The Syntax and Semantics of the Double-faced Prepositions *besides* and *beyond*

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Abstract
Over time, lexical items are recycled and take on different or additional meanings from the ones they originally had. Somewhat surprisingly, items may take on converse meanings. This is the case with the prepositions *besides* and *beyond*, which may signal either inclusion or exclusion, depending on the context. An etymological examination shows that over time, both words have undergone semantic extension from their original spatial meanings. Syntactically, the primary functions of the two are as prepositions and adverbs. Quantitative results show that while nowadays *beyond* functions primarily as a preposition, *besides* functions equally often as an adverb and a preposition. The converse meanings of *besides* and *beyond* are shown here to depend on whether the context is assertive or non-assertive. Both words form part of a large group of prepositions of inclusion and exclusion which share both semantic and syntactic features. Syntactically, what is remarkable about all of them is their ability to occur not only with nominal complements but also with *that*-clauses, bare infinitives, and adjective phrases. One of the issues discussed in this article is what is the best syntactic analysis of these structures.

Keywords: *besides*; *beyond*; semantic change; prepositions of inclusion and exclusion; categorisation

1. Introduction

A familiar linguistic process is that by which words take on additional senses and meanings in order to meet the ever-increasing communicative needs of language users. This 'recycling' normally results in an extension of meaning. Surprisingly, it may on occasion result in the same item taking on meanings that are each other's opposites. An often-cited example is *sanction*, which can mean both 'to allow, encourage' and 'to punish so as to deter'. The slang use of *bad* to mean 'very good, great' demonstrates the same type of extension of meaning. Both of these examples fall into the

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category of lexical words and are frequently cited in the literature; the fact that grammatical words can also take on converse meanings has, however, received less attention. In the present study I will focus on two function words which have acquired converse meanings, namely the prepositions *besides* and *beyond*.

The semantics of *besides* and *beyond* in Present-day English can at least partly be explained by their etymology, both of them having originated as spatial prepositions and only later having extended their meaning. Section 2 provides a survey of this. Both *besides* and *beyond* are interesting not only because of their semantics, but also because of the structural patterns in which they are used in English. In descriptive grammars, such as Quirk et al. (1985) and Carter and McCarthy (2006), as well as in dictionaries, these two items are as a rule classified as both adverbs and prepositions.[1] As such, they can occur either with a null complement, and are then categorized as adverbs, or they can occur with a nominal complement, in which case they are categorized as prepositions. In order to roughly establish their frequencies of occurrence as adverbs and prepositions in English today, the four standard million-word corpora of British and American English (LOB, FLOB, Brown, Frown) were consulted (see section 3). However, the story does not end there. In a study of prepositions and *that*-clauses in English (accounted for in Granath and Seppänen 2004), *besides* and *beyond* turned out to belong to a fairly large group of prepositions which share their meaning in that they signal inclusion and/or exclusion. These items are presented in section 4.1. What makes them particularly interesting is the fact that in addition to nominal complements, they can take *that*-clause complements—thus violating the 'rule' that prepositions cannot take *that*-clause complements in English (see, e.g., Quirk et al. 1985: 659). Section 4.2 is a survey of *besides* and *beyond* with *that*-clause complements, presenting authentic examples from Early Modern as well as Present-Day English which demonstrate that this structure is neither a modern invention, nor obsolete in English today. This section also discusses various options of how the structure can be analysed. Section 4.3 presents evidence that *besides* and *beyond* also take bare infinitive and AdjP complements, further proof of the versatility of these

[1] An exception is *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language* (Huddleston and Pullum 2002), which makes use of an extended category, 'prepositions', comprised of items traditionally classified as conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositions. This approach will be discussed in some detail in section 4.3.

two items. For the data in section 4, it has been necessary to make use of examples from dictionaries as well as from historical and large modern corpora, since the standard million-word corpora are too small to contain these less frequent structures. Ultimately, the aim of this study is to show that there is a need to revise the rule regarding what complements prepositions can take in English, using *besides* and *beyond* as examples.

2. The etymology of besides *and* beyond

Etymologically, *besides* and *beyond* have a similar origin, even though their development over the centuries differs somewhat. The information in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) reveals that both of them originated as compounds. *Beyond*, composed of *be-*, indicating position, and *geondan*, 'from the farther side', was recorded already in Old English. It is pointed out in the OED that *be* is the weak or unstressed form of the preposition and adverb *bí*, corresponding to ModE *by*. The first records of the word *beyond*—in the spatial sense—date from around the year 1000. The sense 'in addition to' is secondary and consequently developed later. The first record of it in the OED is from 1449.

