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ADVERBS IN MODERN SYNTACTIC THEORIES

ADVERBS AS DIAGNOSTICS

Adverbs have been used as **diagnostics for both clause structure** (telling us what is where) **and movement operations** (whether anything moves, and if so, what where).

- (1) a. John **often** kisses Mary.
b. *John kisses **often** Mary.
- (2) a. *Jean **souvent** embrasse Marie.
b. Jean embrasse **souvent** Marie.

Pollock (1989) understands this contrast to illustrate a difference in verb position (see Emonds 1976 for precursors), in particular the presence/absence of **verb-movement**.

- (3) [_{IP} John I [_{VP} often [_{VP} kisses Mary]]] *English*
- (4) [_{IP} Jean embrasse-I [_{VP} souvent [_{VP} t_v Marie]]] *French*

The idea is that certain adverbs demarcate the **left boundary of VP** (e.g. manner adverbs) — so if the verb precedes these, it must have raised (**V-to-I movement**).

In addition to adverbs, Pollock also employed **negation** to illustrate his point:

- (5) a. John does **not** kiss Mary.
b. *John kisses **not** Mary.
- (6) a. *Jean ne **pas** embrasse Marie.
b. Jean *n'*embrasse **pas** Marie
- (7) [_{IP} John does-I [_{NegP} not [_{VP} kiss Mary]]] *English*
- (8) [_{IP} Jean ne+embrasse-I [_{NegP} pas t_{Neg} [_{VP} t_v Marie]]] *French*

But there's so much more to say about adverbs — their nature, their syntactic behaviour, their semantic import, and so on. For example, (i) **not all adverbs adjoin to VP** (IP, CP...), (ii) it's **not clear whether they adjoin** or are specifiers of dedicated adverbial projections (e.g. Cinque 1999), (iii) there are **co-occurrence restrictions**, etc.

Alexiadou (1997) implemented this approach for Greek, for example. One interesting fact this approach gives in a straightforward fashion is that **some adverbs can't be fronted over others** (and yes, the same explanation is evoked as in other cases: RM).

- (10) a. **Probably** John cleaned the room **carefully**.
 b. ***Carefully**, John **probably** cleaned the room.
- (11) a. **Eftihos**, o Janis skarfalose **eksipna** stin korifi **prosektika**.
 fortunately the John climbed cleverly to.the top carefully
 b. ***Eksipna**, o Janis skarfalose **eftihos** stin korifi **prosektika**
 c. ***Eftihos**, o Janis skarfalose **prosektika** stin korifi **eksipna**.

ALTERNATIVE ACCOUNTS

Question I: are adverbs **specifiers**, or do they **adjoin** to some projection (VP, IP...)?

Question II: if adjunction, can adverbs adjoin **to the left** and **to the right**?

- (12) *Major types of adverbials* (from Ernst 2001: 9)
- a. **predicational**
- i. speaker-oriented *frankly, maybe, luckily, obviously*
 - ii. subject-oriented *deliberately, stupidly*
 - iii. exocomparative *similarly*
 - iv. event-internal *tightly, partially*
- b. **domain** *mathematically, chemically*
- c. **participant** *on the wall, with a bowl, for his aunt*
- d. **functional**
- i. time-related *now, for a minute, still*
 - ii. quantificational *frequently, again, precisely*
 - iii. focusing *even, just, only*
 - iv. negative *not*
 - v. clausal relations: purpose, causal, concessive, conditional...

- (13) [**speech act** [**proposition** [**event** [**event-internal**]]]]
 CP IP VP(?) VP
- | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| speaker-oriented | | subject-or. | manner | Jackendoff (1972) |
| conjunct | disjunct | | process adjunct | Quirk et al. (1972) |
| | Ad-S | Ad-VP | Ad-V | McConnell-Ginet (1982) |
| frame | proposition | event process | | Frey & Pittner (1999) |
| framing | clausal NEG | time | aspectual | (various) |

Ernst (2001): Weight Theory

- (14) *The LF-Side* (adapted from Ernst 2001: 17-18)
- a. A set of rules for composition of events, propositions, times, predicates
 - (i) interacting with syntactic positions for certain functional heads and abstract operators
 - (ii) according to basic structural constraints on composition (sisterhood/c-command)
 - b. Lexicosemantic requirements of individual adverbs (and derivatively, via composition, of phrasal adverbials), at least in part represented by a system of semantic types
- (15) *The PF-Side* (adapted from Ernst 2001: 18)
- a. Directionality Principles, incl. a basic head-initial/head-final parameter
 - b. Weight Theory, which requires, disallows, or (dis)favors certain positions according to “weight”
- (16) *PS and Feature/Movement Theories* (adapted from Ernst 2001: 18)
- a. Basic PS theory: in principle symmetric, with two basic non-head positions (complement, adjunction), Spec defined as type of adjunction
 - b. Extended projections, defined by combinations of [\pm Lex], [\pm C], [\pm Disc]
 - c. Movement and checking theory:
 - (i) movement is triggered by feature-checking or by Weight Theory
 - (ii) checking is normally allowed only at Spec (or above in a limited number of cases) [head/leftward A'-movement work as standardly conceived]
- (17) *Weight Theory* (Ernst 2001: 238)
- a. Weight is determined by:
 - (i) Category (CP > PP > DP > AP > AdvP with complement > AdvP without complement > Adv) [heavy, Adv = {+Lite} AdvP]
 - (ii) Stress/Focus (more = heavier)
 - b. Endweight Template: In a sequence of postverbal constituents at PF, the preferred order is of licensing weight to the right.
- (18) a. *She could have left **never**.
b. *Yvonne has eaten **scarcely**.
- (19) a. Albert has (***with a screwdriver**) opened the tin (**with a screwdriver**).
b. Dan (***because he had won**) was jumping for joy (**because he has won**).