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# Decomposing (non-)restrictivity

## Evaluative modifiers in post-head positions

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Draft, comments welcome

### 1. Introduction

This paper is devoted to a particular aspect of the interpretation of evaluative adjectives (*marvelous*, *horrible*), that is, adjectives that are compatible with subjective attitude verbs like *find* in the construction *find x adj* (e.g. *find marvelous*) and give rise to the so-called ‘faultless disagreement’ pattern.<sup>1</sup> Evaluative adjectives have often been claimed to manifest a strong, and even exclusive, preference for the nonrestrictive reading (henceforth the ‘nonrestrictive bias hypothesis’). For French for instance, Milner (1978) :301 claims that adjectives that he calls ‘affectifs’ (*abominable* ‘awful’, *horrible* ‘horrible’) cannot be used ‘in a restrictive or anaphorical way’ (my translation). For Spanish, Demonte (2008) : 71 argues that what she calls ‘extreme degree adjectives’ (*horrible* ‘horrible’, *necio* ‘stupid’, *espantoso* ‘awful’) and ‘qualitative superlative adjectives’ (*maravilloso* ‘wonderful’, *magnífico* ‘magnificent’) ‘are predicative nonrestrictive modifiers’. For Catalan, Castroviejo-Miró and Schwager (2008) :184 assume that adjectives like *beautiful* ‘are often understood as non-restrictive’. For German, Umbach (2012b) claims that ‘evaluative predicates [...] often cannot be used restrictively’. The claim has also been extended to adverbials derived from these adjectives. For instance, Castroviejo-Miró (2008) :63 argue that her *extremely* adverbials ‘are non-restrictive modifiers’.

For those languages that allow both the post- and pre-head positions for at least a subset of their adjectives,<sup>2</sup> a frequent observation reported in support of the ‘nonrestrictive bias

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1. If A claims that the dessert is delicious, and B reacts by claiming that it is not, there is a sense in which both A and B are right, i.e. that their disagreement is ‘faultless’, cf. e.g. Lasersohn (2005), Stephenson (2007).

Evaluative predicates are not the only ones that display faultless disagreement effects; vague scalar predicates (*rich*, *heavy*, *tall*) also do, cf. Richard (2004). However, as Kennedy (2004) :6 observes, the latter are not systematically acceptable under *find*.

2. The quantitative study of Thuilier et al. (2012) provides an interesting picture about the frequency of the postnominal vs prenominal position (among ‘transportable’ adjectives). Their corpus contains 14.804 occurrences of adjectives, of which 4.227 (28,6%) are anteposed and 10.577 (71,4%) are postposed. 1920 lemmas appear in the occurrences. 182 lemmas only appear in both anteposed and postposed positions, but

hypothesis' is that evaluative adjectives are often odd in post-nominal position, cf. e.g. (1) for French.

- (1) a. *J'ai vu l'horrible type ce matin.*  
I have seen the horrible guy this morning  
'I saw the horrible guy this morning.'
- b. *#J'ai vu le type horrible ce matin.*  
I have seen the guy horrible this morning  
'I saw the guy horrible this morning.'

The argument relies on what has been called the *complementarity hypothesis*, namely the hypothesis that pre-head modifiers receive a nonrestrictive interpretation in Romance, while post-head modifiers receive a restrictive interpretation (see e.g. Bouchard (1998), Alexiadou (2001) and Demonte (2005)). The idea is therefore that (1b) is odd because (i) the adjective being post-nominal, it must have the restrictive reading and (ii) *horrible* being evaluative, it doesn't easily get the restrictive reading.<sup>3</sup>

An immediate problem for this argument is that evaluatives *do* appear in post-nominal positions in corpora, even in presence of a definite, a factor that had been argued to favour the anteposition by Forsgren (1978).<sup>4</sup> A search in the literary database *Frantext* for any evaluative modifier studied here delivers many occurrences of the adjective in post-head position.

One of the goals of this paper is to reconcile these data with the nonrestrictive bias and the complementarity hypotheses. The idea pursued is that the terms 'restrictive' and 'nonrestrictive' cover two different but related properties, and that satisfying one of them only allows the modifier to appear in the post-head position. In Section (2), we discuss in detail the two definitions of (non-) restrictivity used in the literature. Section (3) shows how they relate to each other. Section (4) addresses the case where modifiers can appear in post-nominal position if they convey a causal relation only. Section (5) discusses two previous accounts of the nonrestrictive bias of evaluative predicates, identifies the contexts in which evaluative adjectives can appear in post-nominal position and explains why, on the basis of the definitions of (non)restrictivity built in Section (2).

The other properties by which pre- and post-head modifiers are traditionally distinguished (like the differences between idiomatic and literal readings, intersective and non-intersective readings, and 'central property modification' versus 'referent modification') are not addressed in this paper. That is, the discussion is restricted to cases where the other reading(s) of the adjective remain(s) the same in pre- and post-nominal position. So for instance, I will ignore cases where the evaluative adjective is non-intersective only in pre-nominal position and intersective or non-intersective in the postnominal one (cf. Cinque

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they correspond to 5.473 occurrences, that is 37% of the corpus, which suggests that 'transportable' lemmas are very frequent. Among the 5.473 adjectives that appear in both positions, 68,1% are anteposed and 31,9% are postposed. The ratio they obtain for the whole corpus is therefore turned over for these 'transportable' adjectives.

3. The complementarity hypothesis is not endorsed by everyone. For instance, Cinque (2005, 2010) argues that post-nominal adjectives in Romance are systematically ambiguous between restrictive and nonrestrictive modification.

4. The corpus study of Thuilier et al. (2012) :42 shows that in a definite DP, modifiers manifest a slight preference for the postnominal position, a result that contradicts Forsgren's data.

(2003)'s contrasts between *un buon attaccante* 'a forward good at playing forward' and *un attaccante buono* 'a forward good at playing forward/ a good-hearted forward'. I will also ignore the 'objective' (non-evaluative) reading evaluative adjectives can have in postnominal position only (cf. e.g. *un roman fantastique* 'a fantastic novel/a fantasy novel' vs. *un fantastique roman* 'a fantastic novel').<sup>5</sup> As for adverbials, I only take their manner adverbial into account, since it is the only one which can easily appear in pre- and post-nominal position (what is called the agent-oriented reading is generally restricted to pre-verbal positions, cf. e.g. Geuder (2000) for discussion).

When the modifier keeps the same range of readings when in pre- or post-head position (except their restrictive vs nonrestrictive one), I will say that the modifier is *commutable*.

## 2. Decomposing (non)- restrictivity

### 2.1. (Non)-restrictivity : set-based definition

(Non-)restrictivity is rarely explicitly defined in works devoted to (non)-restrictive modification, but the traditional intuition behind this notion is generally clear : a modifier M restrictively modifies the head H when the contextual set of objects denoted by the modified head MH is *properly* included in the contextual set of objects denoted by H. On the other hand, M nonrestrictively modifies H if the contextual set of objects denoted by H equals the contextual set of objects denoted by MH. As Cabredo-Hofherr (prep) emphasises, restrictive modifiers are under this traditional definition inherently *contrastive* : they presuppose the existence of entities of which the description given by the modifier is not true.<sup>6</sup>

Piñón (2005) provides formal definitions of restrictive and nonrestrictive modification that capture this conception of (non)-restrictivity. I repeat them in (2).  $\mathcal{M}$  is a model which consists of a nonempty set  $O$  of objects  $o$ , a non empty set  $S$  of possible situations  $s$ , and an interpretation function  $\llbracket \cdot \rrbracket$ . M and H designate functions from situations and objects to truth values.

- (2) a. M nonvacuously restrictively modifies H in  $s$  iff  
 $\llbracket \lambda o[M_s(o) \wedge H_s(o)] \rrbracket_{\mathcal{M},g} \subset \llbracket H_s \rrbracket_{\mathcal{M},g}$  and  $\llbracket \lambda o[M_s(o) \wedge H_s(o)] \rrbracket_{\mathcal{M},g} \neq \emptyset$   
 b. M nonvacuously nonrestrictively modifies H in  $s$  iff  
 $\llbracket \lambda o[M_s(o) \wedge H_s(o)] \rrbracket_{\mathcal{M},g} = \llbracket H_s \rrbracket_{\mathcal{M},g}$  and  $\llbracket \lambda o[M_s(o) \wedge H_s(o)] \rrbracket_{\mathcal{M},g} \neq \emptyset$

The advantage of the definitions in (2) is that they are neutral regarding what the set of objects  $O$  is. They may be physical, abstract objects, events, etc. Note that if the denotation of H in the situation  $s$  (i.e.  $H_s$ ) is a singleton set, then, according to (2), the modifier cannot non-vacuously restrictively modify  $H_s$ . As Piñón observes, this captures the old idea that a proper noun can be nonrestrictively but not restrictively modified.

Under the complementarity hypothesis, this definition captures well the difference between (3a) and (3b), from Demonte (2008).

5. Correlations between the position of the adjective and its meaning are anyway not regular in French according to Abeillé and Godard (1999).

6. This is made very clear by Bach (1974) :271 (*apud* Cabredo-Hofherr *id.*) about restrictive relative clauses : 'A restrictive relative clause presupposes the existences of entities of which the description given in the relative clause is not true'.

- (3) a. *Encontré las llaves viejas.*  
 find-PAST-1SG the keys old  
 ‘I found the subset of keys in *s* which are old.’  
 b. *Encontré las viejas llaves.*  
 find-PAST-1SG the old keys  
 ‘I found all members of the set of keys in *s* and they are old.’

## 2.2. Contrasts not captured yet

Although certainly useful, this definition of (non-) restrictivity (henceforth (non-) restrictivity<sub>1</sub>) cannot suffice to cover all uses made of this notion in the literature. In particular, as shown below, it cannot among others render the contrasts between restrictive and nonrestrictive modification that have been correlated with a post- vs pre-head position (i) with adverbials (section 2.2.1) and (ii) with indefinite NPs (section 2.2.2).

### 2.2.1. Adverbials

Peterson (1997) : 231-238 argued that the distinction between the restrictive and nonrestrictive readings of relative clauses and adjectives also applies to adverbs.<sup>7</sup> One of Peterson’s examples is given in (4).

- (4) The Titanic’s rapidly sinking caused great loss of life. (Peterson 1997)  
 a. *restrictive* : The Titanic’s sinking being rapid caused great loss of life.  
 b. *nonrestrictive* : The Titanic’s sinking, which [by the way] was rapid, caused great loss of life.

Peterson does not directly correlate this ambiguity with the syntactical position of the adverbial, but Morzycki (2008) agrees with Shaer (2000, 2003) that the nonrestrictive reading is not available with postverbal manner adverbials :

- (5) The Titanic’s sinking rapidly caused great loss of life.  
 a. *restrictive* : The Titanic’s sinking being rapid caused great loss of life.  
 b. # *nonrestrictive*

Peterson emphasizes that the ambiguity ‘is not, however, *exactly* what it was’ with adjectives : with adverbials, the restrictive reading does not amount to the reference to a proper subset of events of a salient set (p. 235). Indeed, in each of the situations described in (4)-(5), there is a *single* event described (a singleton set), independent of the structural position of the adverb. Hence, the modification can only be nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub> : ‘after all, there was only one sinking of the Titanic’ (Piñón *ibid* :5). However, we share Peterson and Morzycki’s intuition that the ambiguity illustrated in (5) shares something with the restrictive vs nonrestrictive ambiguity found with adjectives. We therefore need another definition of restrictivity.

