, but in a true optative the optative semantics is covert.[3]

(4) Jeg ville ønske, jeg var rig.
I would wish I were rich
'I wish I were rich.'

In *bona fide* optatives, there is no special formal expression of optativity, and this is what makes them intriguing: How does the illocutionary force of optativity come about in the absence of a formal expression of this illocutionary force?

Optatives express the speaker's emotional attitude towards a propositional content. In this sense they are not directed towards the hearer. An assertion is an instruction to the hearer to update the common ground with the relevant proposition, and a directive speech act is an instruction to the hearer to make the world fit the words (Searle 1976:3). Optatives do not—in their primary use—require any action on the part of the hearer; they belong to the emotional domain (Rosengren 1993:39)

[3] Note that the matrix verb *ønske* 'wish' in 4 is in the past future with the modal verb *ville* 'would'. This is otherwise observed in the consequent of conditionals. I have no explanation of this at present.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

just like exclamatives.[4] Thus, optatives and exclamatives could both be subsumed under the heading expressive speech acts. However, there is a crucial difference between this use of expressive speech acts and the one in Searle 1976:11. In Searle's taxonomy, expressives presuppose the truth of the expressed proposition. This is obviously not the case for optatives, which implicate either the falsity of the expressed proposition or an unknown truth-value.[5]

On this view, expressives comprise exclamatives, as in 5a, and optatives, as in 5b.

(5) a. Hvor er jeg rig!
how am I rich
'How rich I am!'

b. Hvis jeg bare var rig!
if I only were rich
'If only I were rich!'

A common semantic core of expressives (that is, both exclamatives and optatives) is that worlds in which the modified proposition holds are high on an evaluation according to a contextually salient scale (Grosz 2012: 39ff.). In exclamatives, the scale reflects the *expectations* of the speaker. In optatives, the scale reflects the *preferences* of the speaker. Exclamatives denote a fact, since an actual state of affairs is evaluated against the expectations of the speaker. In contrast, optatives do not denote a fact: A proposition is evaluated against the preferences of the speaker, but the reality status of the proposition is uncertain. It can be counterfactual, as in 5b, or it can be unknown, as in 6.

---

[4] Of course, an optative can be interpreted as a directive in an indirect speech act:

(i) Hvis du bare gik din vej!
If you only went your way
'If only you would leave!'

[5] I follow Iatridou 2000:232 in assuming that counterfactuals implicate rather than presuppose the falsity of the expressed proposition.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(6) Hvis bare hun er rig!
if only she is rich
'If only she is rich!'

This difference between exclamatives and optatives assumes some importance below.

Optatives, defined as utterances expressing a wish or a hope without containing a lexical item with this semantics, can be expressed in various ways in Danish. The canonical optative is the previously mentioned conditional optative. The conditional optative is a complementizer clause with *hvis* 'if', as in 7a, *om* 'if', as in 7b, or *bare* 'if only', as in 7c.[6] They show embedded word order with the finite verb within the VP, or they can have a V1-order, as in 7d.[7]

(7) a. Hvis jeg bare ku se hvad han laver.[DK]
if I only could see what he does
'If only I could see what he is doing.'

---

[6] The word *bare* 'only' can be both a focus particle and a complementizer. I assume that it is a conditional complementizer in examples such as the following (see also Hansen & Heltoft 2011:1553).

(i) Bare der er koldt øl i krusene og terninger
only there is cold beer in the.jars and dices

i raflebægrene, er aftenen reddet.[DK]
in the.dice.cups is the.evening saved

'As long as there is cold beer in the jars and dices in the dice cups, the evening is perfect.'

[7] Danish does not allow *that*-optatives such as the ones observed in German (example 12a from Grosz 2012:7).

(i) Ach, dass ihre Schiffe unsere Ufer
oh that their ships our shores

doch nur nie erreicht hätten!
DOCH only never reached had

'Oh that only their ships had never reached our shores.'

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

b. Om jeg bare kunne hjælpe dig!
if I only could help you
'If only I could help you!'

c. Bare man dog var dér.[DK]
wish one only were there
'Wish one were there.'

d. Kunne man bare blive fri for det.[DK]
could one only get free of that
'If only you didn't have to bother about that.'

An optative can also be expressed as a root clause with a full infinitive.[8] An example is given in 8. As noted for German by Reis (2003:187), the (unexpressed) subject of such optative root infinitives is always the speaker. As I show later, *wh*-optatives share this property with optative root infinitives even though *wh*-optatives are finite.

(8) Åh, at vågne op i et lille hus
oh to wake up in a little house
ude på landet i Grækenland.[DK]
out in the.country in Greece

'Oh to wake up in a little house in the country in Greece.'

Danish also avails itself of a complementizer occurring only in optative clauses, namely, *gid* 'if only', a contraction of *Gud give det* 'God let it happen' (Hansen & Heltoft 2011:1162). I refer to this type of optative as a complementizer optative.[9]

[8] In German, optative root infinitives are bare infinitives. Consider the example from Reis 2003:188 (her example 49c):

(i) Noch einmal Venedig sehen!
once again Venice see
'To see Venice once more!'

[9] *Gid* 'if only' differs from *bare* 'if only' in that it does not occur in conditional clauses. In fact, it can never occur embedded.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(9) Gid det ikke var sådan.[DK]
if.only it not were so
'If only it were not so.'

Actually, the optative in 9 does contain a lexical element expressing a wish, namely, the complementizer. Thus, according to the definition of optatives given above, 9 should not be considered an optative clause. I do, however, consider 9 to be an optative clause, given that the lexical item expressing optativity is a grammaticalized element, occurring in C. Three properties of *gid* 'if only' show that it is a complementizer and not an adjunct. First, *gid* 'if only' selects a clause without verb fronting, just like other complementizers: The finite verb in 9 follows the sentential adverb *ikke* 'not', while the finite verb would precede the sentential adverb in a clause with verb fronting. Second, the complementizer *gid* 'if only' allows preposing of sentential negation. As discussed in Ørsnes 2012, certain nonveridical clauses without verb fronting allow sentential negation to appear in a position preceding the subject, but only if the clause is headed by a complementizer. Optative clauses with *gid* 'if only' allow preposed sentential negation as expected, if *gid* 'if only' is a complementizer. In 10, *aldrig* 'never' appears between the complementizer and the subject.[10]

(10) Gid aldrig mit Øje ser det Hjem, …
if.only never my eye sees that home
'If only my eye never sees that home …'

Finally, *gid* can co-occur with the pleonastic *at* 'that', just like other complementizers (Pedersen 2009, Hansen & Heltoft 2011).

(11) Gid at du havde lyttet til mig, da …[DK]
if.only that you had listened to me when
'If only you had listened to me, when …'

(i) *Gid vi havde haft koldt øl, var aftenen reddet.
wish we had had cold beer were the.evening saved
Intended: 'Wish we had had cold beer, the evening would have been perfect.'

[10] http://www.udfordringen.dk/print.php?ID=4631, accessed on April 19, 2012.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The evidence unambiguously points to the conclusion that *gid* 'if only' is a complementizer that selects optative clauses. Complementizer optatives assume some importance in the discussion of the interpretation of *wh*-optatives in section 5.

The last type of optative clauses is the one under consideration here, namely, *wh*-optatives: a *wh*-clause with the *wh*-word *hvem* 'who', the expletive subject *der* 'there', and no verb fronting. Note that the finite verb in 12 follows sentential negation.[11]

(12) ARGH… hvem der ikke skulle på arbejde i morgen...
argh who there not should to work PREP tomorrow
'Argh… wish I didn't have to go to work tomorrow...'

In the following I concentrate on this last kind of optative, while the other optatives serve as points of comparison in order to highlight specific properties of *wh*-optatives.

3. The Properties of *Wh*-Optatives.

Before proceeding to an analysis of *wh*-optatives, I discuss their basic properties in some detail. The discussion focuses on the three core ingredients of *wh*-optatives: the *wh*-constituent, the expletive *der* 'there' in subject position, and the past tense of the finite verb.

3.1. The Wh-*Constituent.*

Wh-optatives obligatorily contain a fronted *wh*-constituent. This *wh*-constituent proves to be the key to understanding the nature of *wh*-optatives. The *wh*-constituent is characterized by the following properties:

1. The *wh*-constituent is the human-denoting *hvem* 'who'.
2. There is only one *wh*-constituent.
3. The *wh*-constituent is a subject.
4. The *wh*-constituent is in the singular.
5. The *wh*-constituent is stressed.
6. The *wh*-constituent refers to the speaker.

[11] http://www.gamereactor.dk/forum/?forum=6&thread=34086&page=2, accessed on April 19, 2012.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Wh-constituents can be +WH for example by virtue of being headed by the *wh*-words *hvem* 'who' or *hvad* 'what', or containing the *wh*-determiner *hvilk-* 'which'. In *wh*-optatives one only finds the human-denoting *hvem* 'who'. A *wh*-optative with the nonhuman-denoting *hvad* 'what' is completely impossible, as illustrated in 13.

(13) *Hvad der bare skete!
what there only happened
Intended: 'Wish something would happen!'

Wh-determiners are also excluded from *wh*-optatives. If the relevant constraint were that a *wh*-optative must contain a fronted human-denoting *wh*-constituent (and not the particular human-denoting *wh*-word), one would expect a *wh*-constituent such as *hvilken person* 'which person' to be possible, but it is not. The example in 14a is not even remotely grammatical. The *wh*-constituent can only be *hvem* 'who'. As I show below, *wh*-optatives share this property with free relative clauses. Furthermore, *wh*-optatives can only contain one *wh*-constituent, as shown in 14b. Again, this is like free relative clauses but unlike embedded *wh*-interrogatives.

(14) a. *Hvilken person der bare var tredive!
which person there only were thirty
Intended: 'Wish I were thirty!'

b. *Hvem der bare havde hvad!
who there only had what
Intended: 'Wish I had something!'

Not only are *wh*-optatives limited to exactly one *wh*-constituent, this *wh*-constituent must be the subject. In example 15a, the *wh*-constituent is an object, and the subject is *dronningen* 'the queen'. Since the object, and not the subject, is extracted, there is no expletive subject *der* 'there'. The example is not even remotely possible. In contrast, when 15a is passivized and the *wh*-constituent is promoted to subject, as in 15b, the *wh*-optative is impeccable. Optative semantics can only be associated with a *wh*-clause where the *wh*-constituent is the subject.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(15) a. *Hvem dronningen bare inviterede!
who the.queen only invited
Intended: 'Wish the queen would invite me!'

b. Hvem der bare blev inviteret af dronningen!
who there only were invited by the.queen
'Wish I were invited by the queen!'

