

A Structural View of Present-Day English Adverbials

Ahmad El-Bakri^{*}

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the reader with a new approach to the study of English **adverbials** in modern English syntax, from a **structural** point of view. It deals with the three different, though inseparable, aspects of 'Form', 'Function', and 'Position'. Though not in accordance with some previous work on the subject, the paper aims at introducing a methodology that shows the intricate interrelationships holding among these three aspects, through the scientific investigation of some spoken texts of everyday English. Such interrelationships are finally manifested in a classificatory system that covers a great portion of adverbial usage in present-day English.

1. The descriptive analyst may set himself the task of finding out how the different members of a certain **part of speech**⁽¹⁾ can perform different functions, and in what positions. This latter term (viz. 'position'), however, raises a question as to whether or not it is to be identified with the term **function**. Some linguists would not agree to this threefold division of scope. Bloomfield is one. He (Bloomfield, 1935: 185) states that, "The positions in which a form can appear are its **functions** or, collectively, its **function**." In the special case of "adverbs," this becomes an understatement, when compared to the classification given by Harold Palmer; (1924: 171-2) which runs as follows:

Adverbs may be classified:

1. Formally, i.e. according as they are simple, derivative, compound, or group-adverbs.
2. According to their **meanings** (manner, time, degree, etc.).
3. According to their **manner of modification** (epithets, complements or interrogative-conjunctives).
4. According to their **grammatical function** (according to what part of speech they modify, etc.)
5. According to the **position** they occupy in the sentence.

Palmer's classification may be considered an over-elaboration in as much as its items 2, 3 and 4 may be grouped under one heading, which is "function". The justification for such grouping would be that the terms **manner, time, degree**, and the terms **epithets, complements**, etc., actually refer to the syntactic role the adverb performs in the construction under consideration. For instance, an adverb of **time** modifies the verb or the whole construction, an **epithet** modifies the noun it follows, etc., and that would hardly be different from what he refers to in item 4 as 'grammatical function'. Moreover, items 3 and 4 refer explicitly to the function of 'modification'; item 2, implicitly also refers to the same function. ⁽²⁾

Therefore, adverbs will, appropriately, be examined from the aspects of form, function, and position; though, by no means are these three aspects to be regarded as separate and independent. This division of scope is merely done for sake of presentation of material.

2. Form

Adverbs may be classified, according to form, into six classes:

- 1) **One word adverb**;
- 2) **Adverbial group** (which consists of more than one adverbial unit, joined together by a conjunction, or a pause);
- 3) **Adverbial cluster** (which consists of one adverbial unit modified by another, or by others);
- 4) **Adverbial phrase** (with the term 'phrase' here restricted to prepositional phrases only);

- 5) **Adverbial clause;** ⁽³⁾
 6) **Adverbial sentence.** ⁽⁴⁾

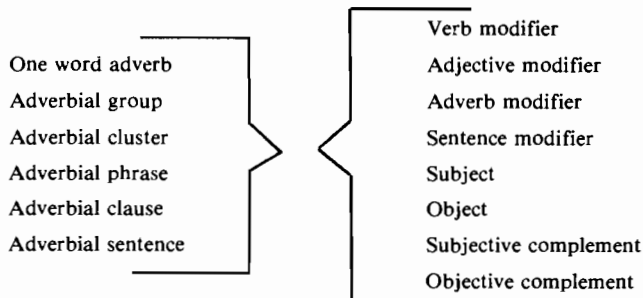
3. Function

An adverb may perform any of the following eight syntactic functions:

- 1) **Verb modifier** (the verb may be one of four: a- finite verb, b- infinitive, c-present participle, d- past participle.)
- 2) **Adjective modifier** (the adjective may be one of three: a- one word adjective, b- adjectival phrase, c- adjectival clause.)
- 3) **Adverb modifier** (the adverb may be one of three: a- one word adverb, b- adverbial phrase, c- adverbial clause.)
- 4) **Sentence modifier** (the sentence may be one of four: a- statement, b- question, c- command, d- exclamation.)
- 5) **Subject** (pre- verb.)
- 6) **Object** (the object may be one of two: a- object of a verb, b- object of a preposition).
- 7) **Subjective complement** (post verb “to be”).
- 8) **Objective complement** (post-object).