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7. As Göbbel (2007) fn 14 observes, this view can be traced back to Heny (2007), who claims that ‘adverbs placed before the verb rather than after the VP may turn out to have a sort of nonrestrictive force, being an interpolation or comment by the speaker’.

### 2.2.2. Indefinites

According to Piñón's definition of restrictivity<sub>1</sub> given in (2), restrictive<sub>1</sub> modifiers are those where some members of H in the situation *s* do not pertain to M in *s*. In order to check whether this is the case or not, the interpreter must be able to build a representation of the set HM<sub>*s*</sub> independently of the representation of the set H<sub>*s*</sub>. This is easy with definite DPs, because these standardly presuppose their domain of quantification. But indefinites do not : *quelques fleurs bleues* 'sm blue flowers' do not presuppose a contextually restricted set of flowers — rather, it introduces a contextual set of blue flowers, and does not introduce nor presuppose an independent contextual set of flowers.

With indefinites, modifiers will thus systematically be nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub> independently of their syntactical position according to (2), at least if *s* is not the maximal situation (we discuss this case below). Symptomatically, indefinites are often left explicitly aside in works devoted to (non)-restrictivity. Katz (2008) :16 explicitly says that indefinite DPs are undefined for (non)-restrictivity. The same for Demonte (1999) :148 about Spanish. Cabredo-Hofherr (prep) also explicitly leaves aside indefinites NP in her work on the (non-)restrictive relative clauses in German.

The difficulty can partly be overcome if  $\llbracket H \rrbracket$  is not a contextual, but rather a maximal set. Indeed, the ambiguity can in principle be captured with indefinites, too : the modifier will be defined as nonrestrictive if all members of the maximal set H are members of M ; we deal then with what Fabricius-Hansen (2009) calls 'conceptual nonrestrictivity', i.e. cases where the modification does not restrict the extension of the noun, which is the case if  $\llbracket MH \rrbracket = \llbracket H \rrbracket$ . The relation of identity can be semantic (*unmarried bachelor*), prototypical (*white snow*) or stereotypical (*innocent passengers*). The modifier will be restrictive if  $\llbracket MH \rrbracket \subset \llbracket H \rrbracket$  (which is possible only if the relation of identity is defeasible, thus prototypical or stereotypical).

This way, we can capture the ambiguity illustrated in (6) : (6a) can be taken to imply that passengers are by definition innocent, while (6b) suggests that passengers can in principle be either innocent or not.

- (6) a. Supposons qu'il y ait d'innocents passagers dans la salle.  
'Let us assume that there are innocent passengers in the room.'  
b. Supposons qu'il y ait des passagers innocents dans l'avion.  
'Let us assume that there are innocent passengers in the room.'

The same contrast obtains in German, where restrictivity<sub>1</sub> is marked by narrow Focus on the modifier, cf. e.g. Umbach (2006), Riester and Baumann (2013). Take for instance the examples (7) inspired from one of Umbach's examples :

- (7) a. Nehmen Sie an, in dem Wartezimmer befinden sich [unschuldige PASSAGIERE]<sub>F</sub>.  
'Let us assume that there are innocent passengers in the waiting room.'  
b. Nehmen Sie an, in dem Wartezimme befinden sich [UNSCHULDIGE]<sub>F</sub> Passagiere.  
'Let us assume that there are innocent passengers in the waiting room.'

While (7a) suggests that passengers are by definition innocent (at least on one of its readings), (7b) clearly presupposes the existence of guilty passengers.

However, the difference between pre- and post-nominal modifiers in French or focused and non-focused ones in German cannot be accounted for with indefinites when one does

not deal with conceptual or ‘maximal’ (non)restrictivity. That does not impede authors to assume that in these cases too, modifiers are ambiguous between the two readings. For French, at least some authors consider that the modifier in *des magnifiques fleurs* ‘some wonderful flowers’ is nonrestrictive while the one in *des fleurs magnifiques* is restrictive. But according to the definition (2), if *s* is the maximal situation, both *de magnifiques fleurs* and *des fleurs magnifiques* are restrictive<sub>1</sub>. For German, Ebert (1971) (*apud* Cabredo-Hofherr (prep)) observes that relatives as the one in (8) are classified either as restrictive or as nonrestrictive. However, under both readings, the set of messy gardens is properly included in the maximal set of gardens. This confirms again that we need another definition of (non-)restrictivity.

- (8) *Er besass einen Garten, der sehr ungepflegt war.*  
 He owned a Garden, that very messy was  
 ‘He owned a very messy Garden/ a Garden, which was (by the way) very messy.’

### 2.3. (Non-)restrictivity : definition in terms of information structure

Many authors agree with the fact that the difference between the restrictive and nonrestrictive readings of attributive (non appositive) modifiers (also) has to do with information structure, cf. e.g. Ebert (1971, 1973), Peterson (1997), Jacob (2005), Umbach (2006), Morzycki (2008), Cabredo-Hofherr (prep), Riester and Baumann (2013), Riester (2012). However, there is much less agreement about the way (non)restrictivity defined in terms of information structure (henceforth (non)restrictivity<sub>2</sub>) should be characterized. Before giving a state of the art (section 2.3.1-2.3.2) and concluding with the proposal adopted here (section 2.3.3), let me present some contrasts between pre- and post-nominals modifiers that are both nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub> (or both restrictive<sub>1</sub>), independently of their syntactical position :

- (9) Comment est-ce que Pierre lui a annoncé ?  
 ‘How did Pierre tell her ?’  
 a. Il lui a annoncé [VIOLEMMENT]<sub>F</sub>  
 b. # Il lui a [VIOLEMMENT]<sub>F</sub> annoncé.  
 ‘He (violently) told her (violently).’
- (10) Comment sont les fleurs tu vas lui acheter ?  
 ‘How are the flowers will you buy her ?’  
 a. Je vais lui acheter des fleurs [MAGNIFIQUES]<sub>F</sub>  
 ‘I’ll buy her magnificent flowers.’  
 b. # Je vais lui acheter de [MAGNIFIQUES]<sub>F</sub> fleurs.

These contrasts show that only post-head modifiers are compatible with new information focus. Note that they are quite robust and do not exhibit the subtlety usual in data provided to account for the difference between pre- and post-nominal modifiers.

#### 2.3.1. Nonrestrictive modifiers as conventional implicatures

Morzycki (2008) defines nonrestrictive modifiers as conveying conventional implicatures. His point of departure is Peterson (1997)’s view on the matter, which I will therefore

present first.

The way Peterson (1997) characterizes restrictive and nonrestrictive adverbials has mainly to do with information structure. He distinguishes the two readings by the kind of answers the sentence containing them can provide. In his illustration (11) of the nonrestrictive use of the adverbial, the whole answer including the adverbial constitutes its focused part, that is the information asked for by the question. In this case, the answer constitutes what Peterson calls a ‘double assertion’: the Titanic sank and the sinking was rapid. In his illustration (12) of the restrictive use, the focused part within the answer is the adverbial alone, i.e. the adverbial bears narrow focus.

- (11) a. What memorable events involving large ships in the North Atlantic can you mention?  
b. [...] [The Lusitania was sunk by a German submarine in 1915. Also, the Titanic sink rapidly. It hit an iceberg]<sub>F</sub>. (nonrestrictive reading)
- (12) a. What caused such a great loss of life in the sinking of the Titanic?  
b. The Titanic sank [rapidly]<sub>F</sub>. (restrictive reading)

Göbbel (2007) casts Peterson’s intuition in a focus-theoretical framework and argues after him that the restrictive vs. nonrestrictive distinction is an informational one, both for adjectival and adverbial modifiers: the modifier is narrowly focused on the restrictive use, and integrated into a broader focus on the nonrestrictive use.

Morzycki (2008) rejects Peterson’s and Göbbel’s characterisation of the nonrestrictive modifiers as non-focused and restrictive ones as focused (to which we come back below), but adopts Peterson’s idea that nonrestrictive modifiers make part of ‘double-assertions’. Besides, Morzycki proposes to extend to the whole class of nonrestrictive modifiers, including the attributive (nonappositive) modifiers, the typical characterization of appositives as ‘parenthetical’, as additional extra-comments on the current utterance. He treats all nonrestrictive modifiers (including adjectives or adverbials in pre-head position) as a subspecies of expressive meaning as defined by Potts (2005), and identified with conventional implicatures. According to this approach, a sentence with a nonrestrictive modifier is a way of saying two sentences in one. The modifier is then conceived as predicated of an (implicit) contextually-restricted definite description. For instance, (13a) receives as a paraphrase (13b), and (14a) means something like (14b) (*C* is a contextually supplied domain variable).

- (13) a. Every unsuitable word was deleted. (nonrestrictive)  
b. Every word was deleted. They were unsuitable.
- (14) a. If a ship slowly sinks<sub>C</sub>, it’s always regrettable.  
b. Every ship-sinking<sub>C</sub> is regrettable. The sinkings<sub>C</sub> (i.e., the relevant sinkings) are slow.

Observe that the nonrestrictive modification is then analysed as having wide scope (e.g. on the conditional in (14)). This is expected if indeed the implication they convey is a conventional implicature.

Although appealing for appositives, such an analysis raises several problems when extended to nonrestrictivity<sub>2</sub> in general. Firstly, it is important not to conflate *attributive* with *appositive* nonrestrictive modifiers. Indeed, as already noticed by Leffel (2012) :12, these



two kinds of nonrestrictive modifiers differ in their discourse properties. On one hand, appositives tend to convey new information, contrary to presuppositions (Potts (2005))). This explains Pott's contrast repeated in (15).

- (15) Lance Armstrong survived cancer...
- a. # When reporters interview Lance, a cancer survivor, he often talks about the disease.
  - b. And most riders know that Lance Armstrong is a cancer survivor

On the other hand, attributive nonrestrictive modifiers regularly present the predication as presupposed, as shown by the contrast (16) provided by Leffel (2012). The same contrast obtains for any commutable modifier in French, cf. (17a). As Waugh (1977) indeed already observed, modifiers in prenominal position can always present the description as already introduced in the previous context, cf. her ex. (17a). Appositives cannot, as shown by the oddity of (17b).

- (16) a. # Carcinogens are harmful, and you should use this product to rid your body of all carcinogens, which are harmful.  
 b. Carcinogens are harmful, and you should use this product to rid your body of all harmful carcinogens.

- (17) a. *J'ai vu un éléphant énorme. Cet énorme éléphant buvait de l'eau.*  
 I have seen a elephant huge. This huge elephant drink-IMP. of the water

'I saw a huge elephant. This huge elephant was drinking water.'

- b. # *J'ai vu un éléphant énorme. Cet éléphant, énorme, buvait de l'eau.*  
 I have seen a elephant huge. This elephant huge drink-IMP. of the water

'I saw a huge elephant. This elephant, huge, was drinking water.'

The second problem raised by Morzycki's approach is that conventional implicatures take maximally wide scope, even in contexts that are filters or plugs for presupposition projection (like *verba dicendi*), and are speaker-oriented – they convey the speaker's commentary of what is said. This is probably the case for expressives like *damn* or *fucking* (in *John told me that the jerk stopped drinking*, *jerk* outscopes the verb of saying and reflects the speaker's opinion). But this is less clear for non expressive pre-head modifiers. For instance, in *The snail told me he quickly approached the salad*, if *quickly* were understood as a comment on the utterance, this comment would on the most accessible interpretation be attributed to the snail, not to the speaker. Besides, some evaluative adjectives like *fantastique* 'fantastic' or *merveilleux* 'marvelous', which resemble expressives in that their use seem always accompanied by the expression of the speaker's emotion (as shown e.g. by the fact that they somehow require an exclamative prosody), do not seem to project when used in indefinites. For instance, *Je voudrais trouver un magnifique appartement!* 'I would like to find a magnificent apartment!' does not project the description conveyed by *magnifique* (I come back to this point later). Also, characterizing nonrestrictive attributive modifiers as speaker

oriented would be at odd with traditional descriptions in grammars of French. According to these descriptions, the predication conveyed by adjectives in prenominal position is presented as ‘notorious’, ‘common-knowledge’, ‘stereotypical’, as ‘mentions of social discourse’, of the *vox populi* (Delente (2004), see also Roubaud (1785), Lafaye (1841), Berlan (1992)).<sup>8</sup> In fact, it is the *post-nominal* rather than the prenominal adjectives that are traditionally characterized as conveying the speaker’s opinion in French grammars.

