

Advanced Syntax
lecture course
handout 5

Modification in the VP: the adjunction of adverbs, PPs and clausal modifiers

1. Adverbs: the most typical VP-modifiers.

Two types: VP adverbs and sentential adverbs

- (1) *He will certainly find out.*
- (2) *He will quickly find out.*
- (3) *He certainly will find out.*
- (4) **He quickly will find out.*

Where are VP-adverbs adjoined?

- (5) *The letter might eventually arrive.*
- (6) *Peter might suddenly punch Paul.*
- (7) *Water is steadily pouring out of the bath.*
- (8) **They will have been taking accurately notes.*

+ all of these sentences can have the adverb at the end of the sentences as well.

→ the adverb can be before/after the VP/vP, but it cannot separate the verb and the object.

- (9) they will (accurately) have (accurately) been (accurately) making notes (accurately)

2. PPs: always follow the verb

- (10) *He may be swimming in the lake.*

But:

- (11) *You should complete in ink every form with a blue cross at the top.*
- (12) **You should complete in ink the form.*

Heavy DP/(formerly NP) Shift: only long/complex DPs can undergo backward movement. No real explanation for why only heavy DPs can move back, but a DP of any weight can move to the front. Stylistic (=not syntactic) movement necessitated by the PF component?)

3. Clausal modifiers: different adverbial clauses of time, place, purpose, etc.

- (13) *Fred phoned the plumber driving to the office.*
- (14) *Harry hired Frida to fire the security guard. (!!!)*
- (15) *Harry fired Frida to hire the security guard.*

Subject: not present, but interpreted as co-referent with one of the constituents of the main clause. (13): structural ambiguity (subject or object **control**)! → v' vs. V'-adjunction

Reading: BESE, pp. 203-209.

EXAM PRACTICE

1. Multiple choice questions (25)

1. The progressive –ing morpheme
 - A. is an Inflectional head.
 - B. is lower than thematic light verbs.
 - C. heads a functional light verbal projection
 - D. can assign accusative Case.

2. Which of the following sentences contains a sentential adverb?
 - A. *I suddenly understood the problem.*
 - B. *The sad news arrived fast.*
 - C. *I will thoroughly go through the paper.*
 - D. *They arrived unexpectedly.*

2. Explain why the following sentences are ungrammatical. (10)

- **You should complete in ink the form.*
- **I believe he to be clever.*

3. Draw trees for the following sentences with detailed DPs. Indicate Case assignment as well. (15)

- Every student has passed the exam.*
- The letter might eventually arrive.*