4. Application

If we multiply all these possibilities, we get ‘Diagram 1’, which will be supplemented by actual examples showing the interrelation of form and function. The examples are representative of spoken English, since they are picked up from stage plays. ⁽⁵⁾



“Diagram 1”

Examples:**A) i. Verb modified by one word adverb:⁽⁶⁾**

- a) I slept soundly yesterday.
- b) He wanted to drive slowly.
- c) She went on screaming loudly.
- d) I'll have that work done carefully.

ii. Verb modified by adverbial group:

- a) He spoke loud and clear.
- b) I wanted to dance there and then.
- c) I could see it flying high and steady.
- d) We saw it played slowly and sweetly.

iii. Verb modified by adverbial cluster:

- a) She studies very hard.
- b) I saw him play extremely well.
- c) He watched birds singing very sweetly.
- d) They want it handled rather carefully.

iv. Verb modified by adverbial phrase:

- a) She loves him within reason.
- b) They've got to fetch Henry from school.
- c) I saw it crawling through the hole.
- d) You will have this discussed in public.

v. Verb modified by adverbial clause:

- a) He ran as quickly as he could.
- b) I watched him eat as if he was starving.
- c) She kept on weeping as a child weeps.
- d) I want it done the way I told you.

vi. Verb modified by adverbial sentence:

... .. (does not occur)

B) vii. Adjective modified by one word 'adverb':⁽⁷⁾

- a) This is rather unusual.
 - b) This is just of minor importance.
 - c) He is only what his mother made him.
-

viii. **Adjective modified by adverbial group:**

- a) She is absolutely and surprisingly smashing.
- b) This is completely and exclusively to my liking.
- c) That is exactly and specifically what you ought to do.

ix. **Adjective modified by adverbial cluster:**

- a) This is so much interesting.
- b) She is very much in trouble.
- c) He is almost exactly what people take him to be.

x. **Adjective modified by adverbial phrase:**

- a) He isn't in any way intelligent.
- b) I am to a great extent in doubt.
- c) She has always been to some degree what you may call shy.

xi. **Adjective modified by adverbial clause:**

- a) Young as he was, he never thought of such a thing.
- b) He is what you may call of humble origin.
- c) A man is, if I may say so, what he stands for.

xii. **Adjective modified by adverbial sentence:**

... .. (does not occur)

C) xiii. **Adverb modified by one word adverb:**⁽⁸⁾

- a) You look most awfully smart.
- b) We met him just outside the door.
- c) I watch television only when I have free time.

xiv. **Adverb modified by adverbial group:**

- a) This is really and truly well done.
- b) It sank down and deep into the water.
- c) She acted exactly and precisely as I told her.

xv. **Adverb modified by adverbial cluster:**

- a) They've left very much early.
- b) He lives not far from here.
- c) Take it right away anywhere you go.

xvi **Adverb modified by adverbial phrase:**

- a) This girl is pretty enough for show business.
- b) Why are you creeping up the stairs like that?
- c) He left the party as he always does on such occasions.

xvii. Adverb modified by adverbial clause:

- a) It was here that we met last time.
- b) It was in this place that I first saw her.
- c) It was where you stand now that he delivered his lecture.

xviii. Adverb modified by adverbial sentence:

- a) I don't think so no.
- b) She came, how shall I put it, in tears and rags.
- c) He behaved, what shall I say, as a child does.

D) xix. Sentence modified by one word adverb:⁽⁹⁾

- a) Accordingly, she left the room.
- b) Now, what will you do?
- c) Go ahead!
- d) Just how unfortunate!

xx. Sentence modified by adverbial group:

- a) In season and out of season, she stood by me.
- b) Why don't you drop in, now and then?
- c) Climb, on and on!
- d) Off and away they went!

xxi. Sentence modified by adverbial cluster:

- a) Just now, everything looks wonderful.
- b) Right now, why won't you tell the whole truth?
- c) Very well, come in!
- d) How well he writes!

xxii. Sentence modified by adverbial phrase:

- a) In my opinion, you should face the truth.
- b) How, in any case, can you avoid it?
- c) Do it by yourself!
- d) For heaven's sake no!

xxiii. Sentence modified by adverbial clause:

- a) As I recall it, he spoke to us on the same subject.
- b) How could you love her after what she'd done to you.
- c) When he turns round, hand me that box.
- d) As if nothing had happened, there he was again!

xxiv. Sentence modified by adverbial sentence:

- a) This happened, now I remember, in 1942.
 - b) How, I am surprised, did it come to that?
-

- c) Don't cry, I tell you!
 d) Look! There goes our train!