A third problem raised by Morzycki’s account for our purposes is that it only offers a characterisation in terms of information structure of nonrestrictivity. It does not provide a definition of restrictivity which is independent of the definition in terms of relations between sets (2).

### 2.3.2. Nonrestrictive modifiers as presupposition triggers

Nonrestrictive modifiers have also been said to be presupposed material. This idea has different incarnations. I will begin by Leffel (2012), because it is one of the most explicit proposals in this direction. Leffel begins by observing that the claim that nonrestrictive attributive modifiers presuppose their description is ‘nearly self-evident’ for modifiers that occur in definite DPs : ‘clearly *my sick mother* presupposes that the speaker has a mother and the speaker’s mother is sick’ (p. 13). About non-definites DPs, his claim is double. Firstly, he assumes that nonrestrictive attributive adjectives in non definites trigger an inference which is generic or universal by nature ; they do not predicate a property to an individual, but rather predicate something of all individuals in the denotation of the noun. In the terms of Umbach (2006), nonrestrictive modifiers in non-definites always have according to this view the ‘kind-related’ reading.<sup>9</sup> Secondly, Leffel claims that this generic inference is presupposed. On this view, *harmful toxins* means ‘the set of y such that y is a toxin’ and is defined only if the presupposition that toxins are generally harmful is satisfied. His first argument in favour of the second claim is that the generic inference is preserved under negation, in questions, modal contexts, etc. For instance, *This product might contain harmful toxins* still entails that toxins are generally harmful. His second argument, taken from Umbach (2006), is that nonrestrictive modifiers cannot take intonational focus in English or German, which is expected if they are backgrounded constituents (cf. also Beller (2012) on this point).

Although Leffel’s account might be correct when nonrestrictivity is conceptual in Fabricius-Hansen’s terms, it cannot be generalized to all attributive/non appositive nonrestrictive readings. Firstly, it cannot always be extended to adverbials in preverbal position. For instance, *J’ai rapidement mangé un sandwich* ‘I quickly ate a sandwich’ does not presuppose that eating-a-sandwich-events are generally quick. Secondly, in indefinites, prenominal adjectives (always nonrestrictive in French) do not systematically have the kind-related rea-

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8. ‘The adjective is before the noun when the property denoted is taken for granted’ (Roubaud (1785), my translation) ; ‘[with a prenominal adjective] we say what is known’ (Lafaye (1841), my translation). Some authors assume that prenominal adjectives are always part of an anaphoric NP (see Waugh (1977) and Nolke (1996)). But as we will see later, this is not correct since they can be used in NPs referring to newly introduced referents.

9. Umbach claims that in definite NPs, nonrestrictive modifiers can either be kind-related (e.g. *der kleine Pekinese* ‘the small Pekinese’ can entail that Pekinese dogs are generally small’) or referent-related (e.g. *der kleine Pekinese* can entail that the dog referred to is small (p. 154).

ding. For instance, *un stupido empleado de la biblioteca* ‘a stupid worker of the library’ can either entail that workers of the library are generally stupid (kind-related reading) or that the individual in question is stupid (referent-related reading). When the context makes clear that conceptual nonrestrictivity is ruled out, the referent reading is even the only reading available. For instance, *de magníficos apartamentos* ‘magnificent apartments’ certainly does not trigger the inference that apartments are generally magnificent. To be sure, there is a clear sense in which the adjectival description is presented as ‘presupposed’ by *de magníficos apartamentos* and not by *des apartamentos magníficos*. But this presupposition cannot amount to the generic inference found when nonrestrictivity is conceptual in Fabricius-Hansen’s terms.

The idea that attributive nonrestrictive adjectives are presupposition triggers has also been popular in the Spanish tradition, but the presupposition involved is of a very different nature. The claim is that prenominal adjectives — which are systematically nonrestrictive in Spanish too — force the specific reading of indefinites, cf. e.g. Bosque (1993), Picallo (1994), Bosque (1996), Demonte (1999) and Bosque (2001). If specific indefinites are analysed as referential expressions (as Bosque does after Fodor and Sag (1982)), this amounts to assuming that prenominal adjectives force the indefinite to trigger a presupposition of existence. Note that this of course doesn’t imply that the description provided by the adjective is presupposed too – in fact, specific indefinites arguably introduce a new description of the referent.

In favour of the idea that indefinites with a prenominal adjective are specific, it has been argued (among other arguments) that prenominal adjectives cannot be used in imperatives<sup>10</sup>, cf. (18), or certain modal constructions, cf. (19).

(18) a. *Escribe una novela interesante/ \*una interesante novela. Te harás famoso.*  
(Bosque (2001))

‘Write an interesting novel. You will be famous.’

b. *? ?Envia una valiente carta.*(Bosque (1996))

‘Send a brave letter.’

(19) *? ?Un complicado artículo te suela llevar horas de lectura.* (Bosque (1996))

‘A difficult paper normally takes you several hours of reading.’

These data are interesting but the generalization that they are supposed to illustrate has later been claimed not to hold. Firstly, Demonte (2008) :88 and Jacob (2005) provide examples where the prenominal adjective can modify an indefinite with a non-specific interpretation in intensional contexts, cf. (20) and (21). Secondly, it is not clear that specific indefinites are not possible in imperatives, cf. e.g. Kaufmann (2012) : 127 for German. Spanish prenominal adjectives in indefinites are anyway not systematically out in imperatives, at least when the noun is not in the final position and the implication conveyed by the adjective possibly not at-issue, cf. (22). Thirdly, prenominal adjectives can appear with the free choice determiner *cualquier*, which is unexpected if the specific reading is compulsory, cf. (23). Finally, examples like (19) seems to get better when the prenominal modifier is in the scope of *incluso* ‘even’, cf. (24).

(20) *Pienso regalarle un enorme ramo de flores.*

10. On the idea that specific indefinites cannot enter imperatives, cf. e.g. Portner (2004).

- 'I think I'll offer her a huge bunch of flowers.'
- (21) Preferiría dormir en una cómoda cama en vez de morirme de frío en esta colchoneta.  
'I would prefer sleeping in a comfortable bed rather than freezing to death on this mat.'
- (22) Regale un enorme ramo de flores !  
'Offer her a huge bunch of flowers !'
- (23) [...] en vez de ser un n° más como puede pasar en cualquier estupendo hotel de 5 estrellas, aquí además de tener unas instalaciones [...] (Internet)  
'instead of being another additional one like it can happen in any wonderful 5 stars hotel, here you not only have some equipments...'
- (24) Incluso un sencillo artículo de semántica formal te suele llevar horas de lecturas.  
'Even a simple paper of formal semantics normally takes you several hours of reading.'

We therefore conclude with Leonetti (1999) and Jacob (2005) that the prenominal position does not directly trigger specificity, but is rather indirectly related to factors (still to remain investigated) that tend to favour this reading.

Although nonrestrictive modifiers do not systematically trigger neither of the two presuppositions just discussed, there still remains the repeatedly reported intuition that non-restrictive attributive modification is presupposed in some way. As already mentioned above, prenominal adjectives often have been said to convey a description which is 'taken for granted', 'shared common knowledge' in the French tradition (Roubaud (1785), Lafaye (1841), Delente (2004), Berlan (1992)).<sup>11</sup> On this respect, prenominal modifiers are contrasted with postnominal ones, which are said, at least in indefinites, to convey a new description of the referent. For instance, Roubaud (1785) writes : 'Lorsque vous dites *un savant homme*, vous supposez que cet homme est savant ; et lorsque vous dites *un homme savant*, vous assurez qu'il l'est. Dans le premier cas, vous lui donnez la qualification par laquelle il est distingué ; dans le second, celle par laquelle vous voulez le faire distinguer. Là, la science est hors de doute ; ici, vous voulez la faire connaître.' (p. 152-153).<sup>12</sup>

There are some parallels in the domain of the adverbials : manner adverbs in preverbal position have also been claimed to be backgrounded (Ernst (2002) :272), and postverbal ones focused (Bellert (1977), Ernst (2002), Abrusán (2012)).

There are several ways to interpret the hypothesis that the description conveyed by modifiers in leftwards position (henceforth  $D(x)$ ) is 'presupposed'. If this means that  $D(x)$  is entailed by the relevant context (cf. e.g. Stalnaker (1973)'s definition of presupposition), an obvious problem arises. Firstly, as already observed above, adverbials in preverbal position do not project their content. Secondly, prenominal adjectives do not either project

11. Note that this is expected when one deals with conceptual/ 'maximal' nonrestrictivity<sub>1</sub>. But this characterization is also taken to be available for nonconceptual/ 'contextual' nonrestrictivity<sub>1</sub>, cf. e.g. Roubaud's example cited below.

12. 'When you say *un savant homme*, you presuppose that this man is learned ; and when you say *un homme savant*, you claim that he is. In the first case, you give the property by which he is distinguished ; in the second, the one by which you want to distinguish him. In the former case, science is beyond any doubt ; in the second, you want it to be known.' (my translation)

systematically. They regularly do in definites, but then, they do not differ from postnominal adjectives. In indefinites, when the nonrestrictive adjective does not have Umbach's kind-related reading, the description  $D(x)$  it provides does not outscope sentential operators like negation, conditionals, modals, etc. This is very clear when the indefinite is nonspecific. For instance, (25) does not entail the existence of a catman such that Pierre met him, and *a fortiori* neither the description of this entity. The same way, under the nonspecific reading of the indefinite in (25b), the description of the painting provided by the prenominal modifier does not outscope the conditional. But even when the indefinite gets its specific reading, the description it provides is typically new too. This confirms that the 'presupposed' content of prenominal adjectives is not *projected*.

- (25) a. Peut-être que Pierre a rencontré sur son chemin un monstrueux chat-garou !  
 'Perhaps Pierre met on his way a monstrous catman !'  
 b. Si tu lui donne une superbe peinture à la gouache, elle sera contente.  
 'If you made her a superb watercolour painting, she will be happy.'

Note that under both readings of the indefinite, (25a) is perfectly acceptable in a context where no thoughts of any type had ever been considered about catmen by any of the conversation's participant (except the speaker). For instance, it can be said to a child in order to introduce her to the concept of catman. For a reason that will be explained later, it would be somewhat strange to utter this sentence in the same context if *monstrueux* were in postnominal position.

For the same range of reasons, the hypothesis that the description conveyed by modifiers in leftwards position is 'presupposed' cannot be saved either under the conception of presuppositions as a type of anaphors (van der Sandt (1992)).

According to a third understanding of presuppositions, these are propositions which are 'conveyed by a sentence but not part of the main point' (Horton and Hirst (2012) :255 via Simons et al. (2010)) ; 'what is asserted is what is presented as the main point of the utterance [...] Anything else will have to be expressed in another way, typically as being presupposed' (Abbott (2000) :143 via Simons et al. *ibid.*). Simons et al. redefine this notion of presuppositionality as 'non at-issueness' and fleshes it out in a focus-theoretic framework. In the next section, I claim that it is in this sense of presupposition as non at-issueness that the hypothesis that the description conveyed by attributive nonrestrictive modifiers is 'presupposed' should be understood.