Besides is a form of *beside*; both these words derive ultimately from the Old English phrase *be sídan*, 'by the side of'. This is also the sense given in the first citation of *besides*, from c. 1275. The metaphorical extension of this meaning to the more abstract 'in addition to' is similar to what took place with *beyond*, though it occurred a little later in time. According to the OED, this sense was first recorded in 1535.

Even earlier than *besides*, *beside* was used in the sense 'in addition, over and above' (first recorded in 1297, according to the OED). This sense is said to be 'usually expressed' by means of *besides* today, which is confirmed in the material used in the present study. A survey of the use of *beside* in the four million-word corpora used for the quantitative survey in section 3 shows that it appears exclusively as a preposition with NP complements. With the exception of the idiomatic *BE beside the point*, which occurs with very low frequency, *beside* is only used in a literal sense, meaning 'by the side of'. Since *beside* does not show the kind of 'double-faced' meaning that can be observed with *besides* and *beyond*, it will not be dealt with further in this article.

Hence, we see a parallel development in *besides* and *beyond*: both originate from an Old English prepositional phrase denoting location and through grammaticalization develop the more abstract meaning 'in

addition to' in Middle English. *Beyond* is still used in a locative sense today, both literally and metaphorically; *besides*, on the other hand, is no longer used to designate location. The last recorded example in the OED of this usage is from 1680. The fact that two words—*beside* and *besides*—did the same job, led to a split where *beside* kept the locative meaning and *besides* came to be used only in the abstract sense.

3. Besides *and* beyond*: Categorisation and use in Present-day English*

When it comes to the word class of *besides* and *beyond* in Modern English, dictionaries and grammars agree on the whole: they function as prepositions when a nominal complement follows, as in (1) a and b, and as an adverb with a null complement, as in (2) a and b.[2]

(1) a. **Besides** the editors there were many contributors in the United States and Great Britain to Volumes 1, and 2. (Brown J73 1520)

b. It had offended many people far **beyond** the ranks of Labour supporters. (LOB A01 172)

(2) a. Da-da-da-dum Music could not be Eugene's passion. **Besides**, the records were dusty. (Brown K13 0940)

b. The rank and file of the expedition were drawn from many parts of the Emperor's wide domains, and even from lands **beyond**. (LOB F25 11)

Since neither dictionaries nor grammars normally indicate frequencies, I consulted the four standard million-word corpora, the British LOB (1961) and FLOB (1991) and the American Brown (1961) and Frown (1992), in order to roughly establish the frequency of occurrence of these items as prepositions and adverbs in two major varieties of English across a span of 30 years. Tables 1 and 2 show the results of this part of the study. Since each corpus consists of around one million words, the numbers in the tables also more or less indicate frequency per million words in British and American English.

[2] Examples in this section are from the standard British and American million-word corpora.

Table 1. The function of *besides*, based on four million-word corpora

Corpus	**Preposition**		**Adverb**		**Total**
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	
LOB (BrE 1961)	22	52%	20	48%	42
Brown (AmE 1961)	38	58%	28	42%	66
FLOB (BrE 1991)	15	34%	29	66%	44
Frown (AmE 1992)	24	47%	27	53%	51

Table 2. The function of *beyond*, based on four million-word corpora

Corpus	**Preposition**		**Adverb**		**Other**		**Total**
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	
LOB (BrE 1961)	144	95%	6	4%	1	1%	151
Brown (AmE 1961)	163	92%	14	8%	0	-	177
FLOB (BrE 1991)	132	92%	11	8%	1	1%	144
Frown (AmE 1992)	148	91%	15	9%	0	-	163

First of all, it appears that overall, *beyond* is about three times as frequent as *besides*. The main reason for this may be that *beyond* is still used also in its original, spatial sense, whereas this is no longer the case for *besides* (see section 2). Second, *beyond* is used more than nine times out of ten as a preposition, whereas *besides* occurs about equally often as an adverb and as a preposition. The two occurrences listed as 'other' functions of *beyond* in Table 2 are represented by the kind of nominalization found in a phrase like *the back of beyond*. Whereas *beyond* is predominantly used as a preposition regardless of variety or time, *besides* is slightly more frequent as a preposition in the corpora from 1961, whereas its use as an adverb predominates in the 1990s, particularly in the British FLOB.