E) xxv. **One word adverb as subject:**

Once is enough, never again for me.

xxvi. **Adverbial group as subject:**

By and by is how he made his way out.

xxvii. **Adverbial cluster as subject:**

Right now is the proper time.

xxviii. **Adverbial phrase as subject:**

By his side was her favourite place.

xxix. **Adverbial clause as subject:**

Where he goes is not my business any longer.

xxx. **Adverbial sentence as subject:**

... .. (does not occur)

F) xxxi. **One word adverb as object:**⁽¹⁰⁾

- a) Leave here at once.
 b) I've been calling you from upstairs.

xxxii. **Adverbial group as object:**

- a) It took long and enough.
 b) He comes from somewhere or other.

xxxiii. **Adverbial cluster as object:**

- a) It took that long.
 b) They come from very far.

xxxiv. **Adverbial phrase as object:**

- a) It took above three hours.
 b) It suddenly came out from under the table.

xxxv. **Adverbial clause as object:**

- a) They left where they have always lived and worked.
 b) He came out from where he works.

xxxvi. **Adverbial sentence as object:**

... .. (does not occur)

G) xxxvii. One word adverb as subjective complement:

It won't be long.

xxxviii. Adverbial group as subjective complement:

It's now or never.

xxxix. Adverbial cluster as subjective complement:

She's still up.

xL. Adverbial phrase as subjective complement:

You're always on time.

ixL. Adverbial clause as subjective complement:

It has always been where you left it.

viiiL. Adverbial sentence as subjective complement:

... .. (does not occur)

H) viiL. One word adverb as objective complement:

We found him alone.

viL. Adverbial group as objective complement:

They found him in and alone.

vL. Adverbial cluster as objective complement:

We found her still up.

ivL. Adverbial phrase as objective complement:

We left her by herself.

iiiL. Adverbial clause as objective complement:

We found him as we had left him.

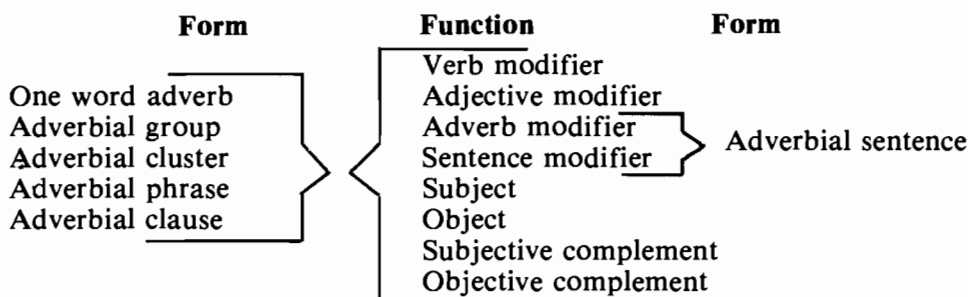
iiL. Adverbial sentence as objective complement:

... .. (does not occur)

5. Modifications

We come to notice from the above shown examples, that all of the potential possibilities do occur, to the exclusion of a small number. The exceptions are: verb modified by adverbial sentence, adjective modified by adverbial sentence; adverbial sentence as subject, as object, as subjective complement, and as objective complement. From the first two of these exceptions, we reach the conclusion that adverbial sentences--whenever they occur within larger constructions--can only modify either an adverb (or an adverbial