The contrast between 15a and 15b clearly shows that this restriction is one of grammatical relation rather than semantic role. In both examples, the *wh*-constituent is a theme, but the optative is only possible when the theme is the grammatical subject.[12]

The human-denoting *hvem* 'who' can be both singular and plural. Danish has very little number agreement, but predicative adjectives agree with their subjects in number (in addition to gender in the singular). Example 16a and 16b both contain *hvem* 'who' as their subject. In 16a, the adjective has the singular ending *Ø*, and in 16b it has the plural ending *-e*. The plural ending appears to be used when the speaker knows that the *wh*-constituent applies to a plural entity, as in the rhetorical question in 16b.

(16) a. Hvem er ansvarlig?[DK]
who is responsible-Ø
'Who is responsible?'

b. Hvem er ansvarlig-e? Ja først og fremmest
who is responsible-PL well first and foremost

de banker og kreditforeninger, som…[DK]
those banks and lending.institutions which

'Who is responsible? Well first and foremost those banks and lending institutions which...'

[12] I am grateful to a reviewer for clarifying this.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

In *wh*-optatives, the *wh*-constituent can only be singular. Thus, I have found no *wh*-optatives, where a predicative adjective would have the plural ending *-e*, as in 17.

(17) ??Hvem der bare var ansvarlig-e!
who there only were responsible-PL
Intended: 'Wish we were responsible!'

I assume that this restriction follows from the fact that the *wh*-constituent refers to the speaker. Note that all *wh*-optatives until now have been paraphrased as *Wish I were X* and not as *Wish we were X*.

In *wh*-optatives, the *wh*-constituent is prosodically emphasized. The *wh*-constituent is stressed, as indicated with capital letters in the example below.

(18) a. HVEM der bare var tredive!
who there only were thirty
'Wish I were thirty!'

b. ?/*Hvem der bare var TREDIVE!
who there only were thirty
'Wish I were thirty!'

If another constituent within the *wh*-optative is stressed, as in 18b and in B's reply in 19, it is understood as a repetition: The stressed constituent indicates what appears to have been misunderstood by the hearer, or it indicates a contrast with a previously uttered *wh*-optative.[13] In 19, A expresses the wish not to be thirty years of age, while B—who is presumably older—contradicts by expressing the wish to be thirty.

(19) A: HVEM der ikke var tredive!
who there not were thirty
'Wish I were not thirty!'

B: Hvem der bare VAR tredive!
who there only were thirty
'Wish I were thirty!'

[13] I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for drawing my attention to this.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

However, such alternative stress placement is only possible if the preceding discourse contains a *wh*-optative that one of the interlocutors responds to. Out of such contexts, the *wh*-constituent is stressed. *Wh*-optatives share this property with echo *wh*-questions. In echo *wh*-questions, such as the one in 20, the *wh*-constituent is always stressed. However, in *wh*-optatives the *wh*-constituent is fronted, while in echo *wh*-questions it is always in-situ. Note that the echo *wh*-question in 20 contains no expletive *der* 'there' as opposed to the *wh*-optatives. I return to the discussion of the expletive in section 3.2.

(20) Han påstår, HVEM kommer?
he claims who comes
'He is claiming who is coming?'

Finally, the *wh*-constituent can only refer to the speaker (as also hinted at in Christensen & Heltoft 2010:95).[14] Recall that all *wh*-optatives have been paraphrased with the 1st person singular pronoun *I*. This is a crucial difference between *wh*-optatives and conditional/complementizer optatives.[15] Imagine a context where you are in a company with only older or younger people, and you wish that there were someone your age

[14] I have, however, come across the example in i, where the *wh*-constituent does not refer to the speaker. I have found no one who would accept this example, though. A reviewer notes that (s)he could not accept this as an optative. It is, however, clearly intended as an optative.

(i) Hvem der bare ville læse for mig inden sengetid
who there only would read to me before bed.time
og vise sådanne nogle herlige billeder.
and show such some wonderful pictures
'Wish someone would read to me before I go to bed and show such wonderful pictures.'
(http://krudtuglensmor.blogspot.com/2010/06/sde-godnathistorier.html, accessed on May 19, 2012)

[15] Recall that infinitival optatives as exemplified in 8 are also speaker-oriented. However, infinitival optatives share this property with other infinitival root sentences, so presumably, this property is due to the nonfiniteness of the verb. *Wh*-optatives are finite clauses, and yet they exhibit obligatory speaker-orientation, in contrast to other finite clauses.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

present. In that context, you can utter the conditional optative in 21a, but the *wh*-optative in 21b would be ridiculous: 21b can only mean that you wish that you were as old as you are, that is, it is an implicature that you are not as old as you are.

(21) a. Hvis bare nogen var på min alder!
if only someone were of my age
'If only someone were my age!'

b. #Hvem der bare var på min alder!
who there only were of my age
'Wish I were my own age!'

Despite the fact that the *wh*-word refers to the speaker, it is unambiguously a 3rd person pronoun. A coreferential possessive pronoun must be in the 3rd person, and a coreferential pronoun in a subsequent embedded clause must also be in the 3rd person.

(22) a. Hvem der bare havde sin/*min bil med!
who there only had his/ my car with
'Wish I had brought my car!'

b. Hvem der bare havde fået at vide
who there only had got to know
at han/*jeg var kvalificeret!
that he/ I was qualified

'Wish I had been told that I was qualified!'

In section 6, I return to the obligatory speaker-orientation and discuss whether it is a pragmatically derived or inherent property of *wh*-optatives.

3.2. The Expletive Subject Der *'There'*.
Wh-optatives obligatorily have *der* 'there' between the *wh*-constituent and the finite verb. The Danish *der* 'there' occurs in a variety of contexts, such as subject relative clauses, impersonal passives, embedded interrogatives, and presentational sentences. It is a matter of debate

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

whether these contexts contain a single *der* 'there' or different *der* 'there'-elements with distinct properties (see, for example, Erteschik-Shir 1984, Vikner 1991, Mikkelsen 2002 for relevant discussion). I assume that *der* 'there' is an expletive subject pronoun, but it is not possible to do justice to all the intricacies of this word here. For my purposes, it is important to note that *wh*-optatives, such as in 23a, pattern with free relative clauses and embedded *wh*-interrogatives, such as in 23b and 23c, respectively: In all three constructions, the expletive *der* 'there' appears in subject position when the subject *wh*-constituent is extracted.[16]

(23) a. Hvem der var tredive!
who there were thirty
'Wish I were thirty!'

b. Hvem der graver en grav for andre, falder selv i den.
who there digs a pit for others falls self in it
'He who digs a pit for others, digs a pit for himself.' (a proverb)

[16] Occasionally, *wh*-optatives also occur with *som* 'as' between the fronted *wh*-subject and the finite verb instead of the expletive *der* 'there'.

(i) Hvem som bare havde en femmer ...
who as only had a five.crowner.piece
'Wish I had five crowners...'
(http://team-maaleren.dk/news.php?readmore=369&y=2010&m=6, accessed on April 24, 2012)

The exact analysis of *som* 'as' is also much debated (see, for example, Vikner 1991 and Mikkelsen 2002 for relevant discussion). I do not take a stance on this issue. Suffice it to say that *som* 'as' also alternates with *der* 'there' in subject relative clauses and in embedded interrogative clauses, as shown in ii. Thus, the analysis of the expletive *der* 'there' applies mutatis mutandis to *som* 'as' as well: It signals that the clause is not a V2-clause.

(ii) a. Ulykke som fører til en for tidlig død, ...[DK]
accident as leads to a too early death
'An accident leading to a premature death, ...'

b. Gæt hvem som betalte den?[DK]
guess who as paid it
'Guess who paid it?'

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

c. Han spurgte, hvem der kom.
he asked who there came
'He asked who was coming.'

The analysis of *der* 'there' in *wh*-optatives is further complicated by the fact that the syntactic structure of free relatives such as 23b is a matter of debate. The free relative can be analyzed as an NP with the *wh*-word as the head followed by a subject relative clause. Alternatively, it can be analyzed as a CP with the *wh*-constituent in SpecCP and the expletive in SpecIP (the subject position). I return to the discussion of the syntactic category of *wh*-optatives in section 4.3. For the time being it is important to note that examples 23a–c have one property in common: In all three examples, the presence of the expletive subject *der* 'there' shows that the *wh*-constituent and the finite verb do not form a V2-clause. This conclusion is important for the interpretation of the *wh*-clause: The *wh*-clause does not contain instructions to the hearer to provide a value for the *wh*-constituent (this point is further elaborated on in section 5). I illustrate this disambiguating function of the expletive subject in the following paragraphs.[17]

Danish is a V2-language with a basic distinction between clauses with a fronted finite verb (V1- and V2-clauses) and clauses with the finite verb in its canonical position within the VP. This is illustrated in 24a,b, where the position of the finite verb as either in C or within the VP can be determined relative to the sentential adverb *ikke* 'not'.

(24) a. Peter sover ikke.
Peter sleeps not
'Peter is not sleeping.'

[17] A reviewer speculates that *der* 'there' could also be in C. This is indeed suggested by Vikner (1991). However, Mikkelsen (2002) argues that it is an expletive in SpecIP. Note that *der* 'there' can co-occur with the complementizer *at* 'that' in colloquial speech, as in i. On the analysis in Mikkelsen 2002, the example in i has *hvem* 'who' in SpecCP, *at* 'that' in C, and *der* 'there' in SpecIP.

(i) Hvem at der bare var rig!
who that there only were rich
'Wish I were rich!'

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

b. At Peter ikke sover.
that Peter not sleeps
'That Peter is not sleeping.'

Wh-clauses with extracted subjects are (potentially) ambiguous between a clause with verb fronting and a clause without verb fronting, since subject extraction is string-vacuous in a clause without verb fronting. This is illustrated with the two structures in 25, both of which have the same surface string.

(25) a. $[_{CP}$ hvem$_i$ $[_C$ kommer$_j$] $[_{IP}$ _I] $[_{VP}$ _j]]
who comes
'Who is coming'

b. $[_{CP}$ hvem$_i$ $[_{IP}$ _i $[_{VP}$ kommer]]]
who comes
'Who is coming'

This ambiguity is resolved by the expletive *der* 'there', which must occur in subject position if a *wh*-clause without verb fronting contains an extracted subject (Vikner 1991, Bjerre 2011, Müller & Ørsnes 2011).

(26) Han fortæller, hvem *(der) kommer.
he tells who there comes
'He is telling who is going to come.'

In 26, the expletive shows that the *wh*-clause is a clause without verb fronting since there are two constituents before the finite verb (Müller & Ørsnes 2011).[18] In free relatives, the presence of the expletive *der* 'there' also supports one of the structures in 27 and not a V2-clause.

