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Adverbial patterns in interaction

Syntax is one of the basic resources in human interaction, as it provides one of the elementary tools for utterance construction and interpretation (cf., e.g., [Hakulinen and Selting, 2005](#); [Günthner and Bucker, 2009](#)).¹ Stating the circumstances of an action – its reason, its condition, its manner etc. – in turn, are recurrent communicative tasks. Adverbial patterns thus belong to the essential inventory of the grammar of a language and have therefore recurrently attracted attention from a range of linguistic approaches (cf., e.g., [Comrie, 1986](#); [Couper-Kuhlen and Kortmann, 2000](#); [Thompson et al., 2007](#)).

Empirical research, in particular that on spoken language, has led to important insights concerning formal and functional aspects of adverbial patterns and revealed a broad range of patterns expressing adverbial relations. Apart from bi-clausal constructions these also include discourse markers, (final) particles, less integrated and insubordinated clauses as well as patterns that encompass larger stretches of discourse. In addition, a number of cross-linguistic differences in the adverbial patterns' use have been observed. Such findings emphasize the variedness of language use. At the same time they raise a range of questions, not only concerning the expression of circumstantial relations and the category 'adverbial clause' but also with regard to the notion of clause combining and the traditional dichotomy coordination-subordination. The papers collected in this special issue contribute to this line of research, presenting studies of various kinds of adverbial patterns in different languages. Moreover, while the contributions all share an empirical approach to adverbial patterns and include spoken data, they rely on different methodological frameworks, such as the macrosyntactic approach ([Berrendonner, 1990](#); [Blanche-Benveniste et al., 1990](#); [Debaisieux, 2006](#)) and (rhetorical) coherence relations (cf. [Mann and Thompson, 1987](#); [Sanders et al., 1993](#); [Asher and Lascarides, 2003](#)). Most of the following papers, however, favor an interactional methodology.

Interaction-oriented approaches have enriched the study of language not only with regard to data and methods – such as emphasis on analyzing linguistic resources in their sequential location – but also in view of concepts and theoretical understandings. Investigations of clause combining (cf. [Haiman and Thompson, 1988](#); [Matthiessen and Thompson, 1988](#); [Laury, 2008](#)), in particular the study of circumstantial adverbial clauses, is one of the research areas which have profited greatly from the interactional perspective. Among the relevant findings are, first and foremost, insights into the employment of adverbial clauses by participants as practices in interaction. As such they accomplish specific interactional tasks – such as conceding and accounting – in specific sequential environments and they involve bundles of resources, like specific lexico-syntactic and prosodic means (e.g., [Chafe, 1984](#); [Ford and Thompson, 1986](#); [Ford, 1993, 1997](#); [Couper-Kuhlen, 1996](#); [Auer, 2000](#); [Ford, 2000](#); [Gohl, 2000b](#); [Barth-Weingarten, 2003](#); [Couper-Kuhlen and Thompson, 2005](#); [Couper-Kuhlen, 2009, 2011, 2012](#); [Laury, 2012](#); [Laury et al., 2013](#)). Such studies have also gained insights into motivations for the ordering of main and adverbial clause (e.g., [Chafe, 1984](#); [Ford, 1993, 2000](#); [Auer, 2000](#); [Diessel, 2005](#); [Diessel and Hetterle, 2011](#)). Research on different lexico-syntactic forms (e.g., [Ford, 1993](#); [Couper-Kuhlen, 1999](#); [Auer and Lindström, 2011](#)), in turn, has shown that specific adverbial connectors may actually be used to signal not only one but a range of adverbial relations (e.g., [Gohl, 2000b](#); [Barth-Weingarten, 2003](#); [Günthner, 2007](#)), while a number of adverbial relations can also be realized asyndetically, viz. without any adverbial connective at all (e.g., [Haiman, 1983](#); [Schlepppegrell, 1991](#); [Gohl, 2000a](#); [Thumm, 2000](#); [Corminboeuf, 2010](#); [Auer and Lindström, 2011](#)).

A growing body of findings on adverbial patterns also relate them to the discussion of larger issues, such as that of bi-clausality in general – a concept a number of scholars have started questioning with regard to other constructions (for cleft-constructions and extraposition see, e.g., [Couper-Kuhlen and Thompson, 2006](#); [Hopper and Thompson, 2008](#); [Günthner and Hopper, 2010](#)). Their findings suggest that grammatical structures should be considered more or less sedimented patterns, which are adapted to local contingencies, accomplished locally, and thus emergent on-line in interaction ([Günthner, 2008a, 2011a, 2008b](#); [Auer and Pfänder, 2011](#); [Imo, 2011a](#); [Laury and Suzuki, 2011](#); [Imo, 2012](#)). Ford even claims that “all

¹ We would like to thank Jan Lindström for helpful comments on an earlier version of this introduction. All remaining errors and shortcomings are of course our own.

units are in one way or another ‘open’” (2004: 47). Viz., when interactants are involved in a specific interactional task, they rely on patterned practices and syntactic structures as resources but they adapt them to local contingencies. Complex constructions may therefore be delivered in a prosodically disintegrated way (e.g., Thompson and Couper-Kuhlen, 2005) or in an incremental fashion (e.g., Ford et al., 2002; Ford, 2004; Ono and Couper-Kuhlen, 2007; Luke et al., 2012). Such observations are taken to provide evidence for the idea that assumedly bi-clausal constructions are better considered as combinations of fragments emerging online (cf., e.g., Hopper, 1998, 2004; Auer, 2006, 2009; Günthner, 2011b; Imo, 2011b; Laury and Suzuki, 2011; Pekarek Doehler, 2011), which may, or may not, grammaticize (Auer and Pfänder, 2011).