### 2.3.3. (Non-) restrictivity and (non-) at-issueness

What I argue in this section (after e.g. Peterson, Goebbel and Morzycki) is that the correct generalization behind the intuition that nonrestrictive attributive modifiers are 'presuppositional' is that they convey *non at issue* implications. However, I will suggest that the 'non-at-issueness' of nonrestrictive attributive modifiers differs from the 'non-at-issueness' of appositives. Also, we saw in the previous section that the implication conveyed by nonrestrictive attributive modifiers *does not project* ; it only does when other factors than the syntactical position (like the presence of the definite determiner) forces it. This makes the non-at-issue implications conveyed by nonrestrictive attributive modifiers different from presuppositions and conventional implicatures. It also suggests that *not all non-at-issue implications of a sentence project*. In fact, there is nothing shocking about this : other cases

of non-projecting non-at-issue components have already been documented. For instance, it has been observed that a subkind of appositives, illustrated in (26), does not project either ((26) does not entail that the professor in question is famous), cf. Wang et al. (2005), Nouwen (2012) :

(26) If a professor, a famous one, publishes a book, he will make a lot of money.

In their study of projection behavior of some presuppositions, Smith and Hall (ta) also suggest that some not-at-issue meaning may not project.

What I do now is to establish empirically that the implication conveyed by nonrestrictive attributive modifiers is non-at-issue. Three tests allow to establish whether a certain component is at issue or not. The first one is what Koev (2012) calls the ‘answerability test’ : since not-at-issue content is supposed not to address the main point of the sentence, it is expected that one cannot use it felicitously to directly address a question. As (9) and (10) show, nonrestrictive attributive modifiers indeed cannot be used this way. The observation is not new ; Göbbel (2007) already provided examples for preverbal adverbials.

- (27) A. How did the accountant transfer the money to his own account ?  
 a. He transferred the money to his own account [SECRETLY]<sub>F</sub>.  
 b. # He [SECRETLY]<sub>F</sub> transferred the money to his own account.

The second test is what Koev calls the ‘direct reply test’. Given that non at issue content is not part of the main point of the sentence, it cannot be targeted directly by subsequent conversational moves like *yes*, *no*, *it’s not true*, etc. The following data show that prenominal attributive modifiers cannot be targeted that way, while postnominal ones can.<sup>13</sup>

- (28) a. Ils ont pu sauver tous les innocents passagers.  
 ‘They could save all innocent passengers.’  
 b. # C’est faux. Les passagers qu’ils ont sauvés n’étaient pas innocents.  
 ‘It is not true. The passengers that they saved were not innocent.’
- (29) a. Ils ont pu sauver tous les passagers innocents.  
 ‘They could save all innocent passengers.’  
 b. C’est faux. Les passagers qu’ils ont sauvés n’étaient pas innocents.  
 ‘It is not true. The passengers that they saved were not innocent.’
- (30) a. Pierre vient de casser un magnifique vase en cristal !  
 ‘Pierre just broke a wonderful cristal vase !’  
 b. # Quoi ? Ce n’est pas vrai ! Ce vase en cristal est franchement vilain. Bon débarras !  
 ‘What ? That’s not true ! This cristal glas frankly ugly. Good riddance !’
- (31) a. Pierre vient de casser un vase en cristal magnifique !  
 ‘Pierre just broke a wonderful cristal vase !’  
 b. Quoi ? Ce n’est pas vrai ! Ce vase en cristal est franchement vilain. Bon débarras.  
 ‘What ? That’s not true ! This cristal glas frankly ugly. Good riddance !’

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13. Data seem however to vary with the syntactical position of the NP and the determiner used. I leave these details aside here, since the two other tests give rather robust results.

Thirdly, at-issueness can also be tested through the Ducrot (1972)'s *loi d'enchaînement* (translated as 'linking law' by Jayez (2010)). In two words, the linking law forbids any attachment to a presupposition by the way of a conjunction or a subordination, except for *et* 'et' and *si* 'if'. Jayez and Tovenà (2008) and Jayez (2010) show that attachments are forbidden with another type of non at issue component, namely the content conveyed by conventional implicatures, too. The following data suggest that attachment is also difficult with prenominal modifiers.

- (32) a. J'ai privilégié un candidat japonais sympathique, car le côté personnel est vraiment important dans la collaboration.  
 'I gave priority to a nice japanese applicant, because the personal side is really important in the collaboration.'
- b. J'ai privilégié un sympathique candidat japonais, # car le côté personnel est vraiment important dans la collaboration.  
 'I gave priority to a nice japanese applicant, because the personal side is really important in the collaboration.'

The informants who judge (32b) to be acceptable interpret it as suggesting that the hiring person finds it easier to work with Japanese. This confirms the idea that one disprefers the attachment with the content conveyed by the prenominal modifier.

On the other hand, the same test suggests that attachment is *forced* with the post-nominal modifier, corroborating the idea that restrictive modifiers are understood as addressing the main point of the sentence :

- (33) a. Il a engagé une délicieuse femme allemande, car on a besoin de temps en temps de traduction français-allemand.  
 'He hired a delicious German woman, because we sometimes need French-German translations.'
- b. # Il a engagé une femme allemande délicieuse, car on a besoin de temps en temps de traduction français-allemand.  
 'He hired a delicious German woman, because we sometimes need French-German translations.'

In conclusion, the three tests just presented point to the conclusion that the implication conveyed by nonrestrictive modifiers is not at issue, while the one conveyed by restrictive modifiers is, or even has to be. What we do next is to define better what it means for a modifier to be (non-)at issue, and distinguish between two ways of being non-at-issue.

**(Non)at-issueness as relevance to the QUD.** Under Roberts (1996)'s definition, the QUD is the question that determines the discourse topic. Simons et al. (2010)'s definition of at-issueness is built on the notion of relevance of QUD. Their idea is that a proposition *p* is at issue relative to a QUD if the question whether *p* (or ?*p*) is relevant to Q, that is if it contextually entails an answer to Q.

Focus indicates what is the QUD : it determines which part of the sentence corresponds to what is the information asked for by the question (Roberts (1996)). If the implication *p* conveyed by restrictive modifiers is by definition at issue wrt to QUD, the question ?*p* should be relevant to QUD, i.e. should answer it. This is what happens when the restrictive modifier is narrow focused, as under Peterson/Göbbel's view of restrictive modification.

If the implication  $p$  conveyed by nonrestrictive modifiers is non at-issue, the question  $?p$  should this time *not* be usable to answer the QUD. That is, nonrestrictive modifiers should be part of a broader focus. The proposed generalization from Göbbel (2007) is schematized in (34).

- (34) a. ... head [MOD]<sub>F</sub> (restrictive reading)  
 b. [... [mod HEAD]<sub>F</sub>]<sub>F</sub> (nonrestrictive reading)

Although correct, the structures proposed in (34) raise two minor problems.

Firstly, at first view, post-head (restrictive) adjectives and adverbials can be part of a broader focus, too. This is what is suggested by the data (35)-(36). In these examples, both answers B and B' are felicitous ways to address the QUD.

- (35) A. Qu'est-ce que tu as acheté ?  
 'What did you buy ?'  
 a. B. J'ai acheté [de magnifiques fleurs]<sub>F</sub>  
 b. B'. J'ai acheté [des fleurs magnifiques]<sub>F</sub>  
 'I bought wonderful flowers.'

- (36) Qu'est-ce que tu as fait ?  
 'What did you do ?'  
 a. B. J'ai lu [tranquillement mon roman]<sub>F</sub>  
 b. B'. J'ai [lu mon roman tranquillement ]<sub>F</sub>  
 'I (quietly) read my novel (quietly).'

It is not clear however that we really deal with the same focus in both cases, contrary to what these data suggest at first sight. An indication that the two answers B and B' probably differ in their information structure is that a contrastive adverbial like *cette fois-ci* 'this time' triggers a different interpretation with a pre- or a post-head modifier :

- (37) A. Qu'est-ce que tu as acheté ?  
 'What did you buy ?'  
 a. B. Cette fois-ci j'ai acheté de magnifiques fleurs.  
 b. B'. Cette fois-ci j'ai acheté des fleurs magnifiques.  
 'This time I bought wonderful flowers.'

Intuitively, the answer B' is interpreted as contrasting the reported event with events where non-wonderful flowers were bought. The alternatives we have in B, where something else than flowers is bought, seem somehow to be discarded. In other words, the alternative set triggered by Focus in B' is very similar to the one we obtain when the modifier is narrow focused. The same contrast obtains in the presence of *ne...que* 'only'.

If correct, the intuition can be captured as follows. Contrary to what first appearance suggests, the modifier is not part of a broader focus in the answers of B' (35b) and (36b). The answers of B and B' differ in that while B *directly* addresses the question, B' does it only indirectly. The person B' in fact answers a subquestion she anticipates and accommodates, e.g. *how are the flowers you bought?* or *how did you read your novel?* Since the answers of B' do not directly answer A's question, their focused part is not determined by the A's question. On this account, Peterson/Göbbel's generalization according to which posthead modifiers are always narrow focused is not really endangered by the data (35b)-(36b).



The second problem raised by the structures (34) is a bit more tricky. In French, evaluative prenominal adjectives very often require prosodic prominence, independently of their syntactical position. This is especially true of elative adjectives like *magnifique* ‘magnificent’, *énorme* ‘enormous’, that we will consequently write in capitals from now on in our examples. This is in principle not incompatible with the idea that these adjectives are part of a larger focused constituent. But if prosodical prominence amounts to focus, we should explicitly mark the difference between the focus characterizing restrictive modifiers and the one that nonrestrictive modifiers can bear.

Following suggestions of Riester and Baumann (2013) (and authors cited therein, as Beaver and Velleman (2011)), I propose to distinguish the ‘standard’ focus marking the information asked for by the question under discussion QUD (marked here *F*-focus), from any other focus that *does not* fulfill this role, but mark e.g. new information not asked by the QUD or not directly addressing it, emphasis, etc (marked here *f*-focus). Restrictive modification is therefore always *F*-focused, while nonrestrictive modification is either backgrounded or *f*-focused, as schematized in (38).

- (38) a. ... head [MOD]<sub>F</sub> (restrictive reading)  
 b. [... [[mod]<sub>(f)</sub> HEAD]<sub>F</sub>] (nonrestrictive reading)

Coming back to our previous example, we’ll have e.g. the following structures :

- (39) a. Je vais lui acheter des fleurs [MAGNIFIQUES]<sub>F</sub>  
 ‘I’ll buy her magnificent flowers.’  
 b. Je vais lui acheter [de [MAGNIFIQUES]<sub>f</sub> fleurs]<sub>F</sub>

Importantly, it seems that the possibility for a nonrestrictive marker to be *f*-focused is not available in a language like German. It has been indeed observed by e.g. Umbach (2006) that ‘adjectives on a nonrestrictive interpretation resist focus’. What is then at the source of the difference between French and German here ?

We can account for this difference as follows. Syntax is in charge of disambiguating the adjective wrt restrictivity in French. Therefore, in French, Focus is in principle free of fulfilling other roles, like e.g. marking emphasis. On the other hand, in German, Focus is the main disambiguating marker wrt restrictivity, since syntax does not play any role on this respect. This is arguably why focus cannot be used for other purposes as freely as in French.

