

THE GRAMMAR OF CONVERSATION: HOW MUCH OF IT IS SYNTAX?

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Abstract: This paper examines the interaction between conversational pragmatics and syntax with a view to identifying to what extent pragmatic interpretation can be read off syntactic structure. Building on empirical data from Romanian, it argues, from a generative grammar perspective, for a speech acts component of clausal derivations. The speech act maps the pragmatic roles of speaker, hearer and the topic of their conversation (the *sentience* dimension) to syntactic positions.

Keywords: speech act, pragmatic roles, syntax, E-adverbs, Romanian

1. Introduction

This paper focuses on the interaction between pragmatics and syntax, and tackles the following question: is the pragmatic interpretation (all or part of it) read off the syntactic configuration? And if it is, how would a syntax of conversation look like?

This discussion is a *déjà vu*, because similar debates have taken place in the 80s and 90s with regard to discourse pragmatics, when the questions surrounded the mapping of topic and focus to syntax. In this respect, strong points of view were expressed on whether the discourse effects arise post-syntactically, only by semantic rules of interpretation, or whether the topic and the focus interpretation is read off the syntactic configuration (as in e.g. Lambrecht 1994, É. Kiss 1995). And if syntax is involved, is it the case that all types of topics and foci are mapped to syntax? In fact, this latter part of the debate is still ongoing (see the papers in Neelman and Vermeulen 2012).

For discourse pragmatics, a strongly supported outcome acknowledged that narrow syntax is involved in generating discourse effects, at least at a basic level. For example, a generalization would be that all languages have means to syntactically map the *aboutness* feature and the *contrast* feature, and when that happens, *aboutness* is higher than *contrast* in the clause hierarchy. The details of the formal execution have been the subject of an uncountable number of studies, trying to capture the syntactization of the discourse in various frameworks and based on a variety of cross-linguistic data, and it continues as we speak (see e.g. Frascarelli and Hinterhölzl 2007). This exercise is now repeated with respect to the interaction between conversational pragmatics and syntax. In this paper, I summarize the main issues and bring empirical support, from Romanian, to the approach that allows for the syntactic mapping of the basic speech act features such as the speaker's point of view.

2. Terminology

In this section, I provide definitions for the key concepts, for the reader's convenience. The term "conversational pragmatics" covers the area of pragmatic theory

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that deals with the “interactivity” between speaker and addressee. The main ingredient of the interactivity is the “speaker’s meaning” (Saeed 1997). This is what Austin (1962) rephrases as “how to do things with words”, when he identifies the speech acts as the speaker’s *modus operandi*.

The “speech act” is an utterance with pragmatic illocutionary Force, in the sense that it is propositional and force-bearing (Stainton 2006), and aims at convincing the addressee to comply with the speaker’s point of view or expectation. Crucially, speech acts are orthogonal to the truth conditional meaning, and belong to what Potts (2003) calls “expressive meaning”, and Horne (2011) – “non-at-issue meaning”.

We can group the pragmatic meanings that come out of the conversational set-up according to the way they convey the speaker’s point of view. A possible classification is presented in (1):

- (1) Types of expressive meaning (the speaker’s point of view)
 - a. inter-personal relation with addressee:
 - authority, respect, disdain...
 - b. utterance performativity typing:
 - utterance intended as question, request, assertion, plea...
 - c. assessment typing:
 - different kinds of evaluations, epistemic stands, sources of evidence

Beside the distinction between types of speech acts, the conversation also encodes information about the *pragmatic roles*: that is, the speaker, the addressee and the topic of their conversation (the *sentience* dimension; see Barðdal & Chelliah 2009).

3. Theoretical question

The definitions provided in section 1 are a matter of routine in semantic and pragmatic theory. The question is how many of these meanings are read off the syntactic structure?