Adverbial patterns, too, exhibit a range of features that question their assumed bi-clausality. Several studies have, for instance, shown that they may be realized incrementally (e.g., Ford, 1993; Couper-Kuhlen and Thompson, 1999; Couper-Kuhlen, 2012). In addition, such incremental production may not only lead to an expansion of the constructional part following a pre-positioned adverbial clause (Günthner, 1999) but also to the relative independence of the parts connected (e.g., Auer, 1997; Ford, 1997; Günthner, 1999; Dancygier and Sweetser, 2005). Incremental production may moreover explain so-called ‘independent’ or ‘insubordinated’ adverbial clauses, with which the corresponding main clause is “missing” altogether (e.g., Schwenter, 1998; Benzitoun, 2006; Evans, 2007; Debaisieux, 2013; Evans and Watanabe to appear). Such insubordinated adverbial clauses have, for instance, been argued to emerge from the pursuit of (more favorable) responses (Couper-Kuhlen, 2011) and from collaborative sequences (e.g., Hilpert, 2015; Sansiñena et al., 2015). Observations like these not only contribute to questioning the concept of bi-clausality of adverbial clause structures but also the dichotomy of subordination and coordination (viz., hypotaxis and parataxis) in general. Moreover, they support the idea that syntax is shared by interlocutors and thus distributed between them (cf., e.g., Fox, 1994; Ono and Thompson, 1995).

Questions concerning the bi-clausality of adverbial patterns have also been raised by interactional studies that found adverbial patterns that encompass more than two parts. Concession, for example, has been shown to be regularly accomplished in a sequence of three sequential moves, actions (e.g., Couper-Kuhlen and Thompson, 2000; McCawley Akatsuka and Strauss, 2000; Barth-Weingarten, 2003; Lindström and Londen, 2013). Moreover, combinations of several adverbial connectives organizing units of discourse have been described as grammatical constructions (Lindström and Londen, 2008; Pfänder and Skrovec, 2010; 2014). Such larger patterns often involve not only one but several adverbial relations between different parts of the pattern.

Furthermore, our traditional notion of clause combining is questioned by the cohesive power of adverbial connectives. Apart from projecting a longer stretch of upcoming talk, such connectives may also relate back talk to the preceding talk in several ways. For instance, a connective may not only anaphorically link the upcoming discourse unit to the immediately preceding clause, but the connective may also skip-connect to pre-prior units (Mazeland and Huiskes, 2001). In addition to this, a connective may exhibit multiple scopes, with regard to the preceding discourse, such as when an account is simultaneously linked to several aspects mentioned before (Gohl, 2002, 2006).

Finally, relevant observations for the study of clause combining are also provided by the study of discourse markers (Schiffrin, 1987; Hansen, 1997; Stenström, 1998). Discourse markers have been shown to grammaticalize, or pragmaticize, from adverbial connectives, with – among other phenomena – decreasing syntactic integration between the units they connect (e.g., Gohl and Günthner, 1999; Auer and Günthner, 2005; Debaisieux, 2005, 2006). A phenomenon possibly related to the development of such markers is the process in which a bipartite adverbial structure (such as German *wenn ... dann ...* ‘if ... then ...’) gets compressed into a single “clause” (*wenn, dann ...* ‘if, then ...’) – viz., a pattern with a prosodic boundary but no lexico-syntactic material intervening between the connectives – which may then develop into a single semantic operator (Auer, 2002). Such operators, in turn, are also linked to ‘adverbial connectives’ functioning as modal particles (Degand et al., 2013) and devices to manage common ground (Fischer, 2007; Tenbrink, 2007; Deppermann and Helmer, 2013). Moreover, adverbial connectives may occur at the end of conversational turns and develop into turn-final particles (e.g., Barth-Weingarten and Couper-Kuhlen, 2002; Mulder and Thompson, 2008; Thompson and Suzuki, 2011; Koivisto, 2012; Ono et al., 2012). Such uses can be understood as rooted in *interaction*, viz. a dialogical process (cf. Ford, 1994; Schwenter, 2000; Linell, 2009; Detges and WALTER, 2012; Detges, 2013, 2014; and the contributions in Günthner et al., 2014), in which – due to local contingencies – a syntactic structure is broken off after the connective, leaving the projected adverbial part ‘open to be inferred’ by the interlocutor(s) at first and later assuming a floor-offering function (cf., e.g., Laury, 2011; Barth-Weingarten, 2014).

Findings such as these show that adverbial patterns are complex in many different ways and because of that they require further scrutiny – as regards methodologies, sorts of settings, and languages studied. Not only can such studies amend previous observations on the forms and functions of adverbial patterns – in particular on the basis of interactional data, the natural habitat of language – but we can, on that basis then, arguably also gain insight into more general issues of language structure and use.

The contributions in this volume share a functional orientation as well as a common interest in the online emergence, sedimentation, and grammaticization of adverbial patterns in language use. In addition, they focus on the fine-grained details of the lexical, syntactic, semantic, prosodic-phonetic, and embodied design of adverbial clause patterns, taking up several of the issues mentioned before.

For one, the papers deal with a broad range of different **design variants** of adverbial patterns. The use of *fragmented adverbial patterns* and *insubordinated adverbial clauses* is discussed in the papers by Günthner, Lindström/Lindholm/Laury, Pfänder, Schwenter, and Suzuki/Thompson. Adverbial *discourse markers and particles* are mainly dealt with in the papers by

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