(27) a. $[_{CP}$ Hvem $[_{IP}$ der $[_{VP}$ graver en grav for andre]]], ...
who there digs a pit for others
'He who digs a pit for others, ...'

[18] Bjerre (2011:280) suggests that the expletive is present when the subject has moved to receive focus. This proposal is also compatible with the analysis to be developed in section 5.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

b. [$_{NP}$ Hvem [$_{IP}$ der [$_{VP}$ graver en grav for andre]]], ...
who there digs a pit for others
'He who digs a pit for others, ...'

The expletive *der* 'there' shows that the *wh*-clause is a clause *without* verb fronting in free relatives, embedded interrogatives, and *wh*-optatives: The finite verb is in the base position within the VP. In section 4.3, I suggest that the *wh*-optative is a CP and not an NP.

3.3. The Past Marking on the Finite Verb of a Wh-*Optative*.
Just as in conditional optatives, the finite verb of a *wh*-optative is canonically in the past—either simple past or past perfect (if combined with a past participle).

(28) a. Hvem der bare var tredive!
who there only were thirty
'Wish I were thirty!'

b. Hvem der bare havde været tredive!
who there only had been thirty
'Wish I had been thirty!'

The past tense marking on the finite verb is what Iatridou (2000:235) refers to as FAKE PAST. A *wh*-optative with a finite verb in the past tense is not temporally past: In spite of the past tense marking, the *wh*-optative in 28a makes reference to the present of the speaker. The speaker wishes (s)he were thirty at the present time. In a similar vein, the past perfect in 28b is fake in that it makes reference to the past of the speaker and not to a time preceding a past reference time. The speaker wishes (s)he had been thirty at a time in the past. Thus, the past tense marking in optatives expresses counterfactuality (see also Christensen & Heltoft 2010:88). It describes a world distant from the world of the speaker. The *wh*-optative does not allow the past future with the modal *ville* 'would' found in the consequent of conditionals. On the analysis in Iatridou 2000:241, the

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

antecedent of a conditional contains an element of futurity, and this element of futurity is spelled out in the consequent of the conditional.[19]

(29) a. Hvis jeg forstod fransk, ville jeg være lykkelig.
if I understood French would I be happy
'If I understood French, I would be happy.'

b. *Hvem der ville være lykkelig!
who there would be happy
Intended: 'Wish I were happy!'

Wh-optatives share this property with (most) conditional optatives.[20]

---

[19] The consequent need not contain (overt) futurity though. This is shown in i, where the consequent contains past and not the past future form.

(i) Hvis jeg havde haft tid, havde jeg hjulpet dig.
if I had had time had I helped you
'If I had had time, I would have helped you.'

The analysis in Iatridou 2000 does not account for the fact that the past future does not occur in the antecedent, and that it is optional (but preferred) in the consequent in Danish. An antecedent clause can contain *ville* 'would' but only on the deontic reading of the modal and enforcing an agentive reading of the verb.

(ii) Hvis de ville have en computer, måtte de lave den selv.[DK]
if they would have a computer had.to they make it themselves
'If they wanted a computer, they had to build it themselves.'

[20] Interestingly, complementizer optatives do allow the past future. I have no explanation for this at present.

(i) Gid det samme ville ske for mig.[DK]
if.only the same would happen to me
'If only the same would happen to me'

Some conditional optatives also allow it. The exact pattern for the use of the past future is yet to be determined.

(ii) Hvis bare det samme ville ske for mig!
if only the same would happen to me
'If only the same would happen to me!'

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(30) *Hvis jeg bare ville være lykkelig!
if I only would be happy
Intended: 'If only I were happy!'

The past tense marking on the verb only represents the canonical case, though. Occasionally, one does find *wh*-optatives with a present tense marking on the finite verb, as in 31.[21]

(31) Hvem der bare er så heldig at få sådan et.
who there only is so lucky to get such one
'Wish I am the lucky one to get such a thing!'

Present tense is also observed in conditional clauses and in conditional optatives. Iatridou (2000) uses the element of futurity inherent to conditional clauses to explain the difference between conditionals with (simple) past tense marking in the antecedent and conditionals with present tense marking. Conditionals with (simple) past tense marking are referred to as FUTURE LESS VIVID; they carry the implicature that the speaker considers it unlikely for the antecedent indeed to be the case. Conditionals with present tense marking are referred to as FUTURE NEUTRAL VIVID; they do not carry such an implicature. Under this approach, optatives with past tense marking carry the implicature that the proposition does not hold in the world of the speaker. Optatives with present tense, in contrast, are neutral as to whether or not the proposition holds in the world of the speaker. *Wh*-optatives with present tense marking appear to be possible if an element of futurity is explicitly stated. In 31, the infinitive clause specifies a future event (*to get such a thing*). Note also that 32a is infelicitous, while 32b specifying the future event is impeccable.

(32) a. #Hvem der bare er rig!
who there only is rich
'Wish I am rich!'

[21] http://vranda-scrap.blogspot.com/2010/06/studenterkort.html, accessed on May 23, 2012.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

b. Hvem der bare er rig,
who there only is rich

når man kan købe rejser til månen!
when you can buy trips to the.moon

'Wish I am rich when you can buy trips to the moon!'

For the remainder of this article, I assume (simplifying somewhat) that canonical *wh*-optatives carry past tense marking, that is, that they are counterfactual. The semantic properties of optatives with present tense marking appear to be different from the semantic properties of counterfactual optatives. This is not relevant for the point I wish to make, namely, that the interpretation of *wh*-optatives is only partly determined by the grammatical properties of the construction.

4. The Syntax of *Wh*-Optatives.

I have shown above that *wh*-optatives take the form of an "embedded" clause, that is, a clause without verb fronting. Thus, *wh*-optatives pattern with free relative clauses as in 33a and embedded *wh*-interrogatives as in 33b.

(33) a. Vi ansætter, hvem der nu engang måtte tilbyde sig.
we hire who there now this.time might offer himself
'We are going to hire whoever happens to apply.'[22]

b. Han spurgte, hvem der var albanere.[DK]
he asked who there were Albanians
'He asked who were Albanians.'

If free relatives and embedded *wh*-interrogatives have the same syntactic structure, one can expect *wh*-optatives also to have this structure. As previously mentioned, this is by no means clear, though. Vikner (1991) and Müller & Ørsnes (2011, in preparation) argue that *wh*-interrogatives are indeed sentential structures (CPs) with the *wh*-

[22] http://fmfreaks.dk/index.php?action=news;start=800;news_id=172, accessed on April 24, 2012.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

constituent in SpecCP. For free relatives the picture is less clear: A free relative can be either an NP or a CP as shown in the representations in 34 (see also the extensive discussion in Riemsdijk 2006 for other structures for free relatives).[23]

(34) a. [$_{NP}$ Hvem [$_{CP\text{-}rel}$ der there comes kommer]]
who
'Who is coming'

b. [$_{CP}$ Hvem [$_{IP}$ der there comes kommer]]
who
'Who is coming'

I am not able to address the syntactic analysis of free relatives in Danish here. Instead, I address two questions. First, to what extent do *wh*-optatives pattern with free relatives and/or embedded *wh*-interrogatives? Second, is there any evidence for the syntactic structure of *wh*-optatives? I conclude that *wh*-optatives resemble free relatives in many respects, but that they appear to be CPs like embedded *wh*-interrogatives. I do not claim, however, that this carries over straightforwardly to *bona fide* free relatives since I also show that *wh*-optatives cannot be analyzed as elliptical free relatives.

4.1. Wh-*Optatives versus Free Relatives and Embedded* Wh-*Questions.* Scholz (1991:108) gives some examples of German *wh*-clauses with an optative interpretation. Rosengren (1993:42) suggests that they should be interpreted as (reduced) free relative clauses. However, apart from the structural similarity she does not supply any arguments in favor of this analysis. In this section, I show that with respect to many syntactic properties, Danish *wh*-optatives do, indeed, pattern with free relatives rather than embedded *wh*-interrogatives. Still *wh*-optatives differ from free relatives in crucial respects, and so they cannot be wholly assimilated to free relatives.

[23] If the free relative is a CP, one must determine how it can occupy an NP-position. I ignore this discussion here. Riemsdijk (2006) provides a thorough discussion of various analyses of free relatives.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

I have shown above that the *wh*-constituent of a *wh*-optative is obligatorily singular. This is also observed for free relative clauses (Jacobson 1995, note 9) but not for embedded *wh*-interrogatives. The relevant examples are given in 35.

(35) a. Hvem der var rig-Ø /??rig-e!
who there were rich-SG / rich-PL
'Wish I were rich! / Wish we were rich!'

b. Vi ansætter hvem vi finder egnet-Ø /??egned-e.
we hire whom we find qualified-SG / qualified-PL
'We are going to hire, whoever we find qualified.'

c. Han spurgte, hvem der var rig-Ø / rig-e.
he asked who there were rich-SG / rich-PL
'He asked who were rich.'

Another difference between free relatives and embedded *wh*-interrogatives is that *wh*-interrogatives allow clefting, as shown in 36a, while free relative clauses do not, as shown in 36b (Bjerre 2011:279, Hansen & Heltoft 2011:1540). *Wh*-optatives do not allow clefting, as shown in 36c, so again *wh*-optatives pattern with free relative clauses and not with embedded *wh*-interrogatives.

(36) a. Han spurgte, hvem det var der kom for sent.
he asked who it was there came too late
'He asked who was the one to be late.'

b. *Han ansatte, hvem det var, han kendte.
he hired who it was he knew
'He hired who it was that he knew.'

c. *Hvem det bare var, der havde ferie!
who it only were there had holiday
Intended: 'Wish I were the one who had a holiday!'

Free relatives can only contain one *wh*-constituent, as shown in 37a (Grimshaw & Bresnan 1978), while *wh*-interrogatives can contain

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

multiple *wh*-constituents, as shown in 37b. *Wh*-optatives only allow one *wh*-constituent just like free relatives, as noted in section 3.1 and shown again in 37c.

(37) a. *Vi ansætter, hvem der er egnet til hvad.
we hire who there is qualified for what
'We hire who is qualified for what.'

b. Peter spurgte, hvem der lavede hvad.
Peter asked who there made what
'Peter asked who was doing what.'

c. *Hvem der bare havde tid til hvad!
who there only had time to what
Intended: 'Wish I only had time for something!'

I have shown in section 3.3 that *wh*-optatives do not allow the past future with the modal *ville* 'would' (see 38a). Free relatives do not allow the past future with *ville* 'would' either, as shown in 38b, while *wh*-interrogatives do, as shown in 38c.