**Two kinds of non-at-issueness.** Observe that in stating that restrictive modification is *F*-focused, we capture the idea that it is central to the point made by the utterance, regardless of whether they provide a new or an old description of the referent. In encoding that non-restrictive pre-head modifiers cannot provide the information asked for by the QUD, we render the intuition that they are additional, unnecessary comments, and this even if they provide new information. On this point, pre-head modifiers resemble appositives. But these two kinds of ‘non at-issue’ modifiers nevertheless differ from each other in several respects.

Firstly, as already mentioned below, while appositives convey new information, nonrestrictive attributive modifiers can convey new or old information. Secondly, while pre-head nonrestrictive modifiers are systematically presented as conveying a non at issue content, the content expressed by appositives, although typically not-at-issue, *can* be at issue when they are *clause final*, as shown by Koev (2012) and Syrett et al. (t a); cf. also Schlen-

ker (2012) on French. Thirdly, while appositives are according to Potts (2005) speaker-oriented, pre-head modifiers have on the contrary been claimed in the French literature to reflect the community's view — the description they convey is said to be unquestionable, a reflection of the *doxa* or common taste on the matter. Fourthly, when the content of appositives is clearly non at-issue, it is not in the same way as with pre-head nonrestrictive modifiers. Let me illustrate the difference through the following examples :

(40) Qui est-ce qui t'a dit ça ?

'Who told you that ?'

a. Une MERVEILLEUSE jeune fille qui est passée ce matin.

'A WONDERFUL young woman who stepped by this morning.'

b. Une jeune fille qui est passé ce matin, par ailleurs MERVEILLEUSE.

'A young woman who stepped by this morning, by the way WONDERFUL.'

In both (40a) and (40b), the content conveyed by the adjective *merveilleux* is non relevant for the QUD. But in (40b), my feeling is that it is nevertheless presented as relevant for a side-question not under discussion. Therefore the impression that although non at-issue, *merveilleux* in (40b) is still put on 'a' (side) Table, although not the 'central' one. After all, parentheticals are often described as *secondary assertions*. As such, it is presented as debatable, although not in the current setting in the conversation where it is 'out of the point'. On the contrary, in (40a), the content of the prenominal adjective is simply presented as undisputable/unquestionable in any kind of settings. So while the implication conveyed by appositives is non at-issue essentially because the question they might address is not under discussion, the one conveyed by prenominal modifiers is not at-issue because it is presented as undisputable, unquestionable. Appositives, like parentheses, address *secondary* issues ; prenominal modifiers do not address any issue at all.

### 3. Linking the two definitions of restrictivity

As far as I know, no work tries to link the two notions of restrictivity discussed above. Intuitively, the two kinds of restrictive modifiers do the same kind of job though. In both cases, the restrictive modifier is contrastive and 'throws something away'. Restrictive<sub>1</sub> modifiers are contrastive in that they presuppose the existence of at least one entity satisfying the description provided by the head, but not the one provided by the modifier, and they 'eliminate' it from the denotation. Restrictive<sub>2</sub> modifiers do not eliminate something from a set of entities, but from a set of propositions. I propose that restrictive<sub>2</sub> modifiers act on the *context set C*, namely the initial set of possibilities taken to be accessible in the context (von Stechow (1998)). They are contrastive in that they presuppose that at least one alternative in the focus value, namely the contradictory proposition to their implication  $D(x)$ , is in  $C$  (is taken to be possible at the time of the assertion). When the contradictory proposition to the implication  $D(x)$  is in  $C$ , I will say that  $\neg D(x)$  is a *viable* alternative to  $D(x)$ . I propose that restrictive<sub>2</sub> modifiers are also 'throwing something away' in that they eliminate their viable alternative  $\neg D(x)$  from  $C$ .<sup>14</sup>

14. The term of *viable alternative* is proposed by Alonso-Ovalle and Menendez-Benito (2012), which deal with the distributional differences between *unos* and *algunos* in Spanish. Their claim is that scalar terms must

So more concretely, the same way the restrictive<sub>1</sub> *nice* modifier in (41a) (i) contrasts the girl in question  $x$  with at least another girl  $y$  and (ii) eliminate  $y$  from the denotation, the restrictive<sub>2</sub> modifier in (41b) contrasts the proposition  $D(x)$  that the girl in question  $x$  is nice with the proposition  $\neg D(x)$  that  $x$  is not nice in  $C$ , and (ii) eliminates  $\neg D(x)$  from  $C$ . In both cases, the restrictive modifier discards something from a contextual set.

- (41) a. The NICE girl came. (restrictive<sub>1</sub>)  
 b. A NICE girl came. (restrictive<sub>2</sub>)
- (42) [A nice GIRL]<sub>F</sub> came (nonrestrictive<sub>2</sub>)

Let us observe that in claiming that the contradictory proposition  $\neg D(x)$  to the implication  $D(x)$  conveyed by restrictive<sub>2</sub> modifiers should be epistemically accessible in the current context  $C$ , we after all only reformulate the old idea that the content of restrictive<sub>2</sub> modifiers is presented as under discussion.

By contrast, the same way nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub> modifiers do not eliminate any entity from the set denoted by the head, nonrestrictive<sub>2</sub> modifiers do not eliminate any proposition from  $C$ : the implication  $D(x)$  conveyed by nonrestrictive<sub>2</sub> modifiers is presented as settled. Note that this does not impede that alternatives to the nonrestrictive<sub>2</sub> modification are collected in the focus value of the focused phrase they are part of. For instance, the focus value of (42) contains an alternative like *An ugly girl came* etc. But this alternative is not eliminated from  $C$  through the use of the nonrestrictive<sub>2</sub> modifier.

A first evidence for the claim that restrictive<sub>2</sub> modifiers presuppose that the contradictory proposition  $\neg D(x)$  to their implication  $D(x)$  has to be a viable alternative in  $C$  is provided by a restriction on the use of postverbal adverbials (which can be restrictive in the second sense only). These are acceptable only if such a viable alternative is entailed by  $C$ . For instance, the example (43a) is weird because it forces us to assume that it is possible for a mother to kill her son with an axe in a non cruel way.<sup>15</sup>

- (43) a. # Cette femme a tué son fils avec une hache SAUVAGEMENT.  
 ‘This woman killed her son with an axe SAVAGEDLY.’  
 b. Cette femme a SAUVAGEMENT tué son fils avec une hache.  
 ‘This woman SAVAGEDLY killed her son with an axe savagedly.’

This hypothesis can also explain why, as I already claimed above, the example (44), which contains a restrictive<sub>2</sub> adjective (since it modifies an indefinite in a postnominal position), would be strange in a context where it is clear that the hearer (for instance a child) is not aware of the existence of catmen. We saw that the corresponding example with a nonrestrictive<sub>2</sub> (25a) could be used in this context.

- (44) Peut-être que Pierre a rencontré sur son chemin un chat-garou MONSTRUEUX!  
 ‘Perhaps Pierre met on his way a MONSTRUOUS catman!’

If the existence of catmen is not taken for granted in  $C$ , it *a fortiori* does not entail any proposition about the properties characterizing catmen. Therefore, the implication conveyed

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generate at least one *viable* alternative, that is an alternative that is compatible with common knowledge.

15. Observe that *sauvagement* can have the manner reading in (43b) too. The agent-oriented reading is here ignored, since pre- and post-head modifiers are here compared when they differ wrt to restrictivity only, that is when they keep the same reading in both positions.

by the adjective cannot possibly have a viable alternative in *C*.

## 4. Restrictivity<sub>2</sub> and causal relations

In the previous sections, we examined in which sense a modifier can be restrictive when (non)-restrictivity<sub>1</sub> cannot apply. The second definition of (non)- restrictivity in terms of information structure is the only one we can rely on for adverbials and for a subcase of indefinites. What I want to suggest now is that (non-)restrictivity<sub>2</sub> also allows to capture the difference between pre- and post-nominal adjectives *with definites*, in contexts where both pre- and post-nominal adjectives are nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub>. The following example illustrates the case.

- (45) a. A. Il est maintenant clair que tous les étudiants sont innocents dans cette affaire. Quels étudiants a choisi d'interroger la police ?  
'It is now clear that all students are innocents in this story. Which students the police choose to examine ?'  
b. B. La police a interrogé tous les étudiants [INNOCENTS<sub>F</sub>, et donc, en fait, tous les étudiants.  
'The police examined all INNOCENT students and therefore, in fact, all students.'

That (45b) is acceptable is *prima facie* problematic for the complementarity hypothesis, since the context makes clear that all members of the contextual set of students are also member of the set denoted by the adjective. However, if we admit that nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub> modifiers can nevertheless appear postnominally if they are restrictive<sub>2</sub>, we account for it : *innocent* conveys an implication which is at-issue, that is relevant for the QUD — it indicates what property is fulfilled by students examined by the police.

Interestingly, for a reason that will be explained at the end of this section, this use is possible only when the modifier provides the property that *explains* why the referent satisfies the property denoted by the rest of the sentence. When the fact that the referent satisfies the property described by the modifier explains that it satisfies the property denoted by the rest of the sentence, I will say that the modifier has an *explanatory function*. Crucially, this causal relation is part of the at-issue content of (45b). A clear indication of this is that this relation can be targeted in the subsequent discourse. For instance, a person *C* could react to *B*'s answer this way :

- (46) C. Ça n'est pas vrai ! Le fait que les étudiants soient innocents n'a rien à voir avec le fait qu'ils aient été interrogés !  
'That's not true ! The fact that the students are innocent has nothing to do with the fact that they have been examined !'

Such a causal relation can of course be interpreted in presence of a pre-nominal modifier, too. In fact, in the French tradition, nonrestrictive relative clauses were often called *relatives explicatives*, because they can be used to convey such an explanation. But importantly, a causal relation involving a prenominal modifier is *not* at-issue and therefore cannot be targeted in the subsequent discourse. For instance, (46) would not be a felicitous reaction to (47).

- (47) La police a choisi d'interroger [tous les INNOCENTS étudiants !]<sub>F</sub>  
'The police choose to examine all the innocent students.'

The fact that adjectives which are nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub> can nevertheless appear in post-nominal position if they have such an explanatory value has already been hinted at at several places. Berlan (1992) notes that redundant NPs like *hommes mortels* 'mortal human beings', although typically deviant pragmatically, become acceptable when the modifier is a 'pièce de raisonnement' ('piece of the reasoning') in the sentence, like e.g. in *la mort est redoutée des hommes mortels* 'Death is feared by mortal human beings'. Delente (2004) notes that when we deal with what Fabricius-Hansen (2009) calls conceptual nonrestrictivity<sub>1</sub>, the postnominal adjective is nevertheless acceptable when the adjective 'a une valeur explicative' ('has an explanatory value'). For instance, she suggests that (48a) is understood as (48b) :

- (48) a. Le soleil et la neige blanche nous aveuglaient.  
'The sun and the white snow were blinding us.'  
b. Le soleil et la neige, parce que blanche, nous aveuglaient.  
'The sun and the snow, because it was white, were blinding us.'