There are three possible answers: none, some or all of them. While no linguist believes that every interpretive nuance arises from syntactic computation, there are some linguists who believe that all interpretation relevant to conversational pragmatics should be accounted for outside the syntactic component (e.g. DeCat 2013). Most linguists take the moderate stand by considering that some basic pragmatic features became functional features visible to syntactic computation. This view is not restricted to generative grammar, but is shared by linguists using various theoretical frameworks (e.g. Barðdal & Chelliah 2009). In fact, there is a general concern with respect to a clear-cut separation between a purely pragmatic and a purely syntactic treatment of speech acts, such as expressed, for example, by Haselow, in descriptive linguistics:

“I argue against a grammar-pragmatics divide and for a broad conception of grammar, as proposed, for instance, by Traugott (2003: 626), for whom grammar encompasses not only phonology, morpho-syntax, and truth-functional semantics,

but also elements that are involved in speaker-addressee interaction and that promote discourse management and coherence, information processing, and the regulation of interpersonal relations between participants of a conversation” (Haselow 2013: 376).

In the remaining of this paper, I adopt Haselow’s standpoint, and argue, from a generative grammar perspective, for a speech acts component of clausal derivations.

4. Evidence for the syntactic mapping of speech act features

The crucial piece of evidence for a syntactic computation of speech acts comes from derivational restrictions: if the presence or the absence of a certain conversational component can be systematically correlated with the presence or the absence of a certain syntactic operation (i.e. the predictability factor), then we have to admit to the visibility of the respective pragmatic feature for the computation of clause/phrasal derivation.

There are many cross-linguistic examples of such correlations, for which I only provide a small sample below. For further examples and discussions, see, among others: Ross (1970), Oyharçabal (1993), Speas and Tenny (2003), Munaro and Poletto (2004), Speas (2004, 2010), Tenny (2006), Sigurdsson (2004, 2008, 2011), Giorgi (2010), Kidwai (2010), Zu (2011), Miyagawa (2012). The basic idea is that the derivation computes what we consider pragmatic features before it reaches the interfaces. The examples in (2) to (5) show only two such features and their syntactic effects: the speaker (including the speaker’s point of view and evidentiality) and the addressee.

- (i) The mapping of *speaker* = long distance binding; logophoricity; indexicality (Ross 1970, Sigurdsson 2004, 2008, 2011, Giorgi 2010)
- (2) a. Physicists like myself were never too happy with the parity principle.
b. *Physicists like himself always claim that Albert was hard to understand.
(from Ross 1970)

In (2), the possibility of having an anaphoric pronoun without local antecedent depends on the person feature: the first person is allowed, whereas the third person is ruled out. Ross (1970) argues that the first person is actually bound locally by a null *speaker* feature, mapped above the sentence, whereas no local antecedent arises for the third person pronoun.

- (ii) The mapping of *addressee* = allocutive agreement in Basque (Oyharçabal 1993, Miyagawa 2012)

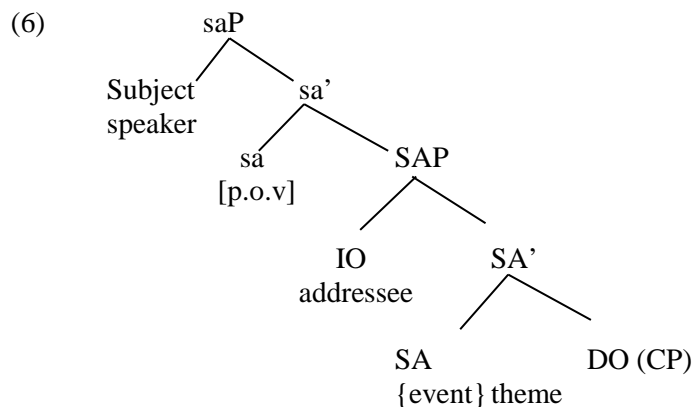
- (3) a. To a male friend
- | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----------|--------|---------|-----------------|------------------------|--------------|
| | | | | allocutive agr. | | subject agr. |
| Pettek | lan | egin | dik. | ↓ | | ↓ |
| Peter.ERG | work.ABS | do.PRF | AUX-3SG | ABS | 2SG.MASC.ALLOC-3SG.ERG | |
- ‘Peter worked.’

ending on the verb in some languages, as shown in (4). For such cases, Speas (2010) argues that the type of evidential morpheme has an impact on the use and interpretation of temporal/aspectual readings, and that evidentiality is part of the TAM system.¹ In the same vein, Kidwai (2010) shows that some tenseless languages, such as Meiteilon, have evidential morphemes that determine the phasal or non-phasal status of a derivation (they are mapped to *v* and *C*). For Romanian, Alboiu and Hill (2015) point out that the difference between known or unknown sources of evidence is syntactically encoded as only the former involves Raising-to-Object, as in (5b).

