

**Kibbitzer 9****"Anyone" and "anybody" in MICASE**

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A. The basic figures for the eight indefinite pronouns in the 1.7 million-word database are as follows:

somebody	494	someone	421
everybody	494	everyone	279
anybody	303	anyone	232
nobody	130	no one	110

These figures are fairly close to the Longman Grammar for conversation, but in general a little lower. As can be seen, these words are quite common, but not very common. The figures also support the Longman Grammar's finding that endings in "body" are more common in American English than in British English.

B. The linked pair *anybody/anyone* is particularly common in questions, and thus plays an important role in the *interactivity* of academic speech.

C. The case of *anyone*

Of the 232 entries for *anyone*, nearly 60% (136) occurred in questions. Other uses were relatively minor:

Conditionals	(27)	if anyone needs a flier I have it
Object positions	(52)	I don't think anyone responded
Subject positions	(12)	anyone who takes chemistry has...

The 136 interrogatives divide almost 50-50 into those that have a full question form and those that have an ellipted form. Here are some examples of each:

- 1) is there anyone in this group living in Helen Newberry or Betsy Barbour in the fall?
- 2) does anyone mind if I sit down?
- 3) can anyone name other than Spike Lee, a black film director?
- 4) can anyone explain why that might be?
- 5) did anyone bring the coursepack cuz I completely forgot?
- 6) has anyone of you ever read Vico?
- 7) has anyone seen that sex book by Madonna?
- 8) does anybody know what (pachypoda) means?
- 9) anyone wanna share their experiences?
- 10) anyone wanna take a guess?
- 11) anyone else do this search?
- 12) anyone know what I'm looking\_thinking of?
- 13) anyone know about jambalaya?
- 14) anyone think of an example?
- 15) anyone know?

16) anyone else?

Although there are some exceptions, these examples illustrate clearly enough that full-form *anyone* questions (examples 1-8) are typically fairly specific *requests for information*. On the other hand, the ellipted "short" forms (examples 9-16) are typically *invitations to take the floor*. This looks like a sufficiently robust form-function correlation to be worth bringing to students' attention.

#### D. The case of *anybody*

In some ways, a broadly similar position is found with *anybody*. Again, over half of the 303 tokens occurred in questions—162 or about 54%. Of the 160 clear examples, 83 employed the full form, while 77 were ellipted.

The more frequent and more extreme forms of ellipsis are as follows:

- 10 anybody (?)
- 8 anybody else (?)
- 5 anybody know?
- 4 anybody have a question/questions?

More generally, most of the ellipted forms involves the present tense:

anybody not know what SNCC is?  
 anybody need copies of handouts?  
 anybody else share that view?  
 anybody wanna look at them?

And as can be seen, most of these are invitations or check questions. However, there are some involving past tense deletion:

anybody here been to the south of Spain?  
 anybody happen to watch Nightline last night?

However, when we turn to the full forms, the fairly clear distinction found with *anyone* for informative questions as opposed to invitations is not so fully borne out, because of examples like these:

okay is there anybody waiting?  
 is anybody else using the computer?  
 does anybody know?  
 does anybody know where this comes from?  
 before we start does anybody have any questions concerns...

As these examples suggest, with *anybody* anyway, there would seem to be greater free variation with regard to which form of question (ellipted versus full) will occur. Further investigations are probably called for.