Katz (2008) :20-21 makes related observations about Demonte (2005)'s example (49a), that he contrasts with (49b) :

- (49) a. Los amigos pretenciosos de Laura llegaron tarde.  
'The pretentious friends of Laura arrived late'  
b. Los amigos pretenciosos de Laura me molestan.  
'The pretentious friends of Laura bother me'

Katz reports that his informants find it easier to admit that all friends of Laura are pretentious (nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub>) in a context where pretentiousness somehow explains why Laura's friends satisfy the property denoted by the VP. This is why, he suggests, (49) is judged better than (49a) : ' [In (49a),] the relevance of pretentiousness to arriving late is not entirely obvious, [while] in [49b)], the information supplied by *pretentious* is clearly part of the reasoning behind the speaker's attitude' (Katz (2008) :21). He further observes that the less relevant pretentiousness is to the property denoted by the VP, the less acceptable is the evaluative adjective in post-nominal position (examples provided are borrowed from Italian) :

- (50) a. Odio gli amici pretenziosi di Laura.  
'I hate Laura's pretentious friends'  
b. ??Ho conosciuto gli amici pretenziosi de Laura.  
'I met Laura's pretentious friends'

An additional example of this contrast in Spanish is given in (51a) and (51b), that I built from an example provided by Demonte (2008) :

- (51) a. Me gustaban los sabores acidos de las primeras fresas de junio.  
'I loved the acid flavours of the first strawberries in June'  
b. Me gustaban los acidos sabores de las primeras fresas de junio.  
'I loved the acid flavours of the first strawberries in June'

Both sentences are acceptable in a context where all savours are acid. But even in this context, (51a) is according to my informants better than (51b) to convey the idea that I liked the savours of the first strawberries in June *because* they are acid. So again, the post-nominal modifier, although nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub>, seems to answer an implicit accommodated question, and is therefore restrictive<sub>2</sub>. Besides, it has what we called an explanatory function.

So in summary, in definites, nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub> modifiers can appear in postnominal position if they are restrictive<sub>2</sub> *and* have an explanatory function. Why this additional requirement?

I would explain it as follows. As a restrictive<sub>2</sub> modifier, the adjective conveys an implication which addresses a QUD, typically a *which* or *how* question. Such a question can be asked for different reasons. Since in our examples, the modifier is nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub>, the intention behind the question cannot be to *identify* a subset of entities in H. Besides, since the modifier applies to a definite, the description it conveys is presented as already known. The point of the question therefore cannot be to ask for a new property. But if the modifier has an explanatory function, the implication it conveys can felicitously address the *which/how* QUD even if it is already taken for granted and does not help to identify the referent.

In indefinites, restrictive<sub>2</sub> modifiers never *have to* have an explanatory function because they convey a new description of the referent. They can therefore always successfully answer a *which/how* question in providing such a new description. What is interesting to note however is that if the *context* forces the modifier in an indefinite to have an explanatory function, the adjective is forced to appear in postnominal position. This explains the contrast in (52) from Demonte (1999) :193 and the corresponding contrast in French (53) :

- (52) a. # Una inteligente mujer es vanitosa.  
           ‘An intelligent woman is vain.’  
       b. Una mujer inteligente es vanitosa.  
           ‘An intelligent woman is vain.’
- (53) a. # Une magnifique femme est vaniteuse.  
           ‘A superb woman is vain.’  
       b. Une femme magnifique est vaniteuse.  
           ‘A superb woman is vain.’

The point of the saying is to convey the causal relation between the property of being an intelligent woman and the property of being vain.<sup>16</sup>

## 5. The nonrestrictive bias of *wonderful* predicates

### 5.1. Previous accounts

Now that the concept of restrictivity has been clarified, I come back to what I called the hypothesis of the ‘nonrestrictive bias’ of evaluative predicates, that is the idea that evaluative predicates typically cannot be used restrictively. Recall that a standard observation

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16. According to Demonte, the problem of (52) is due to the fact that prenominal modifiers force the indefinite to be specific; but as we saw earlier, this seems to be a tendency rather than a rule.

supporting this claim is that in Romance languages, evaluative adjectives are often odd in postnominal position.

To my knowledge, two accounts of this property have been proposed. The first is the one of Milner (1978), who already observes that the ‘nonrestrictive bias’ appears with a subset of evaluative predicates only, e.g. *abominable* ‘horrible’, *horrible*, *affreux* ‘dreadful’, *divin* ‘divine’, *extraordinaire* ‘extraordinary’ (his ‘adjectifs affectifs’, henceforth *wonderful* predicates). He distinguishes them from what he calls ‘mixed’ evaluative predicates, e.g. *beau*, *inopportun*, *fort* (henceforth *beautiful* predicates).

Milner claims that the nonrestrictive bias is due to the fact that *wonderful* adjectives are pseudo-predicates. In line with the emotivist and expressivist tradition in moral philosophy, he assumes that they are devoided from any true semantic content and that copulative sentences that have a *wonderful* adjective as matrix predicate are neither true nor false but only ‘express’ the speaker’s attitude.<sup>17</sup> Since *wonderful* adjectives do not denote sets, they cannot be used restrictively. This purely expressive character is supposed to independently show up through other properties Milner attributes to *wonderful* predicates. A first property is that they cannot appear in true (non rhetorical) questions, cf. (54a), for Milner a direct consequence of the fact that words devoided of any true semantic content cannot be questioned. This should also explain why a *wonderful* predicate appearing in a *which*-phrase is interpreted outside it. For instance, Milner assumes that in (54b)-(54c), the adjective is interpreted as a comment of the speaker outscoping the question (*which houses did they build? Whatever they are, they must be fastuous; which novels did you write? I know by advance that they are passionating*). Thirdly, Milner claims that *wonderful* predicates are always speaker-oriented, as the contradiction of (54d) is supposed to show.

- (54) a. # Habite-t-il une maison fastueuse ? (Milner (1978) :289)  
‘Does he live in a sumptuous house?’  
b. Quelles maisons fastueuses ont-ils construites ? (*id.* :290)  
‘Which sumptuous houses did they build?’  
c. Quels romans passionnants avez-vous écrits ? (*ibid.*)  
‘Which fascinating novels did you write?’  
d. # Bien que ce film superbe passe depuis longtemps, Jean m’a dit qu’il n’avait pas vu l’abominable Amarcord. (*id.* :300)  
‘Although this superb film is onscreen for a long time, Jean told me that he didn’t watch the horrible Amarcord.’

I do not agree with Milner’s description of facts. Firstly, even if the adjective’s content in (54b) and (54c) can be attributed to the speaker, it does not have to. For instance, it is attributed to the hearer under the most accessible interpretation of (56a). Secondly, *wonderful* predicates do not necessarily outscope *verba dicendi*. The contradiction of (54d) is due to the fact that *abominable* appears in a definite DP and would also arise if the evaluative predicate were replaced with a factual one.<sup>18</sup> If the *wonderful* predicate appears in an

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17. ‘Il n’y a pas de classes bien définie dont les membres auraient la propriété d’être "époustouflants", "divins", etc. [...] la seule propriété commune qu’on puisse leur reconnaître, c’est qu’on *dise* à leur égard "c’est époustouflant", "c’est divin", etc.’ (p. 299)

18. Milner claims the contrary, but I am not convinced by his data since they are not built with a definite. For instance, the following example (built with a factual predicate) is indeed not contradictory but contains

indefinite, the contradiction vanishes, and this independently of the syntactical position of the adjective, cf. (56b).

- (56) a. Quels romans PASSIONNANTS as-tu eu l'occasion de lire ces derniers mois ?  
'Which FASCINATING novels did you have the opportunity to read these last months ?'  
b. Pierre m'a dit qu'il avait lu un roman EPOUVANTABLE/ un EPOUVANTABLE roman de Thomas Bernhard. Moi je les trouve tous excellents.  
'Pierre told me that he read a HORRIBLE novel from Thomas Bernhard. I found them all excellent.'

Thirdly, even if I agree with Milner's observation that *wonderful* predicates are often strange in true questions, I do not think that this is due to the fact that their content being expressive, it has to outscope the illocutory operator. In the spirit of the account proposed in Martin (2006), I would claim that the problem is due to the *mirative* flavour of *wonderful* predicates. Mirative constructions express an emotion of the speaker caused by the fact that her expectations are exceeded in front of an unanticipated/novel information (see Rett (2012) for a review of miratives across constructions and languages). Exclamatives are typical mirative constructions (see e.g. Castroviejo-Miró (2006), Merin and Nikolaeva (2008)). The claim that *wonderful* adjectives are mirative-like is supported by the fact that they require an exclamative prosody and they all indicate that an extreme or at least unexpectedly high degree is achieved. I would explain the problem caused by *wonderful* predicates in true questions as follows : it is pragmatically odd to ask whether an extreme degree is obtained and expectations consequently exceeded in a context where it is not even assumed that a high or very high degree is obtained. An evidence for this is that the problem vanishes in a context where the obtention of a very high degree is taken for granted, cf. (58).<sup>19</sup>

- (58) a. On est bien d'accord que sa maison est très belle. Mais est-ce qu'elle est FASTUEUSE ?  
'We agree that his house is very beautiful. But is it SUMPTUOUS ?'  
b. On est bien d'accord que son discours était très mauvais. Mais est-ce qu'il était ABOMINABLE ?  
'We agree that his speech was very bad. But was it HORRIBLE ?'

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an indefinite in its first part :

- (55) Jean m'a dit qu'un roman inachevé d'Hervé Bazin *Vipère au poing* lui avait beaucoup plu ; pourtant ce roman est généralement considéré comme terminé. (p. 301)  
Jean told me that an unfinished novel from Hervé Bazin *Vipère au poing* pleased him a lot ; however, this novel is generally considered as finished.'

19. That *wonderful* predicates are also odd under negation (as noted by Milner too) can be accounted for the same way :

- (57) a. # Je n'ai pas acheté une MAGNIFIQUE voiture.  
'I didn't buy a WONDERFUL car.'  
b. J'ai acheté une belle voiture, on est bien d'accord. Mais je n'ai pas acheté une MAGNIFIQUE voiture.  
'I bought a nice car, we agree on that matter. But I didn't buy a WONDERFUL car.'



The second account of the nonrestrictive bias of evaluative predicates I am aware of is the one of Umbach (2006, 2012a,b) for German. Interestingly, Umbach also distinguishes between the same two classes of evaluative predicates as Milner, the *schön* predicates and the *wunderbar* ones. She makes a similar observation for German as Milner for French, namely that the former get the restrictive reading much more easily.

Umbach distinguishes evaluative predicates from factual ones by the type of propositions they denote : the former convey *subjective propositions*, that is propositions that are not empirically testable and ascribed by the speaker. But she differentiates *wonderful* from *beautiful* predicates by the type of esthetical/ethical judgments they convey. Building on the Kantian distinction between *universal* and *subjective* esthetical/ethical judgements, Umbach proposes that while *beautiful* predicates may be used to convey *universal* judgements, *wonderful* ones can only convey *subjective* ones. When used to convey a universal judgment, *beautiful* predicates do not project an experiencer argument, while *wonderful* ones always do. Universal evaluative judgments partly ‘mimick’ empirical judgments in that they are *normative* : they rely on shared norms providing a standard that allow to define ‘objectively’ what counts as beautiful.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, universal evaluative judgments are truly ‘debatable’ (that is, the question whether *x* is beautiful can give rise to a ‘genuine’, ‘non faultless’ disagreement) and are intended to enter the common ground. On the other hand, subjective evaluative judgments are purely private : they are only intended to reflect the subject’s attitude, and therefore do not target the common ground. Rather, they are stored in what Farkas and Bruce (2010) call individual discourse commitments (sets of propositions to which a participant publicly commits, but which are not in the common ground). Judgments of this type give rise to ‘faultless disagreement’.

Umbach further assumes that in order to be restrictive, a modifier should trigger alternatives and define a ‘commonly accepted cut-off point’ : the denotation of a restrictive modifier and of its complement has to be commonly agreed upon so that it can be used to narrow down the denotation/reference of the modified noun phrase. The idea, then, is that since *wonderful* predicates systematically convey subjective judgments, they cannot be used this way because they are by definition used to denote ‘privately defined sets’. The participants are not supposed to know how the speaker defines the set of wonderful things. Therefore, using *wonderful* predicates restrictively is odd because uncooperative.