Cross-linguistic evidence of this type brought about several proposals for formalizing the syntax of speech acts. The next section introduces such a proposal.

5. Formalization

What is the operation by which pragmatic features are computed in narrow syntax? The analysis that became a theoretical standard has been proposed by Speas and Tenny (2003), and involves the treatment of the speech act as a predicative unit, organized and computed similarly to a *vP/VP*. That is, the speech act (henceforth, *SA*) has evenimental semantics, and many of these markers arise from the grammaticalization of verbs (Haegeman 2014). *SA* maps the pragmatic roles of speaker, hearer and sentience to syntactic positions, in the same way a verb would map its thematic roles to the positions of direct or indirect object and subject. The derivational operations apply blindly, projecting an argument structure. The resulting configuration is shown in (6), slightly modified in Hill (2007a, 2014) from the original proposal in Speas and Tenny (2003).



While (6) basically adopts the structural hierarchy of the performative hypothesis, it has an important conceptual advantage over Ross' (1970) proposal: The performative hypothesis relied on a bi-clausal structure, consisting of a null 'say' predicate that "selected" the matrix clause. The bi-clausal structure raised problems for the truth-value

¹ Romanian also encodes evidentiality morphologically, but through compound forms rather than dedicated verb endings (see Irimia 2010).

theory, which led to severe criticisms and dismissals of this proposal (Levinson 1982). By comparison, the configuration in (6) is mono-clausal, as SAP is part of the functional domain, and no inconsistencies arise for truth conditionality, as the lexical items that merge in SAP have “non-at-issue” meaning (versus ‘say’ lexical verbs).

6. The relevance of Romanian data: E-adverbs

Romanian provides abundant evidence for the syntactization of conversational pragmatics, in direct addresses that include vocatives, speech act particles and allocutive agreement (see Hill 2014 for an analysis of these phenomena). In this section, I focus only on one such example: the use of E-adverbs (evaluative, evidential, epistemic) with both narrow and wide scope.

6.1 Matching positions and interpretations

Several studies pointed out the puzzling use of the complementizer ‘that’ with E-adverbs, cross-linguistically. The construction contains the adverb followed by a CP headed by ‘that’, as in (7). Crucially, in such constructions, the evidence relies only on the speaker’s point of view, and the speaker vows for it. This reading is also signalled by modification in prosody, the adverb getting high pitch.

- (7) English
- a. Clearly **that**, for whatever reason, the information wasn’t getting through on the ground.
 - b. Obviously **that** the kids were giving him a bit of a problem.
- (from Radford 2013)
- (8) Romanian
- a. Evident **c-** a plecat supărată.
obviously that has left angry
‘Obviously, she left angry.’
 - b. Bineînțeles **că** vine la timp.
of course that come at time
‘Of course he comes at the right time.’
- (9) Spanish
- a. Claro **que** te amo mucho.
clearly that you love-1SG much
‘Clearly I love you a lot.’
 - b. Seguro **que** hay sol mañana.
surely that has sun tomorrow
‘Surely, there’ll be sun tomorrow’

The puzzle in (7) to (9) is that the CP is not embedded, but occurs in root context, hence it is a case of “root insubordination”². Common to all these languages is also the fact that

² “Insubordination” refers to a matrix, stand-alone utterance that exhibits morpho-syntactic properties that

some of these adverbs may have either predicative scope, as in (10), or propositional scope as in (11).

- (10) a. He speaks **clearly**.
 b. Protestează **în mod evident**.
 protest-3PL in way obvious
 'They protest openly.'
 c. Está más **seguro** en el banco.
 is more sure in the bank
 'It is safer in the bank.'

In (11), the adverb is evidential with propositional scope, but the source of evidence is other than the speaker (the speaker's point of view is not involved).