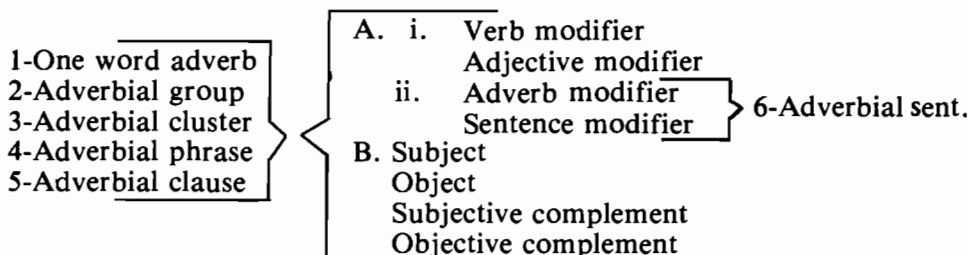
phrase or clause), or else a whole sentence. From the other four exceptions, we reach the conclusion that only one word adverbs, adverbial groups, clusters, phrases, or clauses, can function as subjects, objects, subjective or objective complements. "Diagram 2" sums up these findings:



"Diagram 2"

We notice, further, that the first four items of the "function" column are different, in a specific respect, from the last four items. The first four are modifiers ("attributes" or "epithets") that cannot occur alone as complete grammatical units. They should be attached to other elements; they are "modifiers" in "cluster constructions". While the last four items are essential elements⁽¹¹⁾ that play a major role in the sentence. They are "primaries," that is to say, while modifiers are "secondaries"⁽¹²⁾. They are the major components of an "endocentric construction" (which consists of one "head," one or more "secondaries," and one or more "tertiaries".)⁽¹³⁾ Modifiers, on the other hand, are minor components in such "endocentric constructions." They are "incidental components of sentences"⁽¹⁴⁾ which may be dropped without breaking the grammaticality of the whole. Yet, it is basically on the principal that adverbs occur more as modifiers than as heads, that we give priority to this functional aspect.

We can, thus, make a further subclassification, remodelling "Diagram 2," and bringing it to a final shape:



"Diagram 3"

6. Positions Occupied by Adverbials 'As Modifiers'⁽¹⁵⁾.

When adverbials occur as modifiers, they occupy one of six positions⁽¹⁶⁾. A modifying adverbial may fill any of the following:

1- **Pre-sentence position.** Adverbials occupying this position should, as a minimal requirement, have the ability to occupy the post-sentence position as well, without changing the meaning of the sentence. They may, or may not, be separated from the sentence by a pause. But it becomes a necessity that they should be thus separated, when ambiguity could result (e.g., **I never thought of it honestly** as corresponding to **Honestly, I never thought of it.**)

2- **Sentence-initial position.** This position will be clearly distinct from the first one, on the basis that adverbials occupying it are strictly and exclusively confined to it, and cannot move elsewhere within the sentence.

3- **Pre-verb position.** This is the position between a subject and its verb. As a basic requirement, adverbials occupying this position cannot move freely into any other position in the sentence. (For example, **often** in **They often drop in for tea** is not regarded as belonging to the "pre-verb" position, since we can also say, **They drop in for tea often**, or still, **Often, they drop in for tea**, without the slightest change in meaning.)

4- **Mid-verb position.** Adverbials filling this position cannot occur in others. It is, typically, the position between the modal and its main verb.

5- **Post-verb position.** This position is limited to adverbials falling between a verb and its object, between a verb and its first object (i.e., first in order), or else between a linking verb and its complement. Adverbial particles are, naturally, included in this position.

6- **Sentence-final position.** This position is only filled by adverbials which occur sentence-finally, as distinct from those occurring in "Position 1." In fact, it is often followed by other items, some of which may also belong to this same position. If they are followed by adjectivals (i.e., adjectives of any form), then they modify them.

This position is also "sentence-final" in the sense that what precedes may be considered as complete in itself. In other words, adverbials belonging to this position (which, it should be remembered, are only modifiers) can be said to occupy any of the following positions: a) post-verb, when there are no objects or complements following; b) post-object, or post-objects, when there are two; c) post-complement, if there is one; or, d) post sentence-final position, to which we have just referred.

These six positions, it should be stressed once more, are mutually exclusive; adverbials occupying any of them cannot move freely within a specific sentence.

