Appalachian English (AppE), a variety of American English spoken in the southeastern United States, differs from other varieties of English in the distribution of indefinite quantificational subjects in two interesting ways:

(A) AppE exhibits the co-occurrence of an indefinite quantificational subject and an expletive pronoun not only in existential sentences, but also in declarative clauses more generally, as we see in (1):

(1) a. “He’s stubborn and wild,” ... “There can’t nobody ride him.” (M&H 2004)
   ‘Nobody can ride him.’
   b. They can’t many people say that. (DOHP)
   ‘Not many people can say that.’
   c. ... but there didn’t anyone want to leave their church. (Feagin 1979)
   ‘No one wanted to leave their church.’

These examples strongly resemble Transitive Expletive Constructions familiar from the Scandinavian languages (cf. Holmberg and Platzack 2005, a.o.), yet differ from them in occurring overwhelmingly in negative sentences.

(B) AppE also allows the co-occurrence of an indefinite quantificational subject and a referential pronoun, as we see in (2):

(2) a. They wouldn’t none of ‘em help me at all with her. (Feagin 1979)
   ‘None of them would help me at all.’
   b. We don’t any of us need anything. (M&H 2004)
   ‘None of us needs anything.’
   c. and you don’t none of y’all work as hard as I do.
   ‘And none of y’all work as hard as I do.’

Note that the indefinite subjects in (2) differ from those in (1) in two respects:
- they do not contain a nominal element (body, people, one);
- they obligatorily contain an overt partitive phrase.

We take the referential pronoun in sentence-initial position in cases like (2) to be a copy of the person features of the partitive phrase.

Can we identify a single property of the grammar of AppE responsible for these two aspects of the distribution of indefinite quantificational subjects? We argue that we can, and that the relevant property is the following:

(3) AppE marks the scope of sentential negation overtly.
The patterns in (1) and (2) derive from this property, as follows:

(a) When sentential negation takes scope over a scope-bearing element in subject position, the negative marker *n’t* raises to a position higher than the subject to mark its scope overtly.

(b) This raising of the negated auxiliary or modal makes available an additional position for a nominal element, along the lines of Bobaljik and Jonas' (1996) proposal for TECs. This position can be filled by either an expletive pronoun or by a pronoun that is a copy of the person features of the partitive phrase.


   ‘Nobody likes him’

b. *Hain’t nobody* never set [the trap] for any bears since. (M&H 2004)
   ‘Nobody has ever set [the trap] for any bears since.’

c. *Can’t no one* keep me and Little Sid apart from this day on. (ibid.)
   ‘No one can keep me and Little Sid apart.’

d. *Didn’t none of us* ever learn that (Feagin 1979: 235)
   ‘None of us ever learned that.’

e. *Can’t nary one of us* read no kind of writin’ ner printin’ … (M&H 2004)
   ‘Not even one of us can read any kind of writing or printing.’

These are sentences that have the falling intonation of declarative clauses and are used to make an assertion (not to ask a question). They differ from other declaratives in exhibiting a negated auxiliary or modal that precedes the subject in linear order; crucially, the subject can only be an indefinite quantificational subject. In other words, negative inversion is possible under the same conditions as the AppE examples with expletive subjects in (1) and those with referential subjects in (2). We take this to suggest that all these examples result from the negated auxiliary or modal having raised to a position from which it marks the scope of negation overtly.

In sum, we argue that the property in (3) characterizes the grammar of AppE and is responsible for this variety differing from other varieties of English in the distribution of indefinite subjects in negative clauses.

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