The adverbial uses of *besides* and *beyond* are on the whole uncontroversial: they occur with null complements, *beyond* to indicate remote place (*The food served in the more formal dining room* ***beyond*** *was home-style French*; Frown) or time (*through November and* ***beyond***; Frown) and *besides* in the sense 'in addition, additionally' (*But there is a great deal more* ***besides****, as we are beginning to discover*; FLOB) or as a linking device between sentences (*It would be difficult to track him down […].* ***Besides****, the idea of spying on her husband was repellent*; FLOB).

As prepositions, the two items occur predominantly with Noun Phrase (NP) complements in the four corpora examined in the present study, as shown in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3. Types of complement of the preposition *besides*, based on four million-word corpora

	NP		**V-*ing***		***Wh*-clause**		**Total**
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	
LOB (BrE)	15	68%	6	27%	1	5%	22
Brown (AmE)	31	82%	7	18%	0	-	38
FLOB (BrE)	13	87%	2	13%	0	-	15
Frown (AmE)	19	79%	5	21%	0	-	24

Table 4. Types of complement of the preposition *beyond*, based on four million-word corpora

	NP		**V-*ing***		***Wh*-clause**		**Total**
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	
LOB (BrE)	141	98%	1	1%	2	1%	144
Brown (AmE)	153	94%	7	4%	3	2%	163
FLOB (BrE)	129	98%	2	2%	1	1%	132
Frown (AmE)	141	95%	3	2%	4	3%	148

A comparison of the frequencies with which the two prepositions take different types of complement reveals certain differences. *Besides*, although most often found with NP complements, occurs 13–27% of the time with *-ing* participles, while *wh*-clause complements are rare. Whereas the ratios of *-ing* participle complements have remained fairly stable over time in the American corpora (18% and 21% for the years 1961 and 1992), there has been a change in the British data, where the ratio has decreased from 27% in 1961 to only 13% in 1991. *Beyond* occurs almost exclusively with NP complements; *-ing* participle complements and *wh*-clause complements are only found occasionally. Overall, however, these four million-word corpora are too small to demonstrate the whole range of complements that *besides* and *beyond* can take. Section 4 will widen the perspective to show how the two items are part of a larger group of prepositions that share both semantic and syntactic characteristics.

4. The semantic and syntactic versatility of besides *and* beyond

This section aims to demonstrate how *besides* and *beyond* belong semantically to a set of prepositions which can signal either inclusion or exclusion—or both—as well as how versatile these two prepositions are as to the complements they take. Examples of the various patterns have here been taken from corpora, dictionaries, and fiction, as the focus is not on frequency but rather on the syntax and semantics of the prepositions.

Hence, a corpus-based method is applied, i.e., corpora are used to test hypotheses, in this case in order to establish the semantics as well as the range of grammatical patterns of these two prepositions. Section 4.1 contains a survey of the group of prepositions which I have chosen to call 'prepositions of exclusion and inclusion'. Section 4.2 focuses on the semantics of *besides* and *beyond*, including what meanings they are said to have in dictionaries. The long section 4.3 goes into some detail as to how the structure preposition + *that*-clause is dealt with in grammars, and argues that *besides* and *beyond* should be categorized as prepositions when they occur with *that*-clauses as well as with other types of complement. Finally, section 4.4 presents examples of *besides* and *beyond* with bare infinitive and AdjP complements.

4. 1 Prepositions of exclusion and inclusion

Semantically, *besides* and *beyond* belong to a fairly large group of English prepositions used to signal either 'exclusion' or 'inclusion'—or both (based on Granath and Seppänen 2004). This originally rather small group of prepositions has been extended over time: whereas *beyond* was recorded already in Old English times, a number of others are of more recent date. Table 5 gives a survey of prepositions with the meanings 'exclusion' and 'inclusion', divided into groups according to type (verbal, complex, or originating from locative preposition). Etymologically, *but* is similar to *besides* and *beyond*. According to the OED, its origin goes back to the prepositional phrase *be utan*, 'on the outside', thus incorporating the same locative preposition as *besides* and *beyond*. Unlike the latter two prepositions, however, it can only be used to signal exclusion.