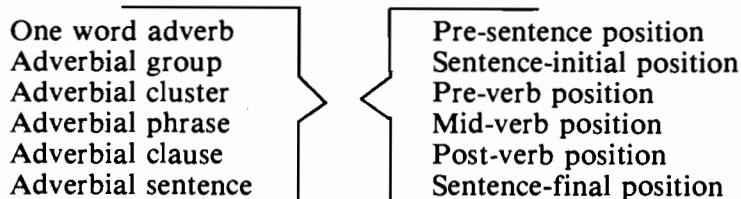
In a hypothetical sentence having all the six positions available, we would have seven adverbials arranged in the order shown, in the following diagram:

(P.1) + (P.2) + Subject + (P.3) + Modal + (P.4) + Verb + (P.5) + Object "or objects" + (P.6) + (P.1)

"Diagram 4"

However, one may justly postulate that an adverbial may have the freedom of movement (within a specific sentence) that does not affect the total meaning, and yet, does not conform to the six limitations mentioned above.⁽¹⁷⁾ But, it is basically on such grounds (viz. that it has such freedom of movement) that it cannot carry any positional marker.

Just as we have contrasted the formal with the functional aspects, we can also contrast the formal with the positional aspects. "Diagram 5" will illustrate all the potential possibilities, which we can, then, try to exploit by the use of examples from actual usage:



"Diagram 5"

Examples:

- A) i. **Pre-sentence position occupied by one word adverb**
Actually, I don't mind that.
Yesterday, we had such a marvellous time.
- ii. **Pre-sentence position occupied by adverbial group**
 He'll ring us up, **sooner or later**.
Again and again, the baby tried to stand on its feet.
- iii. **Pre-sentence position occupied by adverbial cluster**
Up till now, they haven't arrived yet.
Since then, nobody has ever heard of him.
- iv. **Pre-sentence position occupied by adverbial phrase**
 I'll try to do my best, **of course**.
 He had a craze for Judo **in his last year at the college**⁽¹⁸⁾.

- v. **Pre-sentence position occupied by adverbial clause**
When she heard the story, she grew very upset.
The moment I saw her, I recognized her all right.
- vi. **Pre-sentence position occupied by adverbial sentence**
He used to be my frieed, you know.
I'm afraid, I don't know much about this.
- B) vii. **Sentence-intial position occupied by one word adverb**
Well, I hope you have enjoyed it.
No. you are wrong.
- viii. **Sentence-intial position occupied by adverbial group**
... .. (does not occur)
- ix. **Sentence-intial position occupied by adverbial cluster**
Very well, John, come in!
How well you do it!
- viii. **Sentence-intial position occupied by adverbial phrase**
... .. (does not occur)
- xi. **Sentence-intial position occupied by adverbial clause**
If you are right, I must be wrong.
Were Tom here now, he would have explained the matter.
- xii. **Sentence-intial position occupied by adverbial sentence**
It's about time you faced the truth.
I don't think so - no.
- C) xiii. **Per-verb position occupied by one word adverb**
I bet he double paid for that old car.
You never know what he means.
- xiv. **Per-verb position occupied by adverbial group**
... .. (does not occur)
- xv. **Per-verb position occupied by adverbial cluster**
We hardly ever see you now.
Why the hell didn't she tell me.⁽¹⁹⁾
- xvi. **Per-verb position occupied by adverbial phrase**
... .. (does not occur)
- xvii. **Per-verb position occupied by adverbial clause**
... .. (does not occur)
- xviii. **Per-verb position occupied by adverbial sentence**
... .. (does not occur)
- D) xix. **Mid-verb position occupied by one word adverb**
They have just left.
You can hardly see the point.
- xx. **Mid-verb position occupied by adverbial group**
... .. (does not occur)

xxi. Mid-verb position occupied by adverbial cluster

You should **not just** sit there and watch.

She can **not only** dance but also sing very well.

xxii. Mid-verb position occupied by adverbial phrase

... .. (does not occur)

xxiii. Mid-verb position occupied by adverbial clause

... .. (does not occur)

xxiv. Mid-verb position occupied by adverbial sentence

... .. (does not occur)

E) xxv. Post-verb position occupied by one word adverb

It's **perfectly** clear.

