SEMANTIC CLASSIFICATION OF ADVERBS

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There have been various attempts to classify adverbs semantically. According to Quirk et al. [1985], adverbs can have four different grammatical functions: as adjuncts, subjuncts, disjuncts, and conjuncts. On the one hand, adjuncts and subjuncts are integrated within the structure of the clause, as can be observed in the following examples:

(1) He talked *slowly.* ADJUNCT
(2) He has not eaten *yet.* SUBJUNCT

As we can see, both adverbs here seem to be modifying the verb or the whole verb phrase. In (1), the adjunct refers to the pace of the action of talking, therefore modifying the semantics of the verb. On the other hand, the adverb in (2) modifies the whole verb phrase by stating that the event of eating has not happened so far, but that there is a strong chance (or an intention) that it will happen in the future. This is done through the use of the adverb *yet.*

On the other hand, disjuncts express an evaluation of what is being said as far as the form of the communication or its meaning is concerned. An example is *happily* as in (3). On the other hand, conjuncts express the speaker's assessment of the relation of two segments (see (4) and (5)):

(3) Mary will *happily* understand everything.
(4) He admits it was very rude of him. *However,* he won't apologize.
(5) I didn't invite her. She wouldn't have come *anyway.* [Quirk et al., 1985, 441]

Example (3) is a typical example of a disjunct. *Happily* expresses an evaluation of what is being said. In (3), the adverb adds a probability to the fact that Mary will understand everything. It is not directly related to the event per se according to Quirk et al. (4) is a clear example of a conjunct.

In the example, the speaker believes that there are two utterances in contrast, therefore s/he uses *however to* link them both.

Anyway in (5) is another example of conjunct according to Quirk et al. As pointed out by the author, *anyway* cannot be either an adjunct or a subjunct since these are believed to be syntactically integrated within the structure of a clause (at least in its discourse marker use). It appears that *anyway* is a conjunct since it expresses the speaker's assessment of the relation between the two segments; it is an evaluation of this relation between the segments.

Greenbaum and Quirk [1990] believe that conjuncts can conjoin two utterances and they can be used as initiators. The authors offer the following list of possible semantic roles for conjuncts:

☐ Listing adverbs list a number of utterances or topics. They are subdivided into thefollowing categories:

1. Enumerative adverbs, as the name explains, number the list aforementioned, e.g. *next, for one thing, secondly,* etc.

2. Additive adverbs add a new topic to an ongoing list, e.g. *furthermore, above all, moreover, what is more, similarly, in addition, on top of that,* etc.

☐ Summative adverbs introduce a summary of ideas, for example: *all in all, altogether, overall, therefore, in sum, to sum up,* etc.

☐ Appositive adverbs precede exemplifications or rephrasings of ideas, e.g. *namely, that is* (*to say*), *i.e., for example, in other words, specifically, e.g.,* etc.

☐ Resultive adverbs indicate that the following utterances offer some kind of result or consequence denied in previous discourse, for example: *therefore, so, as a result, accordingly, in consequence, of course,* etc.

☐ Inferential adverbs denote that previous discourse has helped toward inferring a result shown in the utterance following the adverb, for instance: *in that case, so, then, otherwise, else,* etc.

☐ Contrastive adverbs display contrast of ideas and they are subclassified as follows:

1. Reformulatory and replacive adverbs suggest that the following utterance is expressed in other words, or information is made more concise in respect to the previous discourse. This is the case of the following: *rather, better, more accurately, in other words, alias, worse,* etc.

2. Antithetic adverbs contrast opposed ideas, for instance: *instead, on the contrary, by contrast, on the other hand, then,* etc.

3. Concessive adverbs imply acknowledgment of previous discourse, e.g. *still, how ever, nevertheless, yet, all the same, of course, that said, anyhow, anyway, still and all, only, though,* etc.

☐ Transitional adverbs suggest some kind of change of progression in the following terms:

1. Discoursal adverbs indicate a transition of topics, for instance: *by the way, incidentally, now,* etc.

2. Temporal adverbs indicate a transition in terms of time, e.g. *meanwhile, originally, subsequently, eventually,* etc.

Greenbaum and Quirk offer a thorough classification of semantic roles for conjuncts, however, their classification might not appear to be very neat since there are a few overlaps, for example, *therefore* appears with two different semantic roles: as a summative and a resultive adverb. However, as we will see, this type of adverbs do often have several related meanings.

Greenbaum and Quirk claim that conjuncts can conjoin two sentences.

This would explain the discourse connectivity effect of the adverbial use of *anyway.* As far as the discourse marker use, we argue that the connectivity is not directed to the previous utterance, rather *anyway* as a discourse marker is used to mark an end to a digression or a topic.