A cursory glance at Table 5 demonstrates that the number of prepositions used to signal exclusion outnumbers the ones that carry the sense of inclusion. Here, it needs to be stressed that in the largest group, prepositions ultimately of verbal origin, some were in all likelihood adopted as prepositions from Anglo-Norman or Old French in the Middle English period, and the grammaticalization process thus took place in that variety rather than in Old English, as convincingly argued by Rissanen (2002, 2007). Rissanen (2011) refers to these items as 'adverbial connectives', which is an indication that these words present problems of categorisation in English, something I will return to in section 4.3.

Table 5. Prepositions of exclusion and inclusion, subdivided according to type and meaning (based on Granath and Seppänen 2004)

Origin of preposition	**'Exclusion'**	**'Inclusion'**
Verbal	*bar* *barring* *except* *excepting* *excluding* *save* *saving*	*counting* *including*
Complex prepositions	*apart from* *aside from* *over and above*	*apart from* *aside from* *in addition to* *over and above*
From Old English phrases used to indicate location	*besides* *beyond* *but*	*besides* *beyond*

As Table 5 shows, some items are used exclusively in the sense 'with the exception of' (*bar*, *barring*, *except*, *excepting*, *excluding*, *save*, *saving*, *but*) or 'in addition to' (*counting*, *including*, *in addition to*). As many as five, however, I have listed as being used both in the exclusive and inclusive senses (*apart from*, *aside from*, *over and above*, *besides*, *beyond*): the term that I use to refer to them here is 'double-faced' prepositions. In the following section, I will provide corpus examples to demonstrate the converse meanings of *besides* and *beyond*.

4.2. The meaning and use of besides *and* beyond *as prepositions of inclusion and exclusion*

Consider the following examples:

(3) I wanted a partner who could bring something (**besides** money) to the table. (COCA: News 2001)

(4) But when I think of how he was suffering and how I was suffering, I know there was no alternative **besides** a miracle healing. (COCA: Blog 2012)

(5) But my passion today is exploring ideas and experiences that help to create a meaningful, sustainable, compassionate and rewarding

life for myself and others. **Beyond** that, I am blessed to be healthy, content, and happily married to my best friend and soul mate--Thom! (COCA: Blog 2012)

(6) Now she's thirty-four and seems to have no plans **beyond** saving dogs. (COCA: Fic 2015)

Both for *besides* and *beyond*, the prototypical meaning appears to be inclusion. We see it here in examples (3) and (5), where the items in bold face approximate 'in addition to'. In examples (4) and (6), on the other hand, the meaning is exclusive. Actually, any of the prepositions in the 'exclusion' column in Table 5 could replace *besides* and *beyond* in these two examples, and there would be virtually no change of meaning. By contrast, none of the prepositions meaning 'except' could take the place of *besides* and *beyond* in examples (3) and (5) above, as shown here:

*I wanted a partner who could bring something (**bar/barring/ except/excepting/excluding/save/saving** money) to the table.

*But my passion today is exploring ideas and experiences that help to create a meaningful, sustainable, compassionate and rewarding life for myself and others. **Bar/barring** [etc.] that, I am blessed to be healthy, content, and happily married to my best friend and soul mate--Thom!

A closer examination of the examples reveals that what determines the meaning of the prepositions as either inclusive or exclusive is the context. Hence, in affirmative sentences, the meaning is inclusive, whereas in interrogative and negated clauses the meaning is exclusive. In Quirk et al. (1985: 83–84) the terms *assertive* and *non-assertive* are used for such clauses. According to them, assertive contexts roughly correspond to affirmative sentences, while non-assertive contexts include interrogative and negated clauses, but are not confined to these two types: 'they also include clauses containing semi-negative words such as *hardly* and *only*' (Quirk et al. 1985: 138 f.n.). Example (7) shows how *few* functions to make the sentence non-assertive. Consequently, the meaning of *besides* here is 'with the exception of' rather than 'in addition to':

(7) Few **besides** a company's own employees possess the specific technical know-how required to run a specialized SCADA system. (COCA: Mag 2002)

In this sentence, substitution by one of the other prepositions of exclusion works well: 'Few **bar/barring/except** [etc.] a company's own employees possess the specific technical know-how required to run a specialized SCADA system'.