I haven't a lot of friends.

xxvi. Post-verb position occupied by adverbial group

... .. (does not occur)

xxvii. Post-verb position occupied by adverbial cluster

That's **just not** true.

He is **not exactly** like that.

xxviii. Post-verb position occupied by adverbial phrase

... .. (does not occur)

xxix. Post-verb position occupied by adverbial clause

He is, **as he has always been**, a trouble maker.

They are, **what you may call**, of humble origin.

xxx. Post-verb position occupied by adverbial sentence

... .. (does not occur)

F) xxxi. Sentence-final position occupied by one word adverb

She has a brave heart, **too**.

He looked happy, **though**.

xxxii. Sentence-final position occupied by adverbial group

She walked **across the room and into the hall**.⁽²⁰⁾

I shall rinse these **out under the tap**.

xxxiii. Sentence-final position occupied by adverbial cluster

He mentioned her name **quite casually**.

Thank you **very much**!

xxxiv. Sentence-final position occupied by adverbial phrase

Some people don't care **about religion**.

They waited **in silence**.

xxxv. Sentence-final position occupied by adverbial clause

You do not act **as you speak**.

It never rains **but it pours**.²¹

xxxvi. Sentence-final position occupied by adverbial sentence

He's an old friend, **that's all**.

This is my fault, I admit it.

We come to conclude from the above shown examples that most of the possibilities occur. This conclusion may be manifested by "diagram 6", which follows; where potential occurrences are marked "x":

	(P.1)	(P.2)	Subject	(P.3)	Modal	(P.4)	Verb	(P.5)	Object	(P.6)	(P.1)
1- One word Adverb	*	*		*		*	*	*		*	*
2- Adverbial group	*	*		*		*	*	*		*	*
3- Adverbial cluster	*	*		*		*	*	*		*	*
4- Adverbial phrase	*	*		*		*	*	*		*	*
5- Adverbial clause	*	*		*		*	*	*		*	*
6- Adverbial sentence	*	*		*		*	*	*		*	*

"Diagram 6"

7. "Form-Function-Position" Relationship

It now follows that we can reach some general descriptive conclusions concerning the complex relationship between the three aspects of form, function, and position. This will help us to better understand the behavioural characteristics of English adverbial usage. Such conclusions are:

1) Adverbials in "Position 1" may belong to any of our six form classes. From the functional viewpoint, it was found out that, in the two positions these adverbials can occupy (viz. pre-sentence and post-sentence), and just by virtue of their ability to occupy any of these two positions quite freely; they are in the majority of cases sentence-modifiers.

2) Adverbials in "Position 2" may belong to four only of our form classes--to the exclusion of the other two. From the point of view of function, since they can only occupy the initial-sentence position, they may be regarded as "sequence-signals," i.e., signals linking the present context to a preceding one--be it a spoken, a written, or a practical context (e.g., so, consequently, all right, if that is so, etc.).

Otherwise, they may function as "hesitators" i.e., almost meaningless elements, uttered by a speaker, solely for the purpose of allowing himself some time to consider what he is going to say next (e.g., well, then, so, very well, etc.).

They may also function as short affirmative or negative answers--to be followed by detailed explanations (e.g., **yes**, **no**).

A fourth and last function of adverbials filling this position is their usage in exclamatory speech (e.g., **how well**, **just look**, etc.).

3) Adverbials in "Position 3" are not very common in general. When they do occur, the form is mostly "one word adverb." In such a position they usually modify the verbs they precede.

4) "Position 4" is the most common one for "one word adverb" as "verb-modifier," though other forms may also occur.

5) Adverbials in "Position 5" are mostly "adjective-modifiers," following "verb to be" (or any other linking verb), and preceding the adjectival they modify.

6) Adverbials in "Position 6," by virtue of their fixed "sentence-final" position, may be said to be 'general conclusions or judgements' of any sort, arrived at by a speaker (e.g., **too**, **though**, etc.). Thus, they are regarded as sentence-modifiers.

However, when they directly follow the verb (which, in this case, will be complete in itself), they modify it.

If, otherwise, they follow a nominal (a noun of any form), they will modify the verb preceding that nominal.