- (11) a. Tolkien's way of thinking **clearly** spoke deeply to Lewis.
 (<http://theringofwords.tumblr.com/post/>)
 b. Absolut **evident** n- are nici un chef de reforme.
 absolutely evidently not has any a wish of reforms
 'It is absolutely evident that he has no wish for reforms'
 (<http://capitalismpepaine.com/2010/12/05/>)
 c. Știu că viața mea pare numai lapte și miere,
 know-1SG that life-the my seems only milk and honey
 ceea ce **evident** n- are nicio legătură cu realitatea.
 that which evidently not has any relation to reality
 'I know that my life looks like pure milk and honey, which evidently has
 no relation to reality.'
 (<https://www.facebook.com/andimoiescu.ro/posts/>)

The first generalization for (7) to (11) is that the position of the adverb, low or high, decides on the narrow or wide scope interpretation (Hill 2007b). When the adverb has wide scope, a further distinction is necessary insofar as the speaker's point of view is involved or not. Thus, (12) has an ambiguous reading in this respect, on paper, but in spoken language, the intonation will distinguish between a reading with the speaker as the only source of evidence, which triggers high pitch on the adverb, and a reading where the evidence comes from alternative sources, and has neutral pitch.

- (12) a. **Clearly**, he speaks.
 b. **Evident**, protestează.
 c. **Seguro**, está en el banco.

Crucially, the high pitch reading in (12) is maintained when 'that' is inserted after the adverb, to obtain the order in (7) to (9). Thus, although the word order in (12) may suggest that both wide scope readings arise from the same configuration, the difference in

are otherwise indicative of subordinate clauses (Evans 2007, Mithun 2008).

intonation indicates differently: on the speaker's point of view reading, 'that' can be optionally inserted, whereas on the "objective" reading, 'that' cannot be inserted. For example, (11c), where the speaker is not the source of evidence, cannot turn into (11c'), but needs to become a bi-clausal structure as in (11c'') in the presence of 'that'.

- (11) c'. *Absolut **evident** că n- are nici un chef de reforme
absolutely evidently that not has any a wish of reforms
Intended: 'It is absolutely evident (take it from me) that he has no wish for reforms'
- c''). E absolut **evident** că n- are nici un chef de reforme.
is absolutely evidently that not has any a wish of reforms
'It is absolutely evident (from various sources) that he has no wish for reforms.'

Formally, when we match the syntactic positions with the differences in the interpretation of the adverb, we end up with three hierarchical positions that instruct the Logical Form for one reading or another. This is summed up in (13).

- (13) SAP < CP < TP/vP
wide scope wide scope narrow scope
+p.o.v (that) -p.o.v.

The insertion of 'that' cannot be accounted for outside the syntax because English and Romanian do not allow for declarative root clauses to start with 'that', as shown in (14):

- (14) a. (*That) he can't stand garlic. (from Radford 2013)
- b. (*Că) vine la timp.
that comes at time
'He is punctual.'

For (14) to become grammatical, an item is needed to precede and select the root CP-'that' in order to license this type of root insubordination. The constructions in (7) and (8) display just such an item: an evidential adverb that c-commands the CP-'that'. Thus, the working hypothesis is the following: the evidential feature that also includes the speaker's point of view is a functional feature of the high left periphery, and it is mapped to the *sa* head in (6). The adverb is merged either in the Specifier of or in the *sa* head.

Cartographic tests (Rizzi 1997) show that the insubordination *că* 'that' is higher than Topics and Focus constituents, as shown in (15a), so it is not different from the complementizer *că* used with finite complements, as shown in (15b):

- (15) a. Bineînțeles **că** [la școală]_{TOP} [numai în uniformă]_{FOC}
of course that to school only in uniform
te poți duce.
CL.ACC.2SG can-2SG go
'Of course, to school, you can only go in uniform.'

- b. Am constatat **că** [la școală]_{TOP} [numai în uniformă]_{FOC}
 have.1 noticed that to school only in uniform
 te poți duce.
 CL.ACC.2SG can-2SG go
 ‘I have noticed that, to school, you can go only in uniform.’

In (15), *că* is constantly in Force in the cartographic clause hierarchy (i.e. Force > Top > Focus > Fin > TP). Hence, we can say that constructions as in (7)-(9) are using a complementizer that is already available in the language and it is compatible with c-selection by various heads, which may include the evidential³.

This line of reasoning leads to the conclusion that, for the point of view reading, we have the structure in (16).

- (16) saP_[evid]/SAP > ForceP

Crucially, (16) is not a biclausal structure; saP is an extension of the CP field that encodes conversational pragmatics higher than discourse pragmatics, so that the speaker’s point of view takes scope over the entire utterance.