Somewhat surprisingly, the double-faced meanings of *besides* and *beyond* are not systematically treated in dictionary definitions. Thus, both the *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* (1995) and the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2004) only give the meaning 'in addition to' for *besides*, with no mention of the 'except' sense. For *beyond*, the opposite is the case: the *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* says that it is 'used to mention a fairly unimportant exception', and the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* specifies that it is used '[with neg]' in the sense 'apart from, except'. *The American Heritage Dictionary* (2000), on the other hand, actually lists the two senses of *besides* as '1. 'in addition to'; 2. 'except for'.' *Beyond*, however, is not accorded the same treatment: it is only glossed as meaning 'in addition to'. Only *The Oxford English Dictionary* online edition provides the full picture, although in a somewhat inconsistent manner, for the two items. The meaning given for *beyond* is '[i]n addition to, besides, over and above; in negative and interrog. sentences almost = Except,' i.e., both senses are indicated in the same entry. In the case of *besides*, however, the two senses are listed as separate entries. Thus, the first listing for *besides* has '[o]ver and above, in addition to, as well as'; the following one has '[o]ther than, else than; in negative and interrogative (formerly sometimes in affirmative) sentences, capable of being rendered by 'except, excluding''. As witnessed in examples (3)–(6), however, the two prepositions are very similar in their semantics.

4.3. Besides *and* beyond *with* that-*clause complements*

As mentioned in section 1, *besides* and *beyond*, like the other prepositions listed in Table 5, may also occur with other complements than the ones accounted for in section 3 (NP, V-*ing*, *wh*-clause). Of particular interest in this respect are *that*-clause complements, as they are normally said not to be able to occur as complements of prepositions in English:

> *That*-clauses […], although they frequently have a nominal function in other respects […], do not occur as prepositional complements in English. (Quirk et al. 1985: 659)

Recorded examples of *besides* and *beyond* with *that*-clause complements can be found in the OED and in various corpora. Historically, it appears that *besides* + *that*-clause precedes *beyond* + *that*-clause: the OED contains no early examples of *beyond* + *that*-clause, but there is a citation of *besides* + *that*-clause from the late sixteenth century:

(8) **Besides that**, this water cooleth all the inward parts, it doth greatly help the stone. (COGAN *The Haven of Health*, 1584)

The comma in example (8) makes this look like a preposition followed by a demonstrative; however, the OED gives this example under the heading 'with *object clause*'.[3]

Corpus evidence shows that *besides* + *that*-clause was fairly frequent some centuries ago. The Lampeter Corpus of Early Modern English Tracts (appr. one million words), with texts from 1640 until 1740, contains altogether six instances of the structure (to be compared with the results from the four present-day English corpora presented in Tables 3 and 4, where not a single occurrence of *that*-clause complements was found).[4] Evidence from fiction corroborates this. In Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* (from 1749) there are eight instances of *besides* + *that*-clause; and it is also found in *Clarissa* by Samuel Richardson (published 1748–1749). Example (9) is from *Tom Jones*:

(9) The new soldiers were now produced before the officer, who having examined the six-feet man, he being first produced, came next to survey Jones: at the first sight of whom, the lieutenant

[3] The context confirms that this is indeed a *that*-clause: 'An excellent water to coole the reynes and to helpe the ſtone. and ſunne the water for a moneth, then drinke thereof every morning tempered with a little Sugar, the quantitie of three or foure ounces, for the ſpace of a moneth: for *beſides that, this water cooleth all the inward parts*, it doth greatly helpe the ſtone, provoketh urine, and clenſeth the kidnies'. (*The Haven of Health*, chapter 98; my italics)

[4] The sentences in the Lampeter corpus are very long; one fairly short example to illustrate the structure is the following: 'It is just the same with that of his 6. Dialogue. Prop. 46. which (*besides that it wants a foundation*) how absurd it is, I have already shewed; in my Hobbius Heauton timor'. (SciA1666; my italics)

> could not help showing some surprize; for **besides that** he was very well dressed, and was naturally genteel, he had a remarkable air of dignity in his look […]. (Henry Fielding: *Tom Jones*)

As regards *beyond* + *that*-clause, there is no evidence of it in the entry for *beyond* in the OED, although a phrasal search reveals an instance from 1906 under the entry *rouse-out* ('The music did not mean that anything was happening, beyond that its playing was a sort of general rouse-out and reminder'; Mrs. C. Dauncey *Englishwoman in Philippines* xli. 318). I have also come across it in Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, which first appeared in 1886. The construction hence appears to date back at least to the late nineteenth century.