## 5.2. Problems

We agree with Umbach’s characterization of the two classes of evaluative adjectives. But a general problem raised by the two accounts just presented is that the nonrestrictive bias is not *always* at play. In *some* contexts indeed, *wonderful* adjectives *can* have a restrictive reading. This explains why they so often appear in post-head position in languages like French.

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20. Note that under Umbach’s account, universal evaluative judgments, although ‘objectivable’ through the set of norms they rely on, still remain subjective in that the norms are not *presupposed* in the context but *proposed* by the speaker. This is how I understand Umbach’s proposal that subjective propositions conveyed by evaluative predicates are always interpreted metalinguistically, in the sense of Barker (2002) : the speaker who asserts the universal judgment *The flowers are beautiful* is also *making a proposal* about the standard of beauty in the context.

Firstly, *wonderful* predicates can be restrictive<sub>1</sub> when they are restrictive<sub>2</sub>, that is convey an at-issue content directly addressing a QUD. For instance, in (59)-(61), the implication conveyed by the adjective under narrow focus answers an (explicit or implicit) *which*-question, and is thus restrictive<sub>2</sub>.

- (59) a. Quels vêtements dois-je jeter ?  
 ‘Which clothes should I get rid of?’  
 b. Jette les vêtements HORRIBLES, et garde tous les autres.  
 ‘Get rid of the HORRIBLE clothes, and keep all the others.’
- (60) a. Quel genre de femmes tu aimes ?  
 ‘Which kind of women do you like?’  
 b. Ah, moi, je n’aime que les femmes MAGNIFIQUES !  
 ‘Oh, me, I only like WONDERFUL women !’
- (61) D’habitude, quand je commence à lire un roman intéress[a]nt, je ne lui consacre que les moments DELICIEUX de la vie (Internet)  
 ‘Usually, when I begin to read an interesting novel, I only devote the DELICIOUS moments of life to it.’

In these examples, *wonderful* adjectives also clearly contrast a set of entities out of a larger set, which can be contextual (cf. (59)) or maximal (cf. (60) and (61)). There are therefore also restrictive<sub>1</sub>. Note that in (60)-(61), the *wonderful* predicates are in the focus of *que* ‘only’, which confirms that they can induce alternatives.

There is a restriction on this use though. Indeed, *wonderful* predicates can be used under narrow focus to address such a *how* or *which* question only if they have what we call in Section 2.3.3 an *explanatory function*. This is the case in (59)-(61) : (59b) suggests that I got rid of these clothes *because* they were horrible, etc. If the context makes the causal relation/explanatory function unlikely, *wonderful* predicates are again deviant in post-nominal position. For instance, the following examples (62) are strange, unless it is understood that there is a causal link between the fact that *x* is a wonderful vase and *x* should be put on the buffet :

- (62) a. A. Quels vases tu m’as dit de déposer sur le buffet ?  
 ‘Which vases did you tell me I should put on the buffet ?’  
 B. # Dépose sur le buffet les vases MAGNIFIQUES !  
 ‘Put on the buffet the WONDERFUL vases !’  
 b. A. Quels livres tu m’as dit que je devais te passer ?  
 ‘Which vases did you tell me I should give you ?’  
 B. # Passe-moi les livres HORRIBLES !  
 ‘Give me the HORRIBLE books !’

Interestingly, under the causal interpretation induced in (59)-(61), the Judge does not have to be the speaker, but can also be the hearer. For instance, B’s answer in (59b) is understood as ‘get rid of the clothes that are horrible *according to you*’. This makes Umbach’s account problematic, since it relies on the premise that *wonderful N* systematically defines the set of wonderful N *according to the speaker*.

A second point to note about the difficulty for *wonderful* predicates to get a restrictive reading is that it is restricted to restrictivity<sub>1</sub>. *Wonderful* predicates have no problem to get

the restrictive<sub>2</sub> reading. This explains why they have no difficulty to appear in post-head position although they are nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub>, as with indefinites (10a) and (35b), or with adverbials (see ex. below).

On this respect, it is also interesting to observe that in French, nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub> *wonderful* adjectives can appear in post-nominal position with *definites*. It typically happens in definites that introduce a set of MH without presupposing the existence of a superset of H. It is among others the case when definites are modified by what Hawkins (1978) an ‘establishing relative’. I give a relevant example in (63b). Note that (63b) is acceptable although the *wonderful* predicate does not have any explanatory function. This function is therefore required only if the *wonderful* adjective has the restrictive<sub>1</sub> reading as in (59)-(61), something that we should explain too.

- (63) a. # Regarde le vase MAGNIFIQUE !  
           ‘Look at the WONDERFUL vase !’  
       b. Regarde le vase MAGNIFIQUE que Chuck vient de m’offrir !  
           ‘Look at the WONDERFUL vase Chuck just gave me !’

Hawkins’ establishing relatives ‘establish a definite referent for the hearer without the need for previous mention’. The referent is then introduced ‘within the total definite NP, rather than prior to the definite NP’. That is, definites so modified do not presuppose a contextual set of H — rather, they introduce a set of HM, exactly like indefinites (except that they still presuppose the unicity of the referent). For instance, while in (64a) below, a contextual set of vases is presupposed and the adjective *bleu* restricts the reference to the unique blue one (at least when focused),<sup>21</sup> in (64b), the vase in question can very well be the only one in the context and its existence is *established* rather than presupposed by the definite (and this even if *bleu* receives prosodic prominence). Consequently, *bleu* is not used restrictively<sub>1</sub> anymore : it is not used to contrast a blue vase with other vases whose existence is presupposed in the context.

- (64) a. Regarde le vase BLEU.  
           ‘Look at the BLUE vase !’  
       b. Regarde le vase BLEU que Chuck vient de m’offrir !  
           ‘Look at the BLUE vase Chuck just gave me !’

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21. I cannot enter the details of the role of focus in the disambiguation of colour adjectives, which only appear in post-nominal position in French, except in very particular contexts. On the restrictive<sub>1</sub> vs nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub> reading of factual predicates like colour and scalar adjectives, the reader is referred to Sedivy et al. (1999) and Sedivy (2003). In these works, Sedivy and colleagues experimentally show that when hearers have to choose between restrictive<sub>1</sub> and nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub> uses of *scalar* adjectives like *tall*, they systematically prefer the restrictive<sub>1</sub> interpretation. However, additional experiments suggest that this ‘restrictive bias’ does not show up with *colour* adjectives. Sedivy suggests that this is due to the fact that colour adjectives are frequently used in descriptions of objects even if they are the only objects of their type in context. On the contrary, scalar adjectives would be much more systematically used in order to identify a *N* among other *Ns*. So her idea is that the closer the adjective gets to the by default description of an object, the less likely is the restrictive<sub>1</sub> interpretation. However, although colour adjectives are in this logic *prima facie* not biased towards restrictivity<sub>1</sub>, they certainly *are* under narrow focus. It has indeed been shown by Weber et al. (2004) for German that narrow prosodic focus enhances the preference for a contrastive (ie restrictive<sub>1</sub>) interpretation of modified nouns (although some results of Sedivy et al. (1999) suggest the contrary). I am not aware of studies on French on this respect, but intuitively, it seems that when the colour adjective is under narrow focus like in our example, it automatically gets its restrictive<sub>1</sub> interpretation.

So (63) shows that *wonderful* predicates can also appear in post-nominal position in definites as soon as these are modified by an establishing relative. Another relevant contrast, taken from Martin (2006), is given in (65) : the relative is establishing in (65a), but not in (65b).<sup>22</sup>

- (65) a. Pierre observait les clients du bar. La femme MAGNIFIQUE qui venait d'entrer commanda une bière.  
 'Pierre was observing the customers of the bar. The WONDERFUL woman who just entered ordered a beer.'
- b. Pierre observait les clients du bar. #La femme MAGNIFIQUE qui était blonde commanda une bière.  
 'Pierre was observing the customers of the bar. The WONDERFUL woman who was blond ordered a beer.'

Another desirable goal that is not reached by Milner's and Umbach's accounts is to provide a unified explanation for the difficulty of *wonderful* predicates to get a restrictive<sub>1</sub> reading (apart in the context mentioned above) and their difficulty to be used nonrestrictively in both senses of the term in anaphorical definite NPs, something that both Milner and Umbach observe independently. Umbach illustrates this through her example (66). In this example, the vase referred to is the only vase in the situation ; the modifier is consequently nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub>. It is also nonrestrictive<sub>2</sub> (its content is not at-issue and does not address a QUD) : in a context where A just asserted that the vase was wonderful, it would be indeed very implausible to assume that we accommodate an implicit question to A answered by *wonderful*.<sup>23</sup>

- (66) a. Sue : Guck mal, Chuck hat mir eine wunderbare Vase geschenkt.  
 'Look, Chuck gave me a wonderful vase.'
- b. # Bob : Ich helfe dir gleich. Stell die wunderbare Vase schon mal auf das Büffet.  
 'I'll help you in a minute. Put the wonderful vase on the sideboard.'

Umbach (2006) suggests that the oddity of (66b) is due to the fact that *wonderful* predicates are expressives, and as such, not only take widest scope but are also 'plugged by the turn they are used in', which would explain the fact that (66) seems like a ironic quote.

However, as we saw above, several facts suggest on the contrary that *wonderful* predicates differ from expressives à la Potts : they are not always speaker-oriented, do not systematically take widest scope, etc.

French translations of Umbach's examples show that in such an anaphorical NP, *wonderful* predicates are indeed odd, independently of their syntactical position, cf. (67b). Note that this is also true even if the adjective receives prosodic prominence, through e.g. what we called *f*-focus in the previous section.

- (67) a. Sue : Regarde un peu, Chuck m'a offert un vase MAGNIFIQUE !  
 'Look, Chuck gave me a wonderful vase !'

22. Martin (2006) makes use of the distinction introduced by Kleiber (1981) between the *relatives spécifiantes* and *non spécifiantes*, which is roughly similar to the one introduced by Hawkins (1978).

23. By contrast, in examples (63b) and (65a), it is plausible that the *wonderful* adjectives directly answer an implicit QUD, something like *how is the woman who entered the bar ? How is the vase you just received from Chuck ?*.

- b. Bob : # Waouw, super ! Je t'aide dans une minute. En attendant, installe le MAGNIFIQUE vase/le vase MAGNIFIQUE sur le buffet par exemple.  
'I'll help you in a minute. Put the WONDERFUL vase on the sideboard.'

In summary, an account of the use of *wonderful* predicates should answer the following questions :

- a. Why can *wonderful* adjectives be restrictive<sub>1</sub> iff they are restrictive<sub>2</sub> *and* have an explanatory use ? (ex. (59)-(61))
- b. Why can *wonderful* adjectives be restrictive<sub>2</sub> without being restrictive<sub>1</sub> *nor* having an explanatory use, as in indefinites and definites modified by establishing relatives ? (ex. (63b), (65))
- c. Why adverbials derived from these adjectives can always be used restrictively<sub>2</sub> ?
- d. Why *wonderful* adjectives cannot be used nonrestrictively<sub>1/2</sub> in anaphorical definites ? (ex. (67)-(66))

### 5.3. New proposal

I claim that the use of *wonderful* predicates is determined by the following rule :

- (68) *Wonderful* predicates cannot be used for a pure referential/denotational purpose *only*. Their descriptive content has to be relevant for the discourse.