(38) a. *Hvem der ville have ferie!
who there would have holiday
Intended: 'Wish I had a holiday!'

b. ??Jeg ville ansætte, hvem det ville passe mig.
I would hire who it would suit me
Intended: 'I would hire whoever I wanted to.'

c. Peter spurgte, hvad der ville ske.
Peter asked what there would happen
'He asked what would happen.'

Embedded *wh*-interrogatives license the question word *pokker* 'the hell', as shown in 39a, while free relatives and *wh*-optatives do not, as shown in 39b and 39c, respectively.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(39) a. Han spurgte, hvem pokker der var rig.
he asked who the.hell there were rich
'He asked who the hell were rich.'

b. *De ansatte, hvem pokker der var egnet.
they hired who the.hell there were qualified
'They hired who the hell were qualified.'

c. *Hvem pokker der var rig!
who the.hell there were rich
'Wish I the hell were rich!'

Still *wh*-optatives are not like free relatives in all respects. Free relatives with *wh*-constituents are marked in modern Danish, and they systematically alternate with the less marked light-headed relatives headed by personal demonstrative pronouns (Citko 2004).

(40) Vi ansætter dem, der er kvalificerede.
we hire those there are qualified
'We hire those who are qualified.'

If *wh*-optatives were (reduced) free relatives, one should expect that a light-headed relative could also be used as an optative (given that a free relative can otherwise always be substituted with a light-headed relative even though the opposite does not hold). This is completely ruled out in Danish.[24]

(41) *Den, der bare havde ferie!
the.one there only had holiday
Intended: 'Wish I had a holiday!'

[24] Interestingly, Swedish has optatives that take the form of light-headed relatives (Elisabet Engdahl, personal communication).

(i) Den som bara hade varit där!!!
the.one who only had been there
'Wish I had been there!'
(http://www.kalimera.se/landet/dvd.html, accessed on December 26, 2012)

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Moreover, free relatives allow the particle *end* '-ever', as shown in 42a, while this particle is impossible in *wh*-optatives, as shown in 42b. The particle *end* '-ever' is canonically associated with a universal reading of free relatives (Riemsdijk 2006:362), and as I show in section 5, *wh*-optatives are associated with a generic reading. Still they do not license *end* '-ever', just like embedded *wh*-interrogatives (see 42c).

(42) a. Vi ansætter, hvem der end er kvalificeret.
we hire who there ever is qualified
'We hire whoever is qualified.'

b. *Hvem der end havde ferie!
who there ever had holiday
Intended: 'Wish I had a holiday!'

c. *Han spurgte, hvem der end var kvalificeret.
he asked who there ever was qualified
'He asked whoever was qualified.'

In fact, *wh*-optatives have certain properties that set them apart from both free relatives and embedded interrogatives. Neither free relatives nor *wh*-interrogatives allow the discourse-oriented swear word *for fanden* lit. 'for the devil', as shown in 43a,b. Julien (2009:42–46) shows that *for fanden* lit. 'for the devil' is licensed by assertions (embedded or unembedded) and commands. Example 43c shows that *wh*-optatives (like other optatives) do license *for fanden* lit. 'for the devil'.

(43) a. ??Vi ansætter, hvem der for fanden er kvalificeret.
we hire who there for the.devil is qualified
'We hire who for fuck's sake is qualified.'

b. *Peter spurgte, hvem der for fanden var kvalificeret.
Peter asked who there for the.devil were qualified
'Peter asked who for fuck's sake were qualified.'

c. Hvem der for fanden bare stadig havde
who there for the.devil only still had

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

en hvepse-talje som en 15.årig![25]
a wasp-waist like a 15-year.old

'Wish I for fuck's sake still had a wasp waist like a 15-year old!'

Free relatives and *wh*-interrogatives allow nonlocal extraction of the *wh*-constituent (extraction across a bridge verb such as *sige* 'say'), as shown in 44a,b, while *wh*-optatives do not, as shown in 44c. They only allow local extraction.[26]

(44) a. Vi ansætter, hvem de siger er kvalificeret
we hire who they say is qualified
'We hire whom they claim to be qualified.'

b. Peter spurgte, hvem de sagde var kvalificerede
Peter asked who they said were qualified
'Peter asked whom they claimed to be qualified.'

c. *Hvem de bare sagde var kvalificeret!
who they only said were qualified
Intended: 'Wish they would say that I were qualified!'

Finally, *wh*-optatives are infelicitous with strong Negative Polarity Items (NPIs), as shown in 45a. Such NPIs are perfectly all right in free relatives and embedded interrogatives, as shown in 45b and 45c, respectively.

(45) a. ??Hvem der ikke havde løftet en finger!
who there not had lifted a finger
'Wish I had not lifted a finger!'

[25] http://thelastmover.wordpress.com/category/netshopping/page/11/, accessed on December 21, 2012.

[26] I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for drawing my attention to these data.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

b. Vi fyrede, hvem der ikke havde løftet en finger.
we fired who there not had lifted a finger
'We fired whoever had not lifted a finger.'

c. Peter spurgte, hvem der ikke havde løftet en finger.
Peter asked who there not had lifted a finger
'Peter asked who hadn't lifted a finger.'

Grosz (2012:78ff.) observes for conditional optatives in German that they do not allow NPIs. Grosz attributes the restriction against NPIs in optatives to the fact that NPIs are not licensed in complements of positive evaluation predicates such as *wish* or *prefer*, and under Grosz' analysis, optatives contain a covert positive evaluation operator EX (to be further discussed in section 6).

This restriction, however, appears to be part of a general restriction against NPIs in clauses with polarity focus. Optatives are associated with polarity focus (Grosz 2012:72), that is, focus on the truth value. Optatives introduce a basic opposition between p and $\neg p$. The speaker wishes for a proposition p to be the case, and it follows as an implicature that $\neg p$ holds in the actual world (Iatridou 2000:232). As discussed in Ørsnes 2012, it is a striking characteristic of different kinds of utterances associated with polarity focus that they do not license NPIs. The exact nature of this restriction is not clear, but it appears to be related to the fact that it is difficult to construct $\neg p$ from a p containing an NPI. The negation of *If only I had not lifted a finger!* is not *I did lift a finger*. In any case, NPIs are not allowed in *wh*-optatives, and this sets them apart from free relatives and *wh*-interrogatives.

One can conclude from this section that *wh*-optatives behave like free relatives in many but not all respects. Moreover, there are properties that *wh*-optatives share with neither free relatives nor *wh*-interrogatives. Thus, *wh*-optatives cannot be treated as free relatives with a special optative interpretation. In the next section, I proceed to show that *wh*-optatives do not have elliptical structures.

4.2. Why Wh-*Optatives Are Not Elliptical.*

The fact that *wh*-optatives take the form of embedded clauses and that they share many properties with free relative clauses in the complement position of a matrix verb invite the conclusion that *wh*-optatives are

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

dependent clauses with a "missing" matrix clause. An analysis to this effect is proposed for conditional optatives in Biezma 2011. She claims that conditional optatives are antecedents of a missing consequent. Grosz (2012) provides ample evidence against analyzing conditional optatives as elliptical structures. I also argue that *wh*-optatives do not have elliptical structures with a missing matrix clause.

First, free relatives with *hvem* 'who' are marked (though grammatical) in modern Danish.[27] Light-headed relatives with demonstrative pronouns as heads are the unmarked choice.

(46) a. Jeg inviterer, hvem der har hjulpet mig. (marked)
I invite who there has helped me
'I invite whoever has helped me.'

b. Jeg inviterer dem, der har hjulpet mig. (unmarked)
I invite those there have helped me
'I invite those who have helped me.'

However, *wh*-optatives do not show the markedness effect associated with free relatives with *hvem* 'who'. On the contrary, the less marked light-headed relatives are completely impossible as optatives (see 41 above). Moreover, it is not possible to reconstruct the putative source of the *wh*-optative. In 47, the *wh*-optative is reconstructed as a subject free relative, that is, the elided part is a VP, and the *wh*-optative is reconstructed as the subject of this VP.

(47) a. ??Hvem der havde ferie, kunne tage på stranden.
who there had vacation could go to the.beach
'Whoever had vacation could go to the beach.'

b. ??Lykkelig ville være, hvem der kunne tage på stranden.
happy would be, who there could go to the.beach
'Lucky would be, whoever could go to the beach.'

[27] Free relatives with *hvad* 'what' are unmarked.

(i) Jeg spiser, hvad der står på bordet, når jeg inviteres ud ...[DK]
I eat what there stands on the.table when I am.invited out
'I eat what is on the table, when I am out ... '

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

These examples are marginal at best since free relatives with *hvem* 'who' are restricted to objects. They do not occur productively as subjects in modern Danish, as shown in 48, where only the version with a light-headed relative is grammatical.

(48) a. ?/*Hvem der ryger, skal betale 15 euro.
who there smokes must pay 15 euro
'Whoever smokes must pay 15 euro.'

b. Den, der ryger, skal betale 15 euro.
the.one there smokes must pay 15 euro
'The one who smokes must pay 15 euro.'

Subject free relatives are only observed in fossilized proverbs, such as 49a (note that 49a contains the old form *hvo* instead of *hvem* 'who'), and in specificational copular clauses, such as 49b, where the postverbal complement identifies the extension of the property-denoting subject (see Mikkelsen 2005).

(49) a. Hvo intet vover, intet vinder.
who nothing dares nothing wins
'Who dares, wins.'

b. Hvem der også lider i kulden, er de to piger ... [DK]
who there also suffer in the.cold are the two girls
'Among those also suffering in the cold are the two girls.'

Whatever the reason for these restrictions on subject free relatives is, it appears not to be possible to reconstruct a source for a *wh*-optative, where the *wh*-optative is a free relative in an NP position. Moreover, a *wh*-optative containing one of the optative adverbs *bare* 'only', *blot* 'only', *dog* 'only' or *i det mindste* 'in the least' cannot be embedded at all. The result is even worse than 47.

(50) a. ?/*Hvem der bare havde ferie, ville være lykkelig.
who there only had holiday would be happy
'Whoever only had a holiday, would be happy.'

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

b. *Jeg ønsker, hvem der bare havde ferie, var mig.
I wish who there only had holiday were me
Intended: 'I wish that the one who had a holiday were I.'

If *wh*-optatives were embedded *wh*-interrogatives with a missing matrix clause, it is not at all clear what would be elided in that case. It is not possible to reconstruct a suitable predicate that would select an embedded *wh*-interrogative and preserve optative semantics. As a matter of fact, it is a characteristic of optatives that they cannot be embedded.[28]

(51) ?*Jeg udmaler mig, hvem der bare havde ferie.
I imagine REFL who there only had holiday
'I am imagining, wish I had a holiday.'