As the survey in section 3 shows, the standard British and American million-word corpora are too small for this structure to show up, so in the remainder of this section I had to turn to larger corpora in order to make my point that the construction *besides/beyond* + *that*-clause is not obsolete. For this part of the study, I decided to use the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA; Davies, 2008-). First of all, consider the examples in (10) and (11):

(10) Ford's other problem, **besides** that it's a long time ago now, is that the 1950s early 1960s Yankees were not seen as a pitcher's team, but were viewed as a bunch of bashers. (COCA: Blog 2012)

(11) I see, too, that I have failed to give much of a picture of Court, **beyond** that he was tall and thin. (COCA: Fic 1992)

One reason for the lack of mention of this type of construction both in dictionaries and in grammars may be that there is a tradition in modern English syntax to deny the possibility of prepositions taking this type of complement (as the quotation from Quirk et al. 1985 in the introduction to this section demonstrates). Such a claim makes the analysis of the structure *besides/beyond* + *that*-clause in examples (10) and (11) somewhat problematic. In order to understand where the 'rule' given by Quirk et al. (1985) came from, a brief historical account is in place.

In the early twentieth century, there were two competing ways of analysing a structure such as the one we find in examples (10) and (11). One acknowledged the structure 'preposition + *that*-clause'. The major

proponent of this view was Otto Jespersen, who in his grammar from 1927 mentioned *except*, *save* and *but* as examples of prepositions that frequently occur in this structure; *besides* and *beyond* were included in a list of prepositions which he claimed were occasionally found with *that*-clauses. The position which came to be adopted by later grammarians, on the other hand, was the claim that prepositions never take *that*-clauses in English. The two major representatives of this view were Poutsma (1926) and Curme (1931), who, while acknowledging the same structures as Jespersen, claimed that when words that otherwise serve as prepositions occur in conjunction with the subordinator *that*, they are no longer prepositions but instead part of a compound subordinator. Whereas Jespersen has had comparatively few followers on this point in the latter half of the twentieth century, Curme's and Poutsma's analysis was subsequently adopted by some of the major grammars, as the quote from Quirk et al. (1985: 659; cited above) shows. A similar position is taken by Biber et al. (1999). Neither grammar includes the combinations *besides that* or *beyond that* in their lists of compound subordinators, however.

A different solution altogether is presented in the *Cambridge Grammar of the English Language* by Huddleston and Pullum (2002). In this grammar, the class of prepositions is extended—in line with Otto Jespersen's suggestion from 1924—to include not only prepositions, but also adverbs (in particular, adverbial particles) and subordinators. This, of course, greatly simplifies any problems of analysis, but leaves the work to be done elsewhere, since for each item, it is necessary to specify whether it occurs on its own (i.e., with no complement), or whether it takes a complement. In the latter case, the type of complement it takes needs to be specified. For instance, *besides* and *beyond* are listed in the *Cambridge Grammar* in a group of 'prepositions' that alternate between occurrence with and without an NP complement (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 613). In traditional terms, this makes the two items either prepositions or adverbs, which means that Huddleston and Pullum's analysis is no different from the classification found in the dictionaries, except that they do not differentiate between different uses terminologically but lump all uses together in one category. They do not mention the possibility of these two 'prepositions' occurring with other types of complement in their survey. However, in a footnote in a later section of the grammar, there is actually an authentic example (from Australian English) of *beyond* with a *that*-clause complement:

(12) He is understood to have been given no assurances [beyond that the Coalition did not believe Labor's cross-media regulations were effective] (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 643 f.n.; square brackets in the original)

This example pertains to a discussion of 'prepositions' that take 'matrix-licensed complements', which according to Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 641) 'appear with a wide range of complements that are licensed not by the preposition itself but by an element in the matrix clause to which the PP in question bears a modifier relation'. The prepositions they list in this group embrace most of the prepositions in the first category in Table 5, i.e., those whose origin is ultimately verbal. *Beyond* is considered by Huddleston and Pullum to 'bear a resemblance' to these prepositions, without fully qualifying as one of them. Ultimately, though, Huddleston and Pullum's solution to the problem of categorisation takes us no further than the traditional ones, as it cannot explain *why* certain types of complement appear—or do not appear—after certain words.