The idea is that *wonderful* predicates cannot be used for the *single* purpose of picking up the right referent in a superset of H or of establishing an anaphorical link to a previous discourse referent. Their predicative content *must* matter : it cannot be used regardless of the description it provides. On this point, evaluative modifiers drastically differ from factual ones. It is indeed a trivial observation that a factual adjective like *blond* can be used regardless of its meaning, as a simple 'pointing stick', for the simple purpose of designating the single blond element of a contextual set or establishing an anaphorical link to a previous discourse referent ; the fact that *x* is blond can be totally irrelevant in the discourse. Since *beautiful* predicates behave like regular predicates when they express universal judgements (Umbach (2012a,b)), they can be used as factual adjectives, too.

I claim that it is the violation of the constraint (68) which is at the source of the nonrestrictive bias of *wonderful* predicates and their difficulty to appear in anaphorical definites. I further assume the following :

- (69) The descriptive content  $D(x)$  of a predicate is presented as relevant for the discourse when
- a.  $D(x)$  is a new description of the referent/denotation  $x$ , or
  - b.  $D(x)$  has an explanatory use.

Let us see how (68) and (69) together explain the data.

Firstly, it answers Question (a.) (Why can *wonderful* adjectives be restrictive<sub>1</sub> iff they are restrictive<sub>2</sub> and have an explanatory use ?). Indeed, as soon as the predicate is at issue *and* has an explanatory use, we are insured that its content 'matters'. The rule (68) is then not violated, since the adjective is not used for the single purpose of narrowing down the denotation out of a superset, regardless of the description it provides.

Questions (b.) and (c.) are answered too : in indefinites and in definites modified by an

establishing relative, *wonderful* predicates provide a *new* description of the referent/denotation in the content, since in both cases the referent is newly introduced. This description is therefore always potentially relevant for the discourse. Since the newness of the description suffices to make it relevant, the adjective does not have to get an explanatory use in these kinds of DPs. Besides, since *wonderfully* adverbials can in principle always provide a new description of the event when used restrictively<sub>2</sub> (there are no ‘definite VPs’), no problem arises either.

Another fact that we explain for free is that *wonderful* adjectives are always acceptable in demonstratives. Compare for instance (67b) with (70b), completely uncontroversial :

- (70) a. Sue : Regarde un peu, Chuck m’a offert un vase MAGNIFIQUE !  
 ‘Look, Chuck offered me a WONDERFUL vase !’  
 b. Bob : Waouw, super ! Je t’aide dans une minute. En attendant, installe ce MAGNIFIQUE vase/ce vase MAGNIFIQUE vase sur le buffet par exemple.  
 ‘Waouw, great ! I help you in a minute. In the meantime, put this WONDERFUL vase on the buffet for instance.’

It suffices to admit with Corblin (1987) that demonstratives systematically present the description they provide of the referent as *new*. Even in cases where  $D(x)$  is already assumed in the common ground, demonstratives *reintroduce* this description, as if it were new.

We can also answer Question (d.) (Why *wonderful* adjectives cannot be used nonrestrictively<sub>1/2</sub> in anaphorical definites ?) In the ‘vase’ Umbach’s example, the description provided by the predicate is presented as already given in the context. It has additionally no explanatory value. Therefore, the adjective is presented as a quote (in which case it might be acceptable), or as a simple ‘pointing stick’, independently of its meaning, directly violating (68). We predict however that in anaphorical definite DPs of this kind, *wonderful* predicates should be more at ease once (i) it is new (they do not make part of the previous mention that serves as an antecedent for the anaphorical definite) or (ii) it can fulfill the explanatory use. These two predictions are in fact correct. Firstly, (71) is acceptable :

- (71) a. Sue : Regarde un peu, Chuck m’a offert un vase et un tapis.  
 ‘Look, Chuck offered me a vase and a rug.’  
 b. Bob : Waouw, super ! Je t’aide dans une minute. En attendant, installe le MAGNIFIQUE vase sur le buffet par exemple.<sup>24</sup>  
 ‘Waouw, nice ! I’ll help you in a minute. In the meantime, put the WONDERFUL vase on the buffer for instance.’

(The example is slightly modified so that the definite wins in the competition with the demonstrative. This is obtained by contrasting the vase in the context with an object of another type. If the vase is the only contextual object, the demonstrative is much more natural, cf. Corblin (1987)).

Secondly, (72b) shows that *wonderful* predicates are acceptable in anaphorical definites even when already present in the description of the antecedent when an explanatory use is plausible. It is by contrast not plausible in (72a), therefore showing the same problem as Umbach’s example.

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24. Note that *magnifique* in post-nominal position would be odd here. This is due to the fact that it should then be restrictive<sub>1</sub>, which is only possible if they have an explanatory use (as in the (59)-(61) examples), or nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub> and restrictive<sub>2</sub> (which is possible only in presence of something like an establishing relative).

- (72) a. Regarde, pour Noël, j'ai reçu un vase horrible et un tapis tout aussi horrible. # Tu peux tenir l'HORRIBLE vase une seconde ?  
 'Look, for Christmas, I received a HORRIBLE vase and an equally HORRIBLE rug. Can you please take the HORRIBLE vase for one second ?'
- b. Pour Noël, j'ai reçu un vase horrible et un tapis tout aussi horrible. J'ai déjà mis l'HORRIBLE vase à vendre sur e-bay, mais je n'en espère pas grand-chose.  
 'For Christmas, I received a HORRIBLE vase and an equally HORRIBLE rug. I've already put the HORRIBLE vase on sale on E-bay, but I don't hope much out of it.'

Unsurprisingly, the same facts hold for *wonderfully* adverbials. If used purely anaphorically, independently of their description content, they are odd, as shown in (73a). However, if an explanatory use is possible, the problem vanishes, cf. (73b).

- (73) a. Il a exécuté cette sonate MERVEILLEUSEMENT. # Pendant qu'il a MERVEILLEUSEMENT joué, le téléphone a sonné et ça s'entend dans l'enregistrement.  
 'He played this sonate WONDERFULLY. While he had been WONDERFULLY playing, the telephone rang and one can hear it in the recording.'
- b. Il a exécuté cette sonate MERVEILLEUSEMENT. Comme il a MERVEILLEUSEMENT joué, le jury s'est extasié et il a reçu le premier prix.  
 'He played this sonate WONDERFULLY. Since he WONDERFULLY played, the committee was extactic and he received the first Prize.'

In fact, it seems that the relation at play between the *wonderful* description and the property denoted by the rest of the sentence does not always have to be an explanation. Other rhetorical relations like *Contrast* (as defined by Asher and Lascarides (2003)) seem to justify the anaphorical use of *wonderfully* adverbials too, as suggested by the acceptability of (74) :

- (74) Il a exécuté cette sonate MERVEILLEUSEMENT. Mais alors qu'il a MERVEILLEUSEMENT joué, son accompagnant a été vraiment horrible.  
 'He played this sonate WONDERFULLY. But while he WONDERFULLY played, his co-player really played in a horrible way.'

Further research is needed to establish which relation other than Explanation licences the restrictive/anaphorical uses of *wonderful(ly)* predicates, and (69) should be amended accordingly. What matters for our purposes is that these predicates are odd in absence of such a rhetorical relation when their description is already given in the context.

## 6. Conclusion and open issues

This paper shows that the complementarity hypothesis (pre-head modifiers receive a non-restrictive interpretation in Romance, while post-head modifiers receive a restrictive interpretation) can be saved once (non)restrictivity<sub>1</sub> defined in terms of a relation between sets is distinguished from (non)restrictivity<sub>2</sub> defined in terms of information structure, and how the two definitions relate to each other. Through our definition of (non)restrictivity<sub>2</sub>, we heavily made use of the distinction used e.g. by Vallduví and Engdahl (1996) between *given*

and *new* lexical material, which confirms its importance at the interface between lexical semantics, discourse and syntax. The discussion about the explanatory function of restrictive<sub>2</sub> modifiers confirms Shaer (2003)'s hypothesis that post-head modifiers more easily induce a causal interpretation than pre-head ones, and makes clear that rhetorical relations play a crucial role not only between sentences, but also in the intra-sentential domain. On the theoretical side, perhaps the most intriguing results of our inquiry is that it confirms that non at-issue content does not systematically project (as already suggested by Wang et al. (2005)), and goes against the claim that *wonderful* predicates are always speaker-oriented. What is also new is the idea that there are several ways for a constituent to convey a non at-issue content : I argued that while appositives convey a non-at issue content because the issue they might address is secondary, attributive nonrestrictive modifiers convey a non-at issue content because they do not address any issue at all.

This paper leaves many issues open. Firstly, there is something about English that we leave unexplained. Remember that in English, modifiers in pre-head position can be either restrictive or nonrestrictive (cf. Morzycki (2008) and Shaer (2003) about adverbials). However, we saw that preverbal adverbials cannot be used restrictively<sub>2</sub> (their content cannot be at-issue), but also that adverbials are always nonrestrictive<sub>1</sub>. So in which sense can pre-verbal adverbials be restrictive? The French picture is 'cleaner' on this respect, since pre-head modifiers cannot have the restrictive reading.

Another intriguing observation left unexplained is illustrated in (75). While (75a) is odd because *allemand* gets its restrictive<sub>1</sub> reading, it is not the case anymore in (75b).

- (75) a. # J'ai rencontré la femme allemande de Paul.  
           'I met Paul's German wife.'  
       b. J'ai rencontré la délicieuse femme allemande de Paul.  
           'I met Paul's delicious German wife.'  
       c. # J'ai rencontré la femme allemande délicieuse de Paul.  
           'I met Paul's delicious German wife.'

This paper focused on adjectives that can appear in pre- or postnominal position, and has little to say about those like *allemand* that can only appear in postnominal position (but see fn (21)). The problem of (75) suggests that for these adjectives too, the restrictive<sub>1</sub> reading is forced in the single position available. But (75b)-(75c) show that this constraint is cancelled in presence of an additional nonrestrictive modification, which has on this respect a role similar to Hawkins' establishing relatives. A similar observation for English was reported in Morzycki (2008), fn. 8, but is to my knowledge not explained.

They are also interesting differences between postnominal *wonderful* adjectives and the corresponding relatives in demonstratives and definites modified by an establishing relative. Take the following contrasts :

- (76) a. Regarde la femme (#qui est) magnifique qui vient d'entrer !  
           'Look at the woman (who is) superb who just entered !  
       b. Regarde cette femme (# qui est) magnifique !  
           'Look at this woman (who is) superb !

Note that the full relative would be acceptable if the *wonderful* predicate were replaced by a factual adjective. Intuitively, it seems that the problem raised by the relative is that it



presents the description as given ; therefore clashing with the demonstrative or the definite modified by an establishing relative, who indicate that the description is new. But the issue should be investigated into more details.

A last intriguing point concerns the inference that French grammarians frequently attribute to prenominal adjectives, according to which the implication they convey is presented as ‘notorious’, ‘shared common knowledge’, ‘mentions of the social discourse’, ‘unquestionable’, etc. What is interesting to observe is that in attitude reports, the identity of the agent according to which the implication conveyed is ‘unquestionable’, ‘notorious’, etc. varies with the determiner used. With a definite, unquestionability is attributed to the speaker, cf. (77b). But in an indefinite, it is by default understood as unquestionable *according to the matrix subject* (e.g. Marie in (77a)). If this observation is correct, it remains to be seen how the theory can account for it.

- (77) a. Marie pense qu’un horrible type va faire son apparition bientôt.  
‘Marie thinks that a horrible guy will appear soon.’  
→ *The guy is unquestionably horrible according to Marie*
- b. Marie pense que l’horrible type va faire son apparition bientôt.  
‘Marie thinks that a horrible guy will appear soon.’  
→ *The guy is unquestionably horrible according to the speaker*

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