Thus, all the evidence points to the conclusion that *wh*-optatives do not have elliptical structures with a missing matrix-clause.

---

[28] The example in i appears to contain an embedded optative with the complementizer *om* 'if'.

(i) og jeg begyndte at tænke på, om jeg bare kunne
and I began to think PREP if I only could
få en chance til at gøre det hele om.[DK]
get a chance PREP to do it all again
'... and I began wondering if only I could get another chance to do everything all over again.'

However, the embedded clause in i is an embedded polar question which is always introduced with the complementizer *om* 'if' and the optative semantics is invited by the presence of the focus particle *bare* 'only', which is also found in polar questions. The example in i is considerably degraded with the unambiguous conditional complementizer *hvis* 'if' and the optative complementizer *gid* 'wish'. Example ii would only be possible on an analysis of the *if*-clause as an appended independent clause.

(ii) ??og jeg begyndte at tænke på,
and I began to think PREP
hvis/gid jeg bare kunne få en chance til ...
if /wish I only could get a chance PREP
'… and I began wondering if only I could get another chance …'

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

4.3. The Syntactic Category of Wh-*Optatives.*
The fact that *wh*-optatives are not ellipses with a missing matrix clause makes it difficult to determine their syntactic category. One possibility is that they are NPs with the *wh*-constituent as the head followed by a subject relative clause. This was one of the structures suggested in 34 for free relatives. An argument in favor of this analysis is that NPs can occur as exclamatives, as shown in 52.

(52) a. Jeg idiot.[DK]
I idiot
'Foolish me!'

b. Og dig, der er så sart og følsom ...[DK]
and you.ACC there is so tender and sensitive
'And you being so tender and sensitive!'

However, there are still two properties of *wh*-optatives suggesting that they are indeed CPs. If *wh*-optatives are CPs and not NPs, one has a straightforward explanation why light-headed relatives cannot be interpreted as optatives: Only *wh*-constituents are possible in SpecCP in a clause without verb fronting. Demonstrative pronouns are not, so the structure in 53 is illicit.

(53) *[$_{CP}$ Den [$_{IP}$ der bare havde ferie!]]
the.one who only had holiday
Intended: 'Wish I had a holiday!'

The second piece of evidence comes from coordination. If one assumes that only constituents of the same category conjoin, the syntactic category of *wh*-optatives can be determined by investigating what categories they conjoin with. It appears that *wh*-optatives can be coordinated with a CP, as in 54a, where a *wh*-optative is conjoined with a conditional optative. In contrast, a coordination of an NP and a *wh*-optative, as in 54b, is ungrammatical. This speaks in favor of analyzing the *wh*-optative as a CP and not as an NP followed by a subject relative clause.

(54) a. Ååååh, [hvem der bare boede som på billede 2], eller
ooooh who there only lived as on picture 2 or

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

[bare if.only der there var were plads room til for en a hængekøje hammock i in stuen]the.living.room[29]

'Ooooh, wish I were living as on picture 2 or wish there were room for a hammock in the living room.'

b. ?/*[Heldige lucky dig you] eller or [hvem who der there bare only også also havde had penge money til for at to rejse travel]!

Intended: 'Lucky you or wish I also had money for travelling!

The impossibility of *wh*-optatives headed by a non-*wh*-word and the coordination pattern in 54 point to the conclusion that *wh*-optatives are CPs even though the evidence is not overwhelming. I assume that *wh*-optatives have the structure in figure 1.

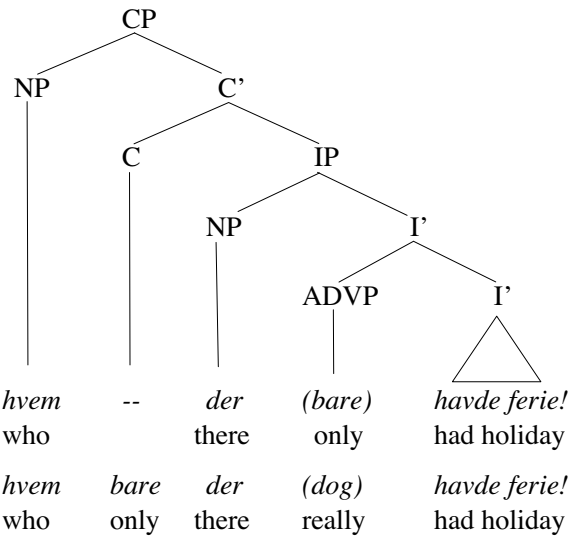


Figure 1. Structure for *wh*-optatives.

[29] http://trineswardrobe.dk/home-12/, accessed on December 10, 2012.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Having argued that *wh*-optatives are independent CPs I next turn to the interpretation of the *wh*-optatives.

5. The Interpretation of *Wh*-Optatives.

In this section, I address the question why a *wh*-clause without verb fronting comes to be associated with optative semantics. The goal is to establish to what extent *wh*-optatives can be given a compositional analysis. Three properties of *wh*-optatives are crucial for their interpretation: (i) the root clause is a *wh*-clause with the finite verb in the base position (signaled by the expletive *der* 'there'), (ii) the finite verb is (canonically) in the FAKE PAST or FAKE PAST PERFECT, that is, the *wh*-optative is counterfactual, and (iii) the *wh*-constituent is obligatorily stressed.

The first property of *wh*-optatives is that the finite verb is in the base position within the VP (the "embedded" word order). The presence of the expletive subject *der* 'there' unambiguously shows that the clause is not V2. So the question is, what the semantic/pragmatic difference between verb fronting and no verb fronting amounts to. Truckenbrodt (2006) suggests for German that verb fronting (V to C) signals an instruction to the hearer: A declarative clause with the verb in second position is a signal to the hearer to update the common ground with the relevant proposition; a *wh*-question with V2 is a signal to the hearer to supply a value for the *wh*-constituent for updating the common ground; a polar question is an instruction to the hearer to tell whether the proposition should be included in the common ground or not. Conversely, clauses without verb fronting do not contain an instruction to the hearer, so clauses without verb fronting do not (directly) require an action on the part of the hearer.[30] This is the reason why *wh*-optatives are not interpreted as *wh*-questions.[31] Ignoring the optative semantics and the

[30] Truckenbrodt (2006:275–276) shows that this also applies to directive root infinitives in German.

[31] Potentially, this still leaves the possibility that the *wh*-clause is interpreted as a deliberative question. However, this possibility is excluded since a deliberative question without verb fronting always contains the complementizer *mon*, roughly, 'I wonder'.

(i) Hvem mon der turde det?[DK]
who I.wonder there dared that
'I wonder who would dare that?'

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

counterfactual marking on the finite verb, the *wh*-clause in 55 simply denotes the set of individuals that are rich (see also Jacobson 1995:465).

(55) Hvem der var rig!
who there were rich
'Wish I were rich!'

The expression *hvem der VP* 'who there VP' is an intensional description of a set, and this interpretation arises precisely because the clause contains no instruction to the hearer.

Next I turn to the past tense marking on the finite verb. As noted in section 3.3, Iatridou (2000) refers to this kind of past as fake past since the *wh*-optative is not about the temporal past. On the unified analysis of past tense marking in Iatridou 2000, the semantic core of past tense marking is *distant from the speaker*. The meaning of the past tense morpheme is *T(x) excludes C(x)*, where T(x) is the x we are talking about (in 55—a world where the speaker is rich) and C(x) is the x of the speaker (in 55—the actual world where the speaker is not rich) (Iatridou 2000:246). x can range over worlds as indicated, but it can also range over times. If x ranges over worlds, the topic world excludes the world of the speaker, which gives rise to the counterfactual reading (the topic world excludes the actual world). If x ranges over times, the topic time excludes the time of the speaker, which gives rise to the temporal past reading (the topic time excludes the utterance time).

Combining the analysis of the past tense marking in *wh*-optatives with the analysis of *wh*-clauses without verb fronting outlined above, one arrives at the following interpretation of the example in 55: The *wh*-clause denotes the set of individuals that are rich in a topic world, which excludes the world of the speaker (the context world). This means that the sets of individuals who possess the property expressed by the VP are not identical in the topic world and in the context world. The two sets differ if the set in the topic world contains more (or, possibly, other) members than the set in the context world, that is, if the set in the topic world contains at least one element that is not a member of the set in the context world.[32] This is the situation found in *wh*-optatives: The speaker

[32] The two sets also differ if the set in the context world contains at least one element that is not a member of the set in the topic world. I assume that this

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

wants to belong to the set with the property denoted by the VP in the topic world without belonging to the set denoted by the VP in the context world.

Finally, *wh*-optatives focus on the entity belonging to the VP set in the topic world but not in the context world. The syntactic as well as the prosodic structure suggest that *wh*-optatives have a different information structure from complementizer and conditional optatives. Example 56a shows a complementizer optative, and example 56b shows the near-synonymous *wh*-optative.

(56) a. [$_{FOC}$ GID] [$_{BCK}$ jeg var rig!]
if.only I were rich
'If only I were rich'

b. [$_{FOC}$ HVEM] [$_{BCK}$ der var rig!]
who there were rich
'Wish I were rich'

In 56a, the whole proposition is within the IP domain as a complement of C: No element within the proposition is syntactically distinguished by being in the CP domain (SpecCP), and no element of the proposition is prosodically distinguished by being stressed. In 56a, the whole proposition is backgrounded and the complementizer is stressed as noted by Christensen (2009:123).[33] In 56b, the *wh*-subject is syntactically distin-

---

interpretation is not available in an example such as 55 because it would more appropriately be expressed with negation as in i.

(i) Hvem der bare ikke var gift ...
who there only not were married
'Wish I wasn't married ...'
(http://www.bt.dk/musik/aah-de-danske-piger, accessed on June 5, 2012)

In i, the speaker belongs to a set with the property denoted by the VP in the topic world, and she expresses the wish not to belong to this set in a topic world.

[33] In conditional optatives, the optative particle is stressed.

(i) Hvis jeg BARE var rig!
if I only were rich
'If only I were rich!'

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

guished by being fronted into the CP domain, and it is prosodically distinguished by being stressed. Thus, the *wh*-subject is separated from the rest of the proposition, and the *wh*-optative has a separate focus-background articulation. The *wh*-subject is focused just like the stressed *wh*-constituents of echo-questions, which are always focused constituents (for details see Reis 1992:235ff.). The semantic contribution of the IP is only that of a VP since the subject is an expletive. In this way the semantic part corresponding to the VP is backgrounded.