6.2 The reanalysis of E-adverbs

Support for the analysis in (16) comes from the grammaticalization that applied to the evidential adverb. That is, when this adverb is used to modify a verb, it can display degree modifiers within its phrase structure, as we saw in (11c) and we have another example in (17a); it can also be replaced with a PP as in (17b, c).

- (17) a. Din discuțiile purtate cu clienții lor, reieșea **foarte**
 from discussions-the carried with clients-the their appeared very
evident că nu ascultau cu adevărat nevoile reale ale clienților
 clearly that not listened in truth needs-the real of clients-the.GEN
 ‘From the discussions had with the clients, it clearly appeared that they
 did not in fact listen to the real needs of their clients’
<http://www.profitness.ro/personal-training-agenda-de-plina-de-programa-ri-/35#.U1J9OfldXX4>
- b. Ucraina se îndepărtează **în mod evident** de Uniunea Europeană
 Ukraine REFL moves away in way clear of Union-the European
 ‘Ukraine is clearly moving away from the European Union.’
 (http://www.economica.net/ucraina-se-indeparteaza-de-ue-in-mod-eviden-t-considera-seful-diplomatiei-poloneze_71814.html)

³ Demonte and Soriano (2013) argue that pure ‘that’ insubordination as in (14) exists in spoken Spanish alongside the selected ‘that’ insubordination in (9).

- c. **În mod evident**, dimensiunea teologică o subordonează
 in way evident dimension-the theological it subordinates
 pe cea istorică
 PE the historical
 ‘Evidently, the theological dimension subordinates the historical one.’
 (<http://books.google.ca/books?id>)

None of the above is possible when the same lexical item is in front of ‘that’, as illustrated in (18):

- (18) a. (*Foarte) evident că nu ascultau nevoile clienților.
 very clearly that not listened needs-the clients-the.GEN
 Intended: ‘Clearly, they did not listen to the clients’ needs.’
 b. (*În mod) evident că nu ascultau nevoile clienților.
 in way clearly that not listened needs-the clients-the.GEN
 Intended: ‘Clearly, they did not listen to the clients’ needs.’

In other words, the adverb that modifies the verb in (17) is a substantive category that projects to an AdvP, whereas the adverb in (18) is not, it behaves like a functional category that is unable to project its own AdvP.

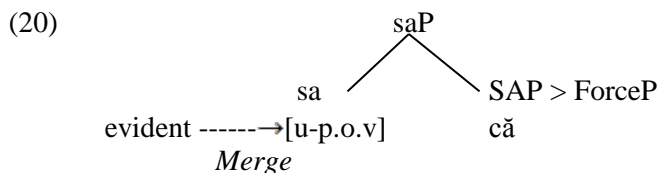
Following the theory of grammaticalization such as recast in Minimalist terms, the lexical adverb has been reanalysed upwards the clause hierarchy, as a functional category. Diachronically, such reanalysis has been shown to abide by the head preference principle and the late merge principle. I give their definitions in (19), as presented in van Gelderen (2011):

- (19) a. **Head Preference Principle**
 Be a head rather than a phrase (upon reanalysis).
 b. **Late Merge Principle**
 Merge as late as possible when reanalyzed.

Accordingly, the evidential adverb is reanalyzed in Romanian as an evidential marker directly merged as the head *sa*, as in (20)⁴:

⁴ This hierarchy in (20) predicts that lexical items in SAP may intervene between the evidential and *că*. This is indeed the case, as shown in (i), where the vocative phrase, situated in Spec, SAP (as the indirect object; Hill 2014) can occur within the same prosodic unit with the evidential: the pitch decreases gradually from high (on the evidential) to low (on the CP) without breaks or pauses.

(i) Bineînțeles mă copile că nu se poate.
 obviously PRT child-VOC that not REFL can
 ‘Obviously my child, this is not possible.’



The merging of the evidential marker in *sa* is triggered by an uninterpretable functional feature that maps the speaker's point of view. In (20), this feature is valued as evidential because of the semantics of the marker.

There could be cross- and intra-linguistic variation in the degree of grammaticalization of the adverb, some adverbs having not yet reached the exclusive head status; that is, the merge in Spec,*sa*P of AdvP or a mixed AdvP/Adv category is not excluded. In Romanian, however, these exceptions are rare and inconclusive⁵.

