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## ADVERB OR ADVERBIAL PHRASES – STRUCTURE, MEANING, FUNCTION

***Abstract:** The following paper deals with phrases and clauses, particularly Adverbial phrases in English language. The aim of this paper was to briefly introduce and explain the importance of phrases in English language by presenting their structure, meaning, types and functions that are usually appointed to them. Showing the results and conclusions of a research and dedicated work by a group of students and their teachers, we presented the way in which adverbial phrases may appear in various kinds of discourses. For the purposes of our research, we chose literary discourse and the excerpt of a novel by Sherwood Anderson (1921) called *The Door of the Trap*.*

***Key words:** adverb, adverbial, phrase, head word, structure, premodifiers, postmodifiers.*

### INTRODUCTION

One of the important structures that helps in better understanding of the English language is the structure called phrases and especially Adverb or Adverbial Phrase (Adv P). No matter whether it is EFL or ESL or ESP, English learnt and taught for different goals and reasons is always faced with the terms *Adverbs, Adverbials, Adjuncts* that are interesting forms morphologically, syntactically and semantically. The process of teaching them is important to understand English. That is why the investigation presented in this paper would try to explain the problem theoretically and practically, because there are certain dilemmas, controversies and different opinions connected with the problem of Adverb or Adverbial Phrases. This investigation represents the result of the mini project done by the students of the second year of English and their teachers during the certain period of time (five years) in order to reveal the problem of Adv P. as much as possible.

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There is a close connection between the three language structures such as *Adverbs*, *Adverb or Adverbial Phrase* and *Adverb or Adverbial Clause*. *Adverbs* belong to the open-class items and can be represented by simple, complex, compound and complex-compound words *morphologically*. But considering their *function* and *meaning* (syntax and semantics) it is obvious that there are other structures that can function as *Adverbs*. According to the positional classification of words they are called *adverbials* (adjectives, nouns, other structures). The last term may lead to confusion because *traditionally* the term adverbial refers to the *sentence structure element*. In order to solve the problem nowadays another term is used to define this sentence structure element – *adjunct*. So functionally the term *adverbial* is used to define all structures that can take the position of an adverb on a phrase level structure, while on a clause and sentence level and *adjunct* is used. This paper would try to explain the problem better. For this purpose, certain grammars and syntaxes are consulted and one example how it is applied in practice is presented.

As it is known, *syntax* is a science which studies sentences, their structure, arrangement, and the relationship among words in a sentence. It is important to emphasize that “syntax has to do with how words are put together to build phrases, with how phrases are put together to build clauses or bigger phrases, and with how clauses are put together to build sentences”. (Miller, 2002) Other analysts state that “syntax is the study of how the words combine to form sentences and the rules which govern the information of sentences” (Richards, Platt, Weber, 1987: 285).

The largest unit of syntax is *a sentence*, “the largest independent construction (or independent language form) – insofar as, regardless of its own structure, is not an integral part of a larger construction or form, but it functions independently in communication” (Bugarski, 1995: 118). On a level below the sentence there is *a clause*, which is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate. A clause may be either a sentence (an independent clause) or a sentence – like construction within another sentence (a dependent or subordinate clause). Then, we have to mention *a phrase*, that is, two or more words that do not contain the subject – verb pair necessary to form a clause. And the smallest unit of syntactic structure is *a word* that grammatically interacts with other such units, forming constructions on various levels (Bugarski, 1995: 117). This division can be arranged in a hierarchical order:

**sentence ↔ clause ↔ phrase ↔ word**

Since the subject of this paper concerns phrases, let us explain them in more detail. Phrases can be very short, consisting of only one word, for example – This is really *difficult*. Or, they can be quite long, like for example, *After slithering down the stairs and across the road to scare nearly to death Mrs. Adams busy pruning her rose bushes*.

Phrases are important units of language that we tend to use quite a lot. A phrase is a small group of words that forms a meaningful unit within a clause. It is a group of words without both a subject and predicate. Phrases are considered as the second level of classification as they tend to be larger than individual words, but smaller than sentences. We refer to the central element in a phrase as *the head* of the phrase. Phrases combine words into a larger unit that can function as a sentence element. Some definitions of a phrase offered by different analysts are the following:

*A phrase can be considered the lowest syntactic unit. It can be defined as a syntactic unit that contains more than one word and lacks the subject – predicate relationship. The phrase contains one word which is more important than the others (Head) and some other single word or word group elements that specify, modify or complete the headword in various ways.* (Ilic, 2008: 44)

*Or the simplest way of forming a phrase is by merging two words together, for example, by merging the word help with the word you, we form the phrase help you.* (Radford, 2004: 38)

The phrase level in the grammatical hierarchy is the level that is below the clause level and above the word level. According to Cook (1969: 30), *the phrase level is that level of the grammar at which the structured word groups which are not clauses are broken down into words.*

There are three classifications of phrases. First of all, they can be divided into *simple* and *complex* phrases. Simple phrase consists of only one word, which is the head, for example in a sentence *he came yesterday*, *came* is a verb phrase. And a complex phrase consists of more than one word, for example, *last Thursday evening*.