One can interpret 56a such that the speaker expresses a wish that *p* would hold, and by implicature ¬*p* holds in the common ground: *S wants that p, CG:* ¬*p*. In a similar vein, 56b can be interpreted such that the speaker wishes for some *PRO* to have the property denoted by the VP, and by implicature the property denoted by the VP does not apply to *PRO* in the common ground: *S wants for PRO to have the property denoted by the VP, CG:* ¬*VP(PRO)*. Compared to complementizer optatives, *wh*-optatives focus on a variable, and it is known about this variable that the property expressed by the VP does not apply to it.

However, there are two differences between conditional/complementizer optatives and *wh*-optatives related to the interpretation of the *wh*-word: *Wh*-optatives are obligatorily speaker-oriented, and they receive a generic interpretation inasmuch as the wish is presupposed to be shared by other people, not just the speaker. The *wh*-word is interpreted as an inclusive impersonal pronoun, like some uses of the English *one* or the German *man* 'one' (van der Auwera, Gast, & Vanderbiesen, forthcoming).

The obligatory association of the *wh*-word with the speaker is unexpected on the analysis so far. A wish is always attributed to the speaker expressing the wish, but the wish does not have to concern the speaker herself, as witnessed by the conditional optative in 57a and the complementizer optative in 57b.

(57) a. Hvis du bare bliver rask til på torsdag!
if you only get healthy until on Thursday
'If only you recover until Thursday!'

b. Gid de bliver raske til på torsdag!
if.only they get healthy until on Thursday
'If only they recover until Thursday!'

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Wh-optatives are different. They can never be associated with the hearer or another salient individual in the discourse without including the speaker.

(58) Hvem der bare blev rask til på torsdag!
who there only got healthy until on Thursday
≠ 'Wish you would recover until Thursday!'

The impossible interpretation in 58 begs the question whether the obligatory speaker orientation is pragmatically derived or whether it is "hard-wired" into *wh*-optatives. If the speaker orientation is a pragmatic implicature, one should expect it to be cancelable. Thus, one should expect the speaker orientation to be blocked if an association with the speaker is highly implausible or impossible for language-external reasons.

Imagine a situation with only two interlocutors. A wants B to finally stay quiet for a second and may express this by uttering the conditional optative in 59a. However, a *wh*-optative cannot be used as an (indirect) address to the hearer. Example 59b can only mean that the speaker wishes for herself that she would stay quiet for a second even though this is pragmatically odd. Example 59b invariably implies that the speaker is not in full control of her flow of words.

(59) a. Hvis du bare kunne tie stille et øjeblik!
if you only could stay quiet a second
'If only you could shut up for a second!'

b. Hvem der bare kunne tie stille et øjeblik!
who there only could stay quiet a second
'Wish I could shut up for a second!'

Imagine also a man talking to his wife, who is unsure whether she is pregnant or not. If the man utters the *wh*-optative in 60, the association with the speaker ought to be blocked for language-external reasons, but it is not. It has only the nonsensical reading that the man wishes for himself that he had a pregnancy test.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(60) Hvem der bare fik foretaget en graviditetstest!
who there only had made a pregnancy.test
'Wish I would have a pregnancy test!'

So the speaker orientation of *wh*-optatives is not a pragmatic implicature; it is an indispensable part of their semantics that cannot be overridden.

The second special interpretational property of *wh*-optatives is that the wish is presupposed to be of a general nature; it should be shared by people in general, not just the speaker. A *wh*-optative allows the tag *hva'?* roughly: 'Don't you agree?' inviting the hearer to agree with the speaker. These tags are very odd with speaker-oriented conditional or complementizer optatives.

(61) a. Hvem der var rig, hva'?
who there were rich what
'It would be lovely to be rich, wouldn't it?'

b. #Bare jeg var rig, hva'?
wish I were rich what
'It would be lovely if I were rich, wouldn't it?'

In example 61a, the speaker implies that the hearer would also wish for herself that she were rich. In contrast, example 61b is only possible in a context where the hearer has a special interest in the speaker's being rich. It does not mean that the hearer would wish that she herself be rich. Thus, an appropriate paraphrase of the *wh*-optative in 61a is the one with the inclusive, impersonal pronoun *man* 'one', as in 62.

(62) Man skulle være rig, hva'?
you should be rich what
'One should be rich, don't you agree?'

If one further examines the kind of properties expressed by VPs in *wh*-optatives, one finds properties such as to be rich, to be thirty, to have a holiday, to have a beautiful garden and to be famous. These are all properties that are considered attractive by most people. These properties are not characterized by the distinction between stage-level and individual-level predicates (see, for example, Kratzer 1995). *Wh*-

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

optatives can contain both stage-level and individual-level predicates. Still if a *wh*-optative contains a stage-level predicate, it carries the presupposition that in that context anyone would want to have this property. For example, the episodic property in 63 carries this presupposition: Anyone in my situation would hold the same wish. In this sense, the interpretation of *wh*-optatives is generic.

(63) Hvem der bare stod nede på den gode solide jord nu^{DK}
who there only stood down on the good solid ground now
'Wish I were standing down there on the solid ground now.'

Otherwise, *wh*-optatives tend to be awkward with very particular properties, such as not to have tilted a glass of wine onto the tablecloth, as in 64.

(64) #Hvem der ikke havde væltet det glas vin
who there not had tilted that glass wine

ud på dugen!
out on the.table.cloth

'Wish I had not tilted that glass of wine onto the table cloth.'

The example in 64 is odd since it is difficult to conceive of this as a generic wish. Note that a paraphrase with *man* 'one' is also odd.

(65) #Havde man bare ikke væltet
had one only not tilted

det glas vin ud på dugen!
that glass wine out on the.table.cloth

'If only one had not tilted that glass of wine onto the table cloth!'

Conditional optatives or complementizer optatives show no such restrictions.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(66) a. Bare jeg ikke havde væltet det glas vin
if.only I not had tilted that glass wine

ud på dugen!
out on the.table.cloth

'If only I had not tilted that glass of wine onto the table cloth!'

b. Gid jeg ikke havde væltet det glas vin
if.only I not had tilted that glass wine

ud på dugen!
out on the.table.cloth

'If only I had not tilted that glass of wine onto the table cloth!'

The generic interpretation of *wh*-optatives also has ramifications for the felicity of Presupposition Accommodation (Lewis 1979, Stalnaker 2002, von Fintel 2008). Consider the example in 67 with a conditional optative.

(67) Hvis bare jeg havde min kamel med!
if only I had my camel with
'If only I had brought my camel!'

On the basis of the optative in 67, the hearer will accommodate the (perhaps somewhat surprising) presupposition that the speaker is in the possession of a camel. Consider next the *wh*-optative in 68 that expresses the very same wish.

(68) #Hvem der havde sin kamel med!
who there had his camel with
'Wish I had brought my camel!'

The optative in 68 also carries the presupposition that the speaker is in the possession of a camel, but at the same time it suggests that it is a fairly common property to be the owner of a camel since the generic interpretation implies that this wish ought to be shared by more people

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

than just the speaker. This additional meaning component makes a *wh*-optative rather odd in the context that involves a camel, while it is perfectly all right in the context that involves a car.

(69) Hvem der havde sin bil med!
who there had his car with
'Wish I had brought my car!'

Presumably, this is also the reason why *wh*-optatives with proper names are marginal, while conditional and complementizer optatives with proper names are impeccable.

(70) a. #Hvem der bare havde husket at invitere Louise!
who there only had remembered to invite Louise
'Wish I had remembered to invite Louise!'

b. Bare jeg havde husket at invitere Louise!
if.only I had remembered to invite Louise
'If only I had remembered to invite Louise!'

The *wh*-optative in 70a suggests that it is a fairly common property to know someone by the name of *Louise*, while this is presumably a rather particular property.

6. Problems for a Compositional Analysis of *Wh*-Optatives.

The previous discussion has shown that the interpretation of *wh*-optatives follows from grammatical properties of the clause to a large extent. Still there are three properties of *wh*-optatives hampering a compositional analysis: (i) the *wh*-word must be *hvem* 'who', (ii) the *wh*-constituent must be a (locally extracted) subject, and (iii) the *wh*-word must refer to the speaker. Of the examples in 71, only 71a can be interpreted as an optative clause.

(71) a. Hvem der blev inviteret af dronningen!
who there were invited by the.queen
'Wish I were invited by the queen!'

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

b. *Hvem dronningen inviterede!
who the.queen invited
Intended: 'Wish the queen would invite me!'

c. *Hvilken person der blev inviteret af dronningen!
which person there were invited by the.queen
Intended: 'Wish I were invited by the queen!'

A structurally similar *wh*-clause embedded under an interrogative predicate shows no such restrictions.

(72) a. Han spurgte, hvem der blev inviteret af dronningen.
he asked who there was invited by the.queen
'He asked who was invited by the queen.'

b. Han spurgte, hvem dronningen inviterede.
he asked who the.queen invited
'He asked whom the queen invited.'

c. Han spurgte, hvilken person
he asked which person

der blev inviteret af dronningen.
there was invited by the.queen

'He asked which person was invited by the queen.'

So how can one explain why only 71a is an optative in a compositional way? The *wh*-clause in 71a is an incomplete utterance in that it shows the embedded word order: It appears to require a main clause, which is missing (just like conditional optatives). On the face of it, there is no illocutionary force associated with the *wh*-clause. It simply denotes a set in a world different from the world of the speaker. Rosengren (1993) suggests that complete utterances interact with the cognitive domain, while incomplete utterances interact with the emotional domain. Complete sentences are related to manipulations of the common ground, the updating of information. Incomplete utterances, such as conditional optatives and *wh*-optatives, are associated with expressive speech acts.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Rosengren does not actually explain this connection between incomplete utterances and expressive speech acts, but still the connection is striking, which suggests that the association is not arbitrary. However, if incompleteness is associated with expressive speech acts, optativity requires something more, namely, a contrast between an actual state and a desired state. Therefore, optatives are counterfactual, or they relate to a future state where a future world is compared with the actual world. In contrast, exclamatives denote facts (Ginzburg & Sag 2001:223). Though incomplete, the following example cannot be understood as an optative.

(73) ??Hvem der har været årets bedste målmand!
who there has been the.years best goal.keeper
Intended: 'Wish I have been the best goal keeper of the year!'

If comprehensible at all, this example inevitably triggers the question: What about him or her?

Thus, optative semantics could be seen as a (pragmatic) association between incomplete counterfactual/future utterances and the emotional domain. This could explain why the *wh*-clauses in 72 are not optatives: They are part of complete utterances. However, it does not explain why 71b and 71c are not possible as optatives despite the fact that they are incomplete counterfactual utterances with an initial *wh*-constituent. Incompleteness in itself does not explain why optative semantics must be associated with the *wh*-word *hvem* 'who' as an extracted subject, nor why *hvem* 'who' must refer to the speaker.