This analysis predicts that other types of pragmatic markers may merge in (20) and bring a variety of values for the speaker's point of view. That is confirmed in (21), where we can see evaluatives derived either from nouns or verbs, promissives, mirative onomatopoeia, epistemics, all of which may occur with 'that'-indicative clauses, and take scope over the utterance.

- (21) a. **Noroc că** nu vine. (**evaluative**, N-based)
 luck that not comes
 'Luckily, he does not come.'
- b. **Las' că** nu e bine. (**evaluative**, V-based)
 PRT that not is well
 'It's not good, really.'
- c. **Zău că** e frumos. (**promissive**, N-based)
 PRT that is pretty
 'It is pretty, cross-my-heart.'
- d. **Cât luăm apă de la fantână și ne zgâim la programul autobuzelor, hop că** vine în stație. (**mirative**, onomat.)
 busses-the.GEN ONOM that comes in station
 'As we get water from the fountain and stare at the bus schedule, there you are, it [the buss] arrives at the terminal.'
 (http://neverendingtrails.wordpress.com/2013/08/31/tour_of_mont_blanc-ziu-a-2/)
- e. **Trebuie că** știe. (**epistemic**, V-based)
 must that knows
 '(In my opinion) she necessarily knows.'

⁵ For example, an evidential PP such as *fără îndoială* 'without any doubt' may precede 'that', on a par with its English counterpart in (23). However, semantic theory treats such frozen expressions as one word/entry in the lexicon (Saeed 1997), so they may even count as being merged in the *sa* head.

In Rizzi's cartographic system, if the structure projects up to a certain level, then it necessarily projects all the functional phrases that are lower than that level, since lower projections cannot be skipped. Then, if the structure projects up to saP, ForceP is necessarily projected, so the spell-out of Force is given for free in the structure. The spell out of Force is optional in these constructions – see (13) – because this is a mono-clausal structure, not a bi-clausal one with a s/c-selected clausal complement. However, if Force is spelled out, it can only be 'that' because of the finite and declarative (statement) nature of the clause.

These configurations are restricted to root/main clauses, as shown in (22), where saP embedding is ruled out⁶:

- (22) *A declarat că evident că n-a venit.
has declared that clearly that not-has come

The ungrammaticality of (22) follows from the fact that the evidential in *sa* is an intervener between the matrix verb and the indicative Force it probes.

To conclude this section, Romanian E-adverbs expressing the speaker's point of view bring support to the mapping of conversational pragmatic features to syntax. In fact, such an analysis allows us to fine-tune the matching between the interpretation and the syntactic structure for E-adverbs with wide scope, and to include under a single umbrella a variety of constructions with root insubordination, as in (21), that would otherwise seem to be syntactically disconnected.

7. Alternative analyses

Within syntactic theory, there is significant resistance to the expansion of the CP field into the SAP domain, as proposed in Speas and Tenny (2003), and as I applied it in (20). Therefore, while admitting to the mapping of the evidential feature, several linguists tried to capture the data in a way that would dispense with a projection like SAP. This section looks at how such analyses fare for the E-adverbs data discussed above.

Let us start with Radford (2013), who argues that English 'that' in (7) is in Fin, not in Force, and this is always the case when we have root insubordination. The adverb is merged in a Specifier position in the CP field, in a way that matches the proposal of a ModP for fronted adverbs in Rizzi's (2004) hierarchy. Thus, the clause structure is a ForceP (phasal) with a lexically null Force, followed by ModP with the adverb and further, by FinP with 'that' in Fin. The justification Radford (2013) provides for this analysis is that Old English had 'that' in Fin, so (7) preserves this distribution, which occurs only in spoken registers.

This analysis runs into empirical problems, both with respect to the Old English facts and with respect to the cartographic tests applied to Modern English. First, diachronic studies do show instances of 'that' in Fin in English up to 1500, but Fin is

⁶ In (22), the verb triggers real embedding, and is different from verbs that allow for free speech, as discussed in the next section.

instantiated as *that* only in the presence of a complementizer in Force (van Gelderen 2005), so it occurs as “recomplementation”. In fact, van Gelderen (2011: 251) locates single ‘that’ in Force and shows that adverbial PPs can be fronted between Focus and Fin. Thus, van Gelderen’s (2011) analysis gives the wrong prediction for Radford’s proposal, and it is supported even by examples from Radford’s article, where the word order is as in (23):

(23) without a doubt **that** in midfield **they** were world class (Radford 2013: ex. 41)

In (23), the fronted PP appears as predicted by van Gelderen, above the subject, which means it is in the CP field. However it is also lower than ‘that’, which means that ‘that’ cannot be in Fin, but in Force. The evidential expression *without a doubt* precedes ‘that’, hence, it has to be associated with a higher projection.