The second classification is made according to the distribution of phrases, and the relation between their constituents. The terms *endocentric* and *exocentric* are used here. Endocentric phrase is one whose distribution is functionally equivalent to that of one or more of its constituents, that is, a word or a group of words, which serves as a definable centre or head. Usually nominal, verbal, adjectival and adverbial phrases belong to endocentric types because the constituent items are subordinate to the head. In this type of phrases the primary constituent or constituents are comparable to the complete construction. For example, the phrase *good old John* is endocentric because of the headword John, which is a noun. If the head is removed from the phrase, then so is the meaning. The rest of the phrase, apart from the head, is optional and can be removed without losing the basic meaning. The opposite of an *endocentric phrase* is an *exocentric phrase*. An exocentric phrase is one in which the primary constituent or constituents do not function like the complete construction. For example, *in the house* is exocentric because the constituent *the house* functions differently from the prepositional phrase. In conclusion, *exocentric* refers to a group of syntactically related words where none of the words is functionally equivalent to the group as whole, that is, there is no definable centre or head inside the group or the middle phrase represents the head.

According to the head, we differentiate between five kinds of phrases (based on the type of word that governs the word group). They are: nominal, verbal, prepositional, adjectival and adverbial phrase.

- **Nominal phrase** – is built around a single noun, or nominal, for example:
  1. *A vase of roses* stood on the table.
  2. She was reading *a book about the emancipation of women*.
- **Verbal phrase** – is the verbal part of a clause, with a head that is a verb or verbal:
  3. She *had been living* in London.
  4. I *will be going* to college next year.
- **Adjectival phrase** – is built around an adjective or adjectival, for example:
  5. He's led *a very interesting* life.
  6. A lot of the kids are *really keen* on football.
- **Prepositional phrase** – is introduced by a preposition, for example:
  7. I longed to live *near the sea*.
  8. The dog was hiding *under the kitchen table*.
- **Adverbial phrase** – is built around an adverb or adverbial by adding words before and/or after it, for example:
  9. The economy recovered *very slowly*.
  10. They wanted to leave the country *as fast as possible*.

All phrases have something in common, namely the fact that they *must minimally contain a Head*. (Aarts, 2001 : 104) Except for the obligatory element (Head – H), there are other elements within phrases to fulfill the meaning of a head. Those are *determiners*, *modifiers* and *complements*.

- **Determiners** – which occur only in noun phrases (NPs). They are words or group of words that introduce nouns. Determiners include articles, demonstratives, quantifiers, and possessive determiners. They are not formal word classes, but functional elements of structure (e.g. *this* book)
- **Modifiers** – can occur in all types of phrases. Modifier is a word, a phrase or a clause which functions as an adjective or adverb to limit or quantify the meaning of another word called the head. According to its place in relation to the head, it can be a *premodifier* (PreM) which appears in front of the head, for example, *a beautiful* flower. And it can be a *postmodifier* (PostM) which appears after the head, for example, a boat *big enough to hold us*". Modifiers of verbs are called *adjuncts*. For example, in a sentence "My mother bought a present for John in London last month", the verb *bought* controls all the other phrases in the clause, and is the head of the clause. Time expressions *in London*, and *last month*, convey the information *when* and *where* something happened. They are always optional and are held to be adjuncts.
- **Complements** – which occur in all types of phrases, apart from adverbial and nominal phrases. "The complements are the generic term for the

completers of the verb". (Stageberg, 1968: 165) For example, in sentence *They argued about what to do*, *what* is a complement of the prepositional phrase *about what to do*. While modifiers are optional, complements are obligatory, they cannot be left out.

## THE STRUCTURE OF ADVERBIAL PHRASE

As it has already been said, an *Adverbial Phrase* is a linguistic term for structures operating to express adverbial meaning. Like other phrases, it can be *simple* or *complex*. It is as well an *endocentric structure*.

The internal structure of Adverbial Phrases would look like this

(mod (s) pre) + H + (mod (s) post)

and it could be *continuous* and *discontinuous*.

### Head Word in Adverbial Phrase

From the structural and functional point of view, each *Adverbial Phrase* must contain a *head*. [The head is the most important word in the phrase, first it bears the crucial semantic information: it determines the meaning of the entire phrase (Tallerman, 2011:108).

*Head words* in Adverbial phrases are basically *adverbs*. They are a heterogeneous class, belong to the open-class items mostly, but varying in their functional and positional ranges. They constitute a series of overlapping subclasses, and some of them belong to more than one subclass. For example, the adverb *very* is an intensifier that functions only as a premodifier (*very large*, *very carefully*), whereas *too* is an intensifier when it functions as a premodifier (*too small*, *too quickly*), but it has a different meaning *in addition* when it functions as an adjunct (The food was good, *too*.) We may regard as a complex adverbs certain fixed expressions that have the form of prepositional phrases, such as *of course* and *as a