At this point I would like the reader to consider two sets of examples, one with *besides* (13–16) and one with *beyond* (17–20):

(13) Who's going to be interested in this stuff **besides** me? (COCA: News 2016)

(14) **Besides** directing and producing movies, Ross has written original screenplays and now he's turning his attention and talents to children's books. (COCA: Web 2012)

(15) So, the truth is out there, there is no moon and there is no phenomena **besides** what we create with our minds. (COCA: Web 2012)

(16) What do we know about the complainant **besides** that she is a hotel maid? (COCA: Blog 2012)

(17) About you, I know nothing **beyond** the fact that your payment cleared. (COCA: Fic 2017)

(18) **Beyond** putting two and two together, there was very little reasoning about it. (COCA: Web 2012)

(19) What is it Nebenzya thinks we need to understand **beyond** what we read? (COCA: Mag 2018)

(20) Laura Cox, spokesman for Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman William H. Donaldson, said Donaldson recalls fundraisers for elected officials, including members of Congress, when he was chairman of the NYSE from 1990 to 1995. She said he recalls little **beyond** that they were infrequent and held in the exchange's luncheon club. (COCA: News 2003)

The above examples show how *besides* and *beyond* occur with four different types of complement. From evidence in the standard corpora (see section 3), we know that an NP complement, as in (13) and (17), is the most frequent type of complement. Both *-ing*, as in (14) and (18), and *wh*-clause complements, as in (15) and (19), occur, although less frequently than NPs; still, this lower frequency would not lead anyone to deny these two items the status of prepositionhood in the examples cited. With *that*-clauses, as in (16) and (20), on the other hand, the situation is different. We saw above that *that*-clauses are said to be nominal elements but without the ability to occur as complements of prepositions. So how can this contradiction be resolved?

There are actually three options. First, we can ignore the structure altogether as being overall too infrequent. This reflects the treatment it gets in dictionaries and grammars today. Still, if frequency were the main indicator, then we might also question whether *besides* is a preposition in (15); as we saw in Table 3, *wh*-clause complements are quite rare with *besides*. A second option is to reclassify the items as part of a complex subordinator. As a result, *besides that* and *beyond that* ought to be listed as separate entries in dictionaries and also mentioned in grammars. A third option, and the one suggested here, is to revise the rule that says that prepositions never take *that*-clauses in English, and acknowledge that this is actually the case under certain circumstances (as suggested in Granath and Seppänen 2004). One indicator that this solution is not ad hoc is that not only *besides* and *beyond* behave in this way, but actually all the

prepositions listed in Table 5, even the complex prepositions, albeit only rarely.

What would the advantages be of adopting this analysis? First of all, examples such as the ones in (13)–(16) and (17)–(20) would be analysed in the same way, which makes sense not only from a structural but also from a semantic point of view. Second, and more importantly, the fact that these items take *that*-clauses does not have to be stated as an exception to the rule given by Quirk et al. (1985: 659), but can be accommodated in conjunction with it. Their rule applies to what we can refer to as 'central prepositions' when they occur as the head of complements, as opposed to when they are used in adjunct constructions. These prepositions overlap with but do not completely correspond to what Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 653) call 'grammaticised prepositions'. Most of the central prepositions are monosyllabic (*at, on, in, of, to* etc.). In addition, they often head prepositional phrases that take on the function of noun complement, verb complement or adjective complement, i.e., the preposition is 'selected' by the noun, verb or adjective. As such, their semantic function is minimized; their main function is to serve as a link between the noun/verb/adjective and a following nominal. Before a *that*-clause, it is obligatorily omitted (as in *I am surprised* ***at*** *the reaction/I am surprised /*at/ that they reacted so strongly*). The prepositions in Table 5, however, instead function as heads of adjuncts in the clause. The same applies to a fairly large number of prepositions in English (Granath and Seppänen 2004 list over 30 such prepositions). As heads of adjuncts, they carry important semantic information, and cannot therefore be omitted. So if this proviso is added, all the cases that appear to be exceptions to Quirk et al.'s (1985) rule are taken care of.