This hierarchy also finds support in Swan’s (1991) article. The author notices that evidential adverbs do not trigger subject-verb inversion, in the way the items merged in ForceP or lower would, which means that the evidential is directly merged in a very high position, which is above any other sentential adverb (e.g. higher than *frankly*, contra Cinque 1999).

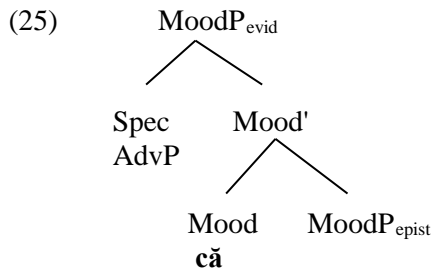
Another problem with Radford’s (2013) analysis comes from the language-specific dimension: locating ‘that’ in Fin may respond to the English data but would not allow for the extension of this analysis to other languages that display the same phenomenon with the same interpretive effects. For example, the Romanian counterpart to (7) routinely allows for fronting to Topic and Focus in the CP field, as seen in (15), which indicates beyond doubt the Force location for ‘that’. If we maintain Radford’s analysis, then the adverb is within CP in English but within saP in Romanian. This cross-linguistic contrast in syntactic structure is unlikely in view of obtaining similar readings, which means that LF must get similar instructions from the structure. Thus, I have to conclude that Radford’s (2013) analysis is inadequate to both English and cross-linguistic data.

One may object that the analysis proposed so far for Romanian is not correct, and so, the similarity with the English data is only apparent. There are two alternative analyses in the literature proposed for the construction in (8): one that adapts Cinque’s (1999) adverbial hierarchy, the other that attempts to adjust the type of fronting to the CP field.

In particular, Lupşa (2011) tries to maintain Cinque’s hierarchy, where evidentiality is mapped to a Mood head above TP, but lower than Force. I show the relevant segment of Cinque’s hierarchy in (24).

(24) [_{CP} [*frankly* Mood-speech act [*fortunately* Mood-evaluative [*allegedly* Mood-evidential [*probably* Mod-epistemic [_{TP} [*once* T(Past)...]]]]]]]]

In order to maintain the analysis in (24), Lupşa analyzes *că* as the spell-out of Mood-evidential, while the adverb is merged in Spec, MoodP, as in (25). The justification is that the evidential must take scope over a proposition, and that any embedded propositional domain is introduced by *că* in Romanian.



This analysis runs into several problems. If any embedded propositional domain is introduced by *că* in Romanian, then *că* must be obligatory in the presence of the wide scope reading of the adverb, which is not the case. This analysis makes no difference between the two types of evidentials with wide scope readings – see (13), which leaves unaccounted for the contrast between structures with phrasal and non-phrasal evidentials – see (17) versus (18) – together with the systematic difference in reading they trigger (i.e. whether the speaker’s point of view is mapped or not). Also, this analysis predicts that the structure in (25) can occur in an embedded clause, since the evidential is lower than Force. The author provides examples as in (26) to support this prediction. However, the examples are limited to constructions with ‘say’ in the matrix clause, which is typical for free speech. As shown in (22), verbs that subcategorize for clausal complements (indirect speech) rule out the embedding of *sAP*.

- (26) Spunea *că* sigur *că* va veni.// (22) *A declarat *că* evident *că* n-a venit.
 said that surely that will come has declared that clearly that not-has come
 ‘She said that surely, she’ll come.’

Finally, this analysis cannot be extended to other languages, since the properties invoked for justification are language specific and do not apply to the counterpart of this construction in other languages. For example, English ‘that’ is not obligatory to introduce propositional domains.

Another attempt to avoid the postulation of *SAP* is made in Protopopescu (2012). This study tries to fit the evidential feature within the finer-grained mapping of the CP field, and provides a syncretic feature analysis rather than an independent high mapping.