A way to maintain a compositional analysis is to analyze problematic cases as local ambiguity resolved through its incompatibility with other lexical choices (Partee 2004:159) or, perhaps, contextually. To account for the *wh*-optative in 71a and the *wh*-interrogative in 72a, one could assume two kinds of *hvem* 'who': an optative and an interrogative *hvem* 'who'. The optative *hvem* 'who' has the interpretation of an inclusive impersonal pronoun, while the interrogative *hvem* 'who' does not have to include the speaker. Thus, by itself this *wh*-clause would be ambiguous between an optative and an interrogative reading, but in 72a it is disambiguated by the embedding predicate *spørge* 'ask'. The independent *wh*-optative would need some contextual mechanism to eliminate the interrogative reading.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Still one is not out of the woods: The *wh*-clause is ambiguous between an optative and an interrogative reading only if *hvem* 'who' is a (extracted) subject, as witnessed by 71b. To derive the optative reading, one has to make sure that the optative *hvem* 'who' appears in a clause with an extracted subject and the expletive subject *der* 'there'. A way to achieve this would be to have the optative *hvem* 'who' select a clause with the mentioned properties. However, *hvem* 'who' is not a selecting head; moreover, *hvem* 'who' would have to select a clause with a subject headed by a particular lexical item in violation of locality. Alternatively, one could posit an expletive subject *der* 'there' used only in optative clauses. In that case, the optative semantics would have to come from the (non-head) subject, and one would need a mechanism to ensure that the optative *der* 'there' is only associated with the optative *hvem* 'who'. It is unclear how this can be done in a principled way.

Grosz (2012:39ff.), finally, suggests a compositional analysis of conditional optatives. On his analysis, optative and exclamative clauses have a common syntactically-represented semantic core. He proposes that they contain a covert operator EX that takes a proposition as its complement and expresses an emotional attitude towards the selected proposition: Worlds in which the proposition selected by EX holds are high on a contextually supplied scale (see section 2). If the context supplies the speaker's preference scale, the utterance is interpreted as an optative. The fact that the expressive clause is interpreted as the complement of an (covert) operator explains why it takes the form of an embedded clause, that is, a clause without verb fronting in Danish. On the analysis in Grosz 2012, a *wh*-optative would have the structure in figure 2 below.[34]

The difference between languages that have *wh*-optatives and those that do not would boil down to a difference in subcategorization properties of the covert operator EX. EX selects a conditional clause in German, while it selects a conditional clause, a complementizer clause, or a *wh*-clause in Danish. In Swedish, EX selects either a conditional clause or an NP, that is, a light-headed relative. Still this analysis does not answer the basic question: How does the speaker know that the clause contains a covert operator EX?

[34] I follow the structural representation in Grosz 2012:50, even though EX appears to be adjoined to the CP (instead of selecting it as a complement).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

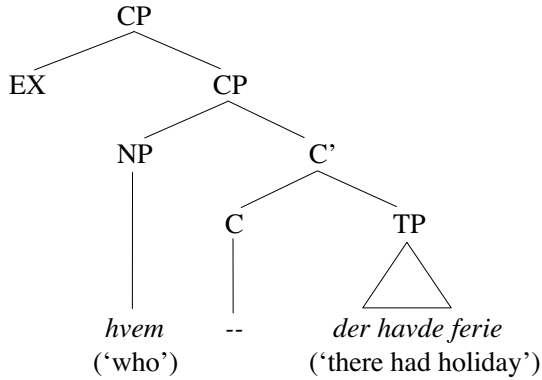


Figure 2. *Wh*-optative with EX-operator.

Moreover, this analysis predicts that expressives always take the form of an embedded clause by virtue of being selected by an (covert) EX operator. However, this is not the case. One also finds exclamatives that take the form of V2-clauses, as in 74.

(74) Hvor er det ærgerligt, at Rifbjerg
how is it pity that Rifbjerg

ikke tager udfordringen op –[DK]
not meets the.challenge PART

'What a pity, that Rifbjerg does not meet the challenge –'

Some predicates do allow embedded V2-clauses (Vikner 1995, Julien 2009, Wiklund et al. 2009), but embedded V2 is not observed in *wh*-clauses (Vikner 1995:77). Example 74 with V2 would be completely unexpected as a complement of an operator EX.

Finally, an analysis in terms of a covert operator does not allow one to state that the *wh*-constituent has to be the *wh*-word *hvem* 'who' (and not any kind of *wh*-phrase), and that it has to refer to the speaker. A selecting head cannot impose restrictions on the internal structure of its complement. EX would have to impose restrictions on the lexical head of the first daughter of the CP. For the very same reason one cannot state that the *wh*-constituent has to be an extracted subject, and that the TP embedded under the CP has to contain the expletive subject *der* 'there'.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

In conclusion, I have established that *wh*-optatives exhibit a combination of compositional and noncompositional features. On the one hand, the fact that *wh*-optatives contain no instruction to the hearer (they have no V to C) and that they describe a set in a topic world that excludes the world of the speaker motivate an optative interpretation. On the other hand, the fact that the *wh*-constituent has to be *hvem* 'who' as an extracted subject referring to the speaker appears to be an idiosyncratic property of *wh*-optatives that invites a constructional analysis in the conservative sense: familiar pieces, familiarly arranged, but with idiomatic interpretations (Fillmore, Kay, & O'Connor 1988:508). However, even though it is an arbitrary association of form and meaning, the association is well motivated. It is no coincidence that a *wh*-clause without V2 becomes an optative clause, even though not all of its properties can be derived in a compositional way. This, in turn, may explain why *wh*-optatives are not observed in languages that otherwise do have *wh*-clauses occurring as free relatives and embedded interrogatives, such as German and English. The *wh*-optative is a potentially possible construction in these languages as well, but it has not acquired the specific idiosyncratic features that make it an optative in Danish. If the use of a *wh*-clause as an optative were completely predictable from its grammatical properties, the lack of *wh*-optatives in German and English would be quite unexpected. This may also help to explain the uses of *wh*-clauses as optatives attested in German (Scholz 1991:108). Such use of *wh*-clauses is compatible with their properties even though it is not established as a separate optative construction (at least, not for all speakers).

7. A Constructional Analysis of *Wh*-Optatives.

The outcome of the preceding discussion is that the use of a *wh*-clause without verb fronting and with counterfactual marking on the verb as an optative is highly motivated. Still, that only *hvem* 'who' as an extracted subject triggers the optative interpretation with obligatory speaker orientation cannot be predicted. For that reason, it does not seem to be possible to derive the optative reading of these *wh*-clauses in a strictly compositional way, by looking only at local trees. One must be able to look into subtrees to make sure a *wh*-optative contains the appropriate lexical heads, namely, *hvem* 'who' as the *wh*-constituent and *der* 'there' as the subject. These unpredictable features speak in favor of analyzing

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the *wh*-optative as a construction in the conservative sense: an idiosyncratic pairing of form and meaning with nonlocal dependencies among specific lexical items (Fillmore 1985, Fillmore, Kay, & O'Connor 1988, Goldberg 1995). Figure 3 gives the fully-fledged construction for canonical *wh*-optatives in Danish.

Construction*: Wh-optative*

SYN: CP[(INTJ) NP[$_{N}$ *HVEM*$_{SING}$] C'[(C[*bare*$^{+}$]) IP[NP[$_{N}$ *der*] (PART) VP[V:{past} XP*]]]]

INTJ = {*Oh*/*Åh*/*Nej*/*Suk*/*Tænk* ... }

PART = {*bare+*/*blot+*/*i det mindste*/*dog*}

Elements marked with '+' do not co-occur

PHON: Capitalized word is stressed

SEM: Speaker wishes to belong to the set of NP with the property denoted by the VP

IMPLIC:

- The topic world excludes the world of the speaker in not having the speaker as a member of the set denoted by the VP
- To belong to the set denoted by the VP is a common wish

Figure 3. Construction for *wh*-optatives.

The construction for *wh*-optatives specifies that it is a CP consisting (minimally) of *hvem* 'who', *der* 'there', and a VP containing the past tense form of a verb followed by zero or more complements (ignoring adjuncts). A *wh*-optative can contain three optional elements: an interjection (nonexhaustively) enumerated as *Oh*, *Åh*, *Nej*, *Suk*, *Tænk*, the complementizer *bare* 'if only', and a particle restricted to one of the particles observed in optative constructions, namely, *bare* 'only', *blot* 'only', *dog* 'only' or *i det mindste* 'at least'. Thus, a minimal *wh*-optative looks like 75a. Concomitantly, a maximal *wh*-optative looks like 75b.

(75) a. Hvem der havde sådan en hyggelig lille vogn!
who there had such a cosy little carriage
'Wish I had such a cosy little carriage!'

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

b. Åh, hvem bare der dog
oh who only there only

havde sådan en hyggelig lille vogn![35]
had such a cosy little carriage

'Oh, wish I only had such a cosy little carriage!'

Note that the optative semantics is present also in the minimal version in 75a; thus, none of the elements associated with optative or exclamative clauses (the interjection, a special complementizer, or one of the special adverbs) are necessary to convey the optative semantics.

The semantics of the construction is as follows: The speaker wishes that he or she had the property denoted by the VP. The implicatures are that the speaker does not have this property and that the wish to belong to the set denoted by the VP is shared by other people, not just the speaker.

The proposed construction (trivially) accounts for the observed properties of *wh*-optatives. The problem with the analysis is that all the properties of the construction appear to be arbitrary. It is, however, possible to separate the compositional aspects of the construction from the noncompositional ones in a hierarchy of constructions where more specific constructions inherit the properties of less specific constructions. A full constructional hierarchy of *wh*-constructions and optative constructions is beyond the scope of this paper. Figures 4, 5, and 6 provide a fragment of such a hierarchy that serves simply as an illustration (it could be further simplified by having constructions for optatives and clauses with interjections). In the proposed fragment, the idiosyncratic properties of the construction are listed under the construction for *wh*-optatives, while the predictable properties are inherited from less specific constructions, in this case—a construction for *wh*-clauses with an extracted subject and no verb fronting, as shown in figure 4, and a construction for counterfactual clauses, as shown in figure 5.

[35] http://www.heste-nettet.dk/forum/14/983700/983700/, accessed on June 12, 2012.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Construction: Wh-clause_non-V2_subj	
SYN:	CP[XP:{+wh} C'[IP [NP[N[*der*]] VP]]]
SEM:	The set of XP with the property denoted by the VP

Figure 4. Construction for *wh*-clauses
without verb fronting and with an extracted subject.