From a semantic point of view, it needs to be pointed out that whereas *besides* occurs about equally often in the exclusive as in the inclusive sense when a *that*-clause follows, *beyond*, as far as I have been able to determine, occurs primarily in the exclusive sense. The examples in (21) and (23), show how *besides* and *beyond* + *that*-clause are used in an assertive context, and therefore the meaning is 'in addition to'. The interrogative used in (22) and the negative *no* in (24) make the context non-assertive, and the meaning is 'except':

(21) What is so significant about Burle Marx's contribution -- **besides that** it has lasted 60 years -- is the way it has made an impact on all scales, from garden to landscape. (COCA: Mag 1990)

(22) Any connection between the victims **besides that** they're all men? COCA: TV 2005)

(23) He was wrong to do that, particularly given that the claims are in fact accusations of impropriety. And **beyond that** it was wrong, it was not smart. (COCA: Blog 2012)

(24) (He has no emotional issues with his weight, **beyond that** it's hard for him to walk from what he's said.) (COCA: Web 2012)

4.4 Besides *and* beyond *with bare infinitive and AdjP complements*

According to the survey in Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 642), *except* and similar prepositions not only take the prototypical prepositional complements (i.e., NPs, 'gerund-participials' [their term for the *-ing* form], and *wh*-clauses), but also *that*-clauses, AdjPs, AdvPs, bare infinitivals and *to*-infinitivals. We saw in section 4.2 that the two prepositions of special interest in this study, *besides* and *beyond*, do indeed take *that*-clause complements in English. To what extent can they also take the other types of complement?

As it turns out, both of them can take bare infinitivals as well as AdjPs. With bare infinitivals, *besides* is used in both assertive and non-assertive contexts; see examples (25) and (26):

(25) Sure. I, uh, wish there was something I could do **besides** bring you dumb movies. (COCA, TV 2013)

(26) What to do, then, **besides** hope for interest rates to rise and real estate to soar again? (COCA: Mag 1991)

I have only been able to find authentic examples of *beyond* in non-assertive contexts with this type of complement. In (27) it is *anything* that provides this context:

(27) To form a joint unit (much less an impenetrable one) that does anything **beyond** offer Russia an up-close look at our cyber defense operations, the two countries would have to reach some kind of consensus on what constitutes cybercrime and cybercriminals. (COCA: Mag 2017)

With AdjPs, the situation is a little different. As with other types of complement, *besides* occurs both in assertive and non-assertive contexts, as examples (28) and (29) show. *Beyond*, on the other hand, I have only recorded in an *assertive* context with an AdjP. The example in (30) may serve as a hint as to why *beyond* occurs so frequently in non-assertive contexts with the less common types of complement: in an assertive context the locative sense of *beyond* as 'further than' comes into play. The fact that *besides* is not used in its original, spatial sense in English any more appears to be what makes it possible for it to shift so easily between the two converse senses.

(28) There were quite a few things that I didn't like: the plot holes and the little kid who unfortunately is a terrible child actor and **besides** creepy, is terrifically annoying, (COCA: Blog 2012)

(29) Nyx had no idea what they were, **besides** volatile and unpredictable. (COCA: Fic 1993)

(30) Actually, we had a cook when I was growing up in L.A. She was from the South, and her food was **beyond** perfect. (COCA: Mag 2010)

What I have presented here is thus a case of two prepositions that not only have developed converse meanings, but also, in conformity with a large group of other English prepositions to which they are semantically very close (listed in Table 5), have come to be used with a wide range of complements.

5. Conclusion

The two items discussed in this article, *besides* and *beyond*, have a long history in the English language. Originating as phrases used to indicate location, they became grammaticalized early on and have been used as

prepositions and adverbs from early Middle English times. Both later expanded their meaning, so that the 'being placed next to' or 'being placed on the farther side' developed into the meaning 'in addition to'. In non-assertive contexts, the meaning shifted to mean 'with the exception of', something which makes these two prepositions very flexible—and therefore useful—in communication. Syntactically, they take a variety of complements. In addition to the types of complement normally found with prepositions, namely noun phrases, *-ing*-clauses and *wh*-clauses, they may also take *that*-clause complements, adjectives, and bare infinitivals. Neither the meaning nor the structure of these two items is accurately represented in modern English reference books. It is hoped that the survey of the syntax and semantics of *besides* and *beyond* given in the present study will help remedy the situation.

Corpora

Brown = The Brown Corpus of Standard American English (appr. one million words of American English texts printed in 1961).

COCA = Davies, Mark. (2008-) The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/.

FLOB = The Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English (appr. one million words of British texts printed in 1991).

Frown = The Freiburg-Brown Corpus of American English (appr. one million words of American English texts printed in 1992).

The Lampeter Corpus of Early Modern English Tracts (appr. 1.1 million words; texts from 1640-1740).

LOB = The Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus of British English (appr. one million words of British texts printed in 1961).

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