Protopopescu acknowledges that *că* is a complementizer, not the spell out of Mood-evidential, but she tries to locate it at a lower level in the CP, so as to leave room for the adverb without the need of stipulating the higher mapping of *SAP*. Hence, her objective is similar to Radford’s (2013). Although the *SAP* analysis was available in the literature (Hill 2007b), the author rejects it on the basis of possible embedding and constituent fronting as in (27).

The objection relating to embedding is supported only by examples with ‘say’ in the matrix clause, so making generalizations on the basis of such constructions is problematic, as explained for (26) above. The second objection is based on examples as in (27):

- (27) Pe Maria **firește** că o vom invita.
 PE Maria naturally that her will-1PL invite
 ‘As for Maria, naturally, we’ll invite her.’

In (27), a constituent with Topic reading precedes the relevant evidential. Since such a constituent is in Spec, TopP, then the evidential must be lower, in the CP field.

The fallacy of this reasoning is to assume that there is only one topic position at the left periphery. This cannot be correct, as constituents with an “aboutness” topic reading are commonly seen above what is considered the SAP domain (above vocatives, imperatives, etc.). These are Hanging or Frame-setting Topics, such as discussed in Benincà (2001), Benincà and Polletto (2004) or Kuong (2007), and which are generated above the ForceP domain. In fact, there is a test for distinguishing CP topics from Hanging topics: only the latter allow for a strong resumptive pronoun in the clause. Consider (28):

- (28) a. Pe Maria **sigur** că o vom invita și pe ea.
 PE Maria of.course that her will-1PL invite and PE her
 ‘As for Maria, of course we’ll invite her too.’
 b. Credea că pe Maria **sigur** o vom invita (*/?și pe ea).
 Believed-3SG that pe Maria certainly her will-1PL invite and PE her
 Intended: ‘He believed that we’d invite Maria too.’

(28a) replicates the word order in (27), and allows for the resumptive pronoun, whereas (28b) displays the typical word order in an embedded CP and rules out the resumptive pronoun. Hence, (27) and (28a) do not generate the topic constituent within the CP.

The next step in Protopopescu’s analysis is to find a location for *că*, which ends up in Focus. Predictably, this analysis runs into conceptual and empirical problems, among which is the prediction that evidential adverbs that occurs with *că* should be in complementary distribution with fronting to Spec, FocusP (competition for the Spec position), which is not the case, as shown in (15).

To conclude, Protopopescu’s analysis, on a par with Lupșa’s or Radford’s, resorts to ad-hoc stipulations in its attempt to avoid a SAP configuration, and ends up being empirically inadequate.

8. Conclusions

This paper aimed to point out that the recent extensions of the clausal functional field with the purpose of capturing the mapping of conversational features to syntax are justified and necessary. This is not a simple exercise in the proliferation of the left periphery, but a fundamental missing ingredient from the way generative grammar formalizes the work of the computational system applied to language processing.

The most successful proposal in this respect at this time is the configuration in (6). There is no doubt that other types of formalizations are possible, and the exact labels or feature distribution are irrelevant as long as the analysis can account for the syntactic effects arising from the merging of lexical items with speech act features.

What is unacceptable, considering the large body of linguistic studies attesting to the contrary, is the denial of a dedicated functional field for speech act features in narrow syntax. This would not only dismiss the empirical evidence (e.g. as being noisy or deceiving) but also the theoretical basis of generative grammar, which predicts this extension: In cartography, for example, the line of enquiry laid out in Cinque and Rizzi (2010) advocates the syntactization of the interpretive domains, extending it to the speech act layer of the clause. In Minimalism, Miyagawa (2010) points out that the expressivity of language is syntactically grasped by including discourse based features in the C/T agreement and inheritance/transfer relations, in addition to the phi-feature cluster, and ends up adopting the domain in (6) above the CP (Miyagawa 2012).

We know that a proposal has a valid basis when it springs up in various theoretical frameworks. The morphosyntactic treatment of speech act features is a case in order. There is strong support for such a treatment in descriptive and in historical linguistics, where the process of grammaticalization has been shown to be often triggered by features of conversational pragmatics (e.g., Barðdal and Chelliah 2009). And, as Hyman (1983: 71) remarks, “when pragmatic factors become part of grammar, the result is syntax and morphology”.

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