The construction for *wh*-clauses with an extracted subject is independently needed for embedded *wh*-clauses with an extracted subject that also contain the expletive *der* 'there' (Müller & Ørsnes 2011). The construction type describes a clause with an extracted *wh*-constituent and the expletive subject *der* 'there'. Semantically, the construction denotes a set of individuals with the property denoted by the VP, following the analysis in Jacobson 1995:465.

The construction for a counterfactual clause specifies the past tense marking on the verb. I follow the analysis in Iatridou 2000 as detailed above and assume that the construction introduces a counterfactual implicature.

Construction: Counterfactual	
SYN:	V:{past}
IMPLIC:	The topic world excludes the world of the speaker

Figure 5. Construction for counterfactual clauses.

The construction for *wh*-optatives is a subtype of the two constructions above, and it inherits their properties. The idiosyncratic properties of *wh*-optatives are accounted for by treating the optative construction as a subtype of a *wh*-clause with an extracted subject only. In this way, no other *wh*-clause counts as an optative. The optative construction further restricts the *wh*-constituent to the singular *hvem* 'who'. The requirement that an optative be speaker-oriented is part of the semantic contribution, while the genericness of the wish is part of the implicature.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Construction: Wh-optative

Subtype of: *Wh-clause_non-V2_subj*, *Counterfactual*

SYN: CP[(INTJ) NP[N[$HVEM_{SING}$]] C'[(C[$bare^{+}$]) IP[NP (PART) VP]]]

INTJ = {*Oh*|*Åh*|*Nej*|*Suk*|*Tænk* ... }

PART = {$bare^{+}$|$blot^{+}$|*i det mindste*|*dog*}

Elements marked with '+' do not co-occur

PHON: Capitalized word is stressed

SEM: Speaker wishes to belong to SEM_of_*wh-clause_non-V2_subj*

IMPLIC:

- IMPLIC_of_*Counterfactual* in not having the speaker as a member of the set denoted by the VP
- To belong to the set denoted by the VP is a common wish

Figure 6. Construction for *wh*-optatives.

By positing a hierarchy of constructions in which more specific constructions inherit the properties of less specific constructions, it is possible to separate the idiosyncratic properties from the predictable properties. In this way the constructional hierarchy captures the compositional as well as the noncompositional aspects of the construction.

8. Conclusion.

In this article, I have provided a detailed description of the somewhat neglected *wh*-optatives in Danish. I have argued that they should be treated as a construction in the conservative sense: an idiosyncratic association of form and meaning. However, I have also shown that this association is not wholly arbitrary: The interpretation of *wh*-optatives is to some degree predictable from the grammatical and semantic properties of *wh*-clauses without verb fronting and with a counterfactual (or future) interpretation. The point has been to argue that a crucial aspect of analyzing and positing constructions should consist in specifying exactly what parts are predictable and what parts are not predictable from the grammatical properties of the construction. This can ultimately help to understand why certain constructions are found in some languages and not in others. That is, the presence of a construction in a given language

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

should—as far as possible—be motivated by the properties of its components and the mode of their combination. However, there is still a possibility for an expression to acquire certain features in a given language and thus develop into a specific construction in that language but not in others.

REFERENCES

Biezma, Maria. 2011. Optatives: Deriving desirability from scalar alternatives. *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung*, vol. 15, ed. by Ingo Reich, Eva Horch, & Dennis Pauly, 1–15. Saarbrücken: Universaar, Universitätsverlag des Saarlandes.

Bjerre, Anne. 2011. Topic and focus in local subject extractions in Danish. *Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar*, ed. by Stefan Müller, 270–288. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.

Christensen, Tanya K. 2009. Hvem der bare havde en hund—om emotive sætninger i dansk. *Sprogvidenskab i glimt*, ed. by Ken Farø, Alexandra Holsting, Niels-Erik Larsen, Jens Erik Mogensen, & Thora Vinther, 121–124. Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag.

Christensen, Tanya K., & Lars Heltoft. 2010. Mood in Danish. *Mood in the languages of Europe (Studies in Language Companion Series* 120*)*, ed. by Björn Rothstein & Rolf Thieroff, 85–102. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Citko, Barbara. 2004. On headed, headless, and light-headed relatives. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 22. 95–126.

Erteschik-Shir, Nomi. 1984. Der. *Nordic Journal of Linguistics* 8. 131–148.

Fillmore, Charles J. 1985. Syntactic intrusions and the notion of grammatical construction. *Proceedings of the 11th Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*, ed. by Mary Niepokuj, Mary VanClay, Vassiliki Nikiforidou, & Deborah Feder, 73–86. Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Linguistic Society.

Fillmore, Charles J., Paul Kay, & Mary C. O'Connor. 1988. Regularity and idiomaticity in grammatical constructions: The case of *let alone*. *Language* 64. 501–538.

Ginzburg, Jonathan, & Ivan Sag. 2001. *Interrogative investigations*. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.

Goldberg, Adele E. 1995. *Constructions*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Goldberg, Adele E. 2005. *Constructions at work—the nature of generalization in language*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press.
Grimshaw, Jane, & Joan Bresnan. 1978. The syntax of free relatives in English. *Linguistic Inquiry* 9. 331–391.
Grosz, Patrick G. 2012. *On the grammar of optative constructions* (*Linguistik Aktuell/Linguistics Today* 193*)*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
Hansen, Aage. 1967. *Moderne Dansk,* vols. 1–3. København: Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab, Grafisk Forlag.
Hansen, Erik, & Lars Heltoft. 2011. *Grammatik over det danske sprog,* vols. 1–3. Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag.
Heim, Irene, & Angelika Kratzer. 1998. *Semantics in generative grammar*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Iatridou, Sabine. 2000. The grammatical ingredients of counterfactuality. *Linguistic Inquiry* 31. 231–270.
Jacobs, Joachim. 2008. Wozu Konstruktionen? *Linguistische Berichte* 213. 3–44.
Jacobson, Pauline. 1995. On the quantificational force of English free relatives. *Quantification in natural language* (*Studies in Linguistics and Philosophy* 54*)*, ed. by Emmon Bach, Eloise Jelinek, Angelika Kratzer, & Barbara H. Partee, 451–487, Dordrecht: Kluwer.
Julien, Marit. 2009. *Embedded V2 in Norwegian and Swedish*. Manuscript. University of Lund. LingBuzz. Available at http://ling.auf.net/lingBuzz/000475.
Kratzer, Angelika. 1995. Stage-level and individual-level predicates. *The generic book*, ed. by Gregory N. Carlson & Francis J. Pelletier, 125–176. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
Lewis, David. 1979. Score-keeping in a language game. *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 8. 339–359.
Mikkelsen, Line. 2002. Expletive subjects in subject relative clauses. *Studies in Comparative Germanic Syntax* 53, ed. by Werner Abraham & Jan-Wouter Zwart, 71–93. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
Mikkelsen, Line. 2005. *Copular clauses: Specification, predication and equation* (*Linguistik Aktuell* 85*)*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
Müller, Gereon. 2010. *Regeln oder Konstruktionen? Von verblosen Direktiven zur sequentiellen Nominalreduplikation*. Manuscript. University of Leipzig. Available at http://www.uni-leipzig.de/~muellerg/mu242.pdf.
Müller, Stefan, & Bjarne Ørsnes. 2011. Positional expletives in Danish, German and Yiddish. *Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar*, ed. by Stefan Müller, 167–187. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.
Müller, Stefan, & Bjarne Ørsnes. In preparation. *Danish in Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar*. Freie Universität Berlin. Available at http://hpsg.fu-berlin.de/~stefan/Pub/danish.html.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Partee, Barbara H. 2004. Compositionality. *Compositionality in formal semantics: Selected Papers by Barbara H. Partee*, 153–181. Oxford: Blackwell.
Pedersen, Karen M. 2009. Indre at i danske dialekter. *Drammatikken i grammatikken*, ed. by Rita Therkelsen & Eva Skafte Jensen, 321–333. Roskilde: Institut for kultur og identitet, Roskilde Universitet.
Reis, Marga. 1992. Zur Grammatik und Pragmatik von Echo-w-Fragen. *Satz und Illokution,* vol. 1, ed. by Inger Rosengren, 213–261. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
Reis, Marga. 2003. On the form and interpretation of German *wh*-infinitives. *Journal of Germanic Linguistics* 15. 155–216.
Riemsdijk, Henk van. 2006. Free relatives. *The Blackwell companion to syntax*, ed. by Martin Everaert, Henk van Riemsdijk, Rob Goedemans, & Bart Hollebrandse, 328–382. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
Rosengren, Inger. 1993. Imperativsatz und 'Wunschsatz': Zu ihrer Grammatik und Pragmatik. *Satz und Illokution,* vol. 2, ed. by Inger Rosengren, 1–48. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
Scholz, Ulrike. 1991. *Wunschsätze im Deutschen: Formale und funktionale Beschreibung*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
Searle, John R. 1976. A classification of illocutionary acts. *Language in Society* 5. 1–23.
Stalnaker, Robert. 2002. Common ground. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 25. 701–721.
Truckenbrodt, Hubert. 2006. On the semantic motivation of syntactic verb movement to C in German. *Theoretical Linguistics* 32. 257–306.
van der Auwera, Johan, Volker Gast, & Jeroen Vanderbiesen. Forthcoming. Human impersonal pronoun uses in English, Dutch, and German. *Leuvense Bijdragen*. Available at http://webh01.ua.ac.be/vdauwera/publications.html
Vikner, Sten. 1991. Relative *der* and other C^0 elements in Danish. *Lingua* 84. 109–136.
Vikner, Sten. 1995. *Verb movement and expletive subjects in the Germanic languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
von Fintel, Kai. 2008. What is presupposition accommodation, again? *Philosophical Perspectives* 22. 137–170.
Wiklund, Anna-Lena, Kristine Bentzen, Gunnar H. Hrafnbjargarson, & Þorbjörg Hróarsdóttir. 2009. On the distribution and illocution of v2 in Scandinavian *that*-clauses. *Lingua* 119. 1914–1938.
Wilder, Christopher. 2008. The PP-with-DP construction. *Elements of Slavic and Germanic grammars: A comparative view*, ed. by Jacek Witkos & Gisbert Fanselow, 235–264. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
Ørsnes, Bjarne. 2012. Negation the verum: The syntax and semantics of preposed negation in Danish. *Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 15. 49–105.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Copenhagen Business School
Department of International Business Communication
Dalgas Have 15
DK-2000 Frederiksberg
Denmark
[boe.ibc@cbs.dk]

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1470542713000019 Published online by Cambridge University Press