Greenbaum and Quirk subclassify *anyway* and its variants as having a contrastive-concessive meaning. Even though we will claim that the contrastive effect that *anyway* is marginal and secondary to its meaning, it is present in some occasions. For this reason and due to the nature of Greenbaum and Quirk study, we consider that their classification partially fits with our analysis, though it fails to explain the effects created by *anyway* fully. It is an acceptable classification even if it is not a sufficient explanation of the meaning of *anyway* and its variants: *anyhow, at any rate,* etc.

More recently, Huddleston and Pullum [2002] relate the semantic roles with the positions that an adverb can take in a sentence. There are three possible positions for adverbs: front, end (after the verb), and central (between the subject and the verb). The positioning of any adverb depends on the following classification according to [Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, 576]:

☐ VP-Oriented Adjuncts

1. Manner adverbs are gradable and they modify a verb phrase. Examples: *carefully, hastily, badly,* etc.
2. Means or Instruments are typically prepositional phrases indicating either the means or the instrument use to perform an action, e.g. *by bus, with a spanner,* etc.
3. Act-Related adverbs can be considered manner adverbs in some occasions. The former appear preceding the sentence, so they can be paraphrased as *the act of V* (V being the verb modified by the adverb). Manner adverbs, on the other hand can be paraphrased as *doing* V in a particular way. Examples of act-related adverbs are: *rudely, foolishly,* etc.
4. Degree adverbs have a central or final position in the sentence and they introduce some kind of quantification, e.g. *almost, enormously,* etc.

5. Temporal Location adverbs introduce some type of time constraint on the verb, for instance: *subsequently, earlier,* etc.

6. Duration adverbs indicate the time duration of the verb as *temporarily* does.

7. Aspectuality adverbs are polarity sensitive and give information on the aspect of the verb as the following adverbs do: *already, still,* etc.

8. Frequency adverbs describe the frequency of the occurrence described by the verb, e.g. *often.*

9. Serial Order introduces an order regarding events, e.g. *next, last,* etc.

 Clause-Oriented Adjuncts

1. Domain adverbs restrict the domain of the clause, e.g. *politically, officially,* etc.

2. Modality adverbs add modal meaning to the clause, for example: *necessarily, probably, surely,* etc.

3. Evaluation adverbs start off the clause by offering a subjective evaluation of it, e.g. *fortunately, ironically, sadly,* etc.

4. Speech Act-Related adverbs always appear at the start of a sentence and make reference to the speech act of the clause, e.g. *frankly, briefly, confidentially,* etc.

5. Connective adjuncts connect utterances or chunks of discourse, for instance: *moreover, alternatively, on the other hand,* etc.

The generalization adopted by the authors is that VP-oriented adjuncts are closely associated with the VP constituents and this is the reason why they are more likely to appear closer or adjacent to the VP. On the other hand, clause-oriented adjuncts are less closely related to the VP and, in turn, they are less likely to be closer or adjacent to the VP.

VP-oriented adjuncts appear preferably in end position where prosodic detachment is not normal unless it indicates an afterthought. However, an inter-sentential position is an alternative to this end position. Front position is very unusual for this type of adjuncts. On the other hand, clause-oriented adjuncts appear preferably

in front position where prosodic detachment is common. And while end position is strongly disfavored, central position is an alternative.

Huddleston and Pullum's study of adverbs is in line with traditional grammarians, though they add a little more to traditional classifications including modal, evaluative, and speech-act-related adjuncts.

The classification that Huddleston and Pullum offer shows a syntactic behavior potentially applicable to the different functions that *anyway* has.

This difference in syntactic behavior highlights the differences in its semantic role. *Anyway* occurs in two different positions, and it has different functions in the discourse which are marked by its syntactic behavior and a very distinctive prosody. *Anyway* can appear at the end of the sentence (and very rarely in mid-sentence position) and it is integrated in the prosody of the sentence. Huddleston and Pullum would argue that it is a VP-oriented level of the syntactic tree. On the other hand, *anyway* can appear at the start of the sentence with a clearly distinct prosody, and in this case it is a clause-oriented adverb.

This position and prosody indicate a slight different function in discourse.

There are some slight differences between all adverb classifications. Quirk et al. [1985] and Greenbaum and Quirk [1990] divided the study of adverbs into adjuncts, subjuncts, conjuncts, and subjuncts. On the other hand, Huddleston and Pullum [2002] categorize all adverbs as adjuncts. Some of the semantic roles appear in all these studies. However, in some studies there are differences in classification and definition of the semantic roles. This possibly means that some studies change the semantic role of particular adverbs. This is not surprising as to establish all possible semantic roles of all adverbs is an enormously difficult task due to the semantic complexity of each and every adverb.

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