7) We, finally, consider adverbials which have a relative freedom of movement within a specific sentence. These can fill more than one of the six mentioned positions without changing the meaning of the sentence; although they usually have one of two favourite positions: pre-verb, or mid-verb.

In the following few examples, the first sentence of each set seems to be more common than the other sentences in the same set⁽²²⁾:

a) **actually**

Waiting, **actually**, won't be necessary.
Actually, waiting won't be necessary.
 Waiting won't, **actually**, be necessary.
 Waiting won't necessary, **actually**.

b) **suddenly**

He **suddenly** stopped talking.
 He stopped talking **suddenly**.
Suddenly, he stopped talking.

c) **as I remember**

The man was, **as I remember**, talking about one of his sons.
As I remember, the man was talking about one of his sons.
The man, **as I remember**, was talking about one of his sons.
The man was talking about one of his sons, **as I remember**.

d) soon

She'll **soon** be here.
She'll be here **soon**.
Soon, she'll be here.

8) "Diagram 7," a combination of "Diagram 6" and the conclusions arrived at in the previous section, will, we hope, sum up most of the results gathered up here concerning modern English adverbial usage, from a 'structurally' orientated point of view:

1- One word Adverb	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
2- Adverbial group	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
3- Adverbial cluster	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
4- Adverbial phrase	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
5- Adverbial clause	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
6- Adverbial sentence	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	(P.1)	(P.2)	Subject	(P.3)	Modal	(P.4)	Verb	(P.5)	Object	(P.6) + (P.1)
1- Verb modifier	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
2- Adjective modifier	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
3- Adverb modifier	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
4- Sentence modifier	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
5- "Other functions" (1)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

"Diagram 7"

(1) Sequence -, or exclamatory-signals; hesitators; signals for affirmation or negation.

Footnotes:

- (1) Practically, the traditional division of words into "parts of speech" is more appropriate than the system of four "form-classes" (plus a set of 'function words') proposed by C. C. Fries (**The Structure of English**), Longmans, London, 1952). Hence, this division will be maintained here. Words fall into one or another (or more than one) of the following seven parts of speech: nouns (these include pronouns), verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, interjections.
- (2) Note, also, that item 3 is, partly, self-contradictory. It is labelled **manner of modification**, yet it includes, as one of its constituents, the element 'complement'. Such grouping does not go parallel with most of the accepted grammatical practice, cf.: "An adverb may function in the clause itself as adverbial, as a constituent distinct from subject, verb, object, and complement. As such it is usually and optional element and hence peripheral to the structure of the clause" (Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G. & Svartvik, J., **A Grammar of Contemporary English**, Longman Group Ltd., London, 1972, p. 268). Greenbaum, in his book 'Studies in English Adverbial Usage', also sets out to draw a clear-cut line between the two distinct functions of 'complement' and 'modifier': "This book is concerned with some of the functions of the 'Adjunct' in Contemporary English, that is, with some of the functions of those constituents of a clause that are not Subject, Verb or Complement" (Greenbaum, S. **Studies in English Adverbial Usage**, Longman Group Ltd., 1969, p.1).
- (3) It may be convenient to state here what is meant by the terms 'clause' and 'sentence'. A **sentence** may be defined as "a word or a group of words forming a complete utterance; starting from silence or pause." A **clause** is "a group of words containing one finite verb (at least), that cannot stand by itself, and may be substituted by a nominal construction, an adjectival construction, or an adverbial construction."
- (4) An 'adverbial sentence' may be defined as a construction that, first, complies with the 'sentence' definition given above, second, functions, in its totality, as a modifier for another construction. An 'adverbial sentence' may occur before, after, or within the construction it modifies, e.g., 'The total number of students, **I am positive**, amounts to eighty-three.' This term, however, should not be confused with the terms 'sentence adverb' and 'sentence adverbial', for which the term 'sentence modifier' is used here. Compare, in this respect, Greenbaum, op. cit., p.2.
- (5) These are familiar dramatic works by the contemporary British playwright Harold Pinter.
- (6) In the case of verbs, all the four sub-categories mentioned above are here exhausted, in their given order.
- (7) In the case of adjectives, all the three sub-categories mentioned above are here exhausted, in their given order.
- (8) In the case of adverbs, all the three sub-categories mentioned above are here exhausted, in their given order.
- (9) In the case of sentences all the four sub-categories mentioned above are here exhausted, in their given order.
- (10) In the case of objects, both the two sub-categories mentioned above are here exhausted, in their given order.
- (11) By the word "essential" we mean that if you take them off, you destroy the structure of the sentence as an integral grammatical unit.
- (12) "Primary," not in the sense used by Otto Jespersen (**The Philosophy of Grammar**, Allen & Unwin, London, 1924), as a relative concept depending upon the "modifier-head" relationship -- be the head a noun, a verb, etc. -- but rather "primary" in the sense that it is one of the main grammatical components of the sentence, that cannot be dispensed with.
- (13) CF, Bloomfield: 1935: 194-6.
- (14) Harold Palmer (**A Grammar of Spoken English**, Cambridge, London, 1924) differentiates between adverbs as 'incidental components of sentences' and as "essential components of sentences;" but this is not how we use the term. We would not call adverbs "essential components of sentences," except when they function as one of our four last functional classes. (This is basically different from the view held by Palmer; this latter view rests too heavily on the aspect of meaning as a differentiating criterion.
- (15) The term 'adverbial' is used as a comprehensive term to cover all the six form classes.
- (16) Compare, in this respect, the positional classification given by Quirk, into four main positions, the last three of which are subdivided into two alternatives each (Quirk et al, op. cit., p. 426). See also the positional description adopted by Stageberg which reduces the number to four positions only (Stageberg, N., **An Introductory English Grammar**, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, U.S.A., 1977, p. 229).
- (17) Example are: **Sometimes, I sit and think; I, sometimes, sit and think; I sit and think, sometimes; In fact, she did it on purpose; She, in fact, did it on purpose; She did it on purpose, in fact;** etc. But not: **It only happened yesterday; It happened yesterday only. She only ate two oranges; She ate two oranges only;** etc. (where we get completely different sentences).
- (18) Here, we have two adverbial phrases, not one. They fill two positions which happen to be the same.

- This is not the same as a group which consists of more than one element, but fills only one position.
- (19) "The hell" is a cluster in the sense that one element (the first) modifies the other which is, in this context, an adverb (see our definition of 'adverbial cluster' in "Section 2"). In fact, this **the** is found in other contexts, in similar adverbial usage (e.g., **He loved her "the more" for what she'd done**); cf. **that** which functions, by itself, as an adverb (e.g., **I never felt that happy, Have you read that much?** etc.).
- (20) The reader may be referred to "Section 2" where a definition of "group" was supplied (viz. 'consisting of more than one unit'). This is the case here, where each of the two composites happens to be a "phrase".
- (21) This is to be pronounced without a pause after **rains**.
- (22) We ignore here overtones of stress or emphasis which, although they mostly exist, are excluded for the sake of objectivity of outlook.

Bibliography

- Bloomfield, Leonard **Language**. London: Allen & Unwin, 1935.
- Francis, Nelson **The Structure of American English**. New York: Ronald Press Co., 1958.
- Fries, C. C. **The Structure of English**. London: Longmans, 1952.
- Gleason, H. A. **An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics**. U.S.A.: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1955.
- Greenbaum, Sidney **Studies in English Adverbial Usage**, London: Longman Group Ltd., 1969.
- Jespersen Otto **The Philosophy of Grammar**. London: Allen & Unwin, 1924.
- Long, Ralph. **The Sentence & Its Parts**. U.S.A.: University of Chicago, 1961.
- Palmer, Harold. **A Grammar of Spoken English**. London: Cambridge, 1924
- Poutsma, H. **A Grammar of Late Modern English**. Amsterdam: 1926.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G. & Svartvik, J. **A Grammar of Contemporary English**. London: Longman Group Ltd., 1972.
- Stageberg, Norman, **An Introductory English Grammar**. U.S.A.: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1977.

* **Ahmad El-Bakri**

* Ph.D. Linguistics, London University, 1974.

* Lecturer in the English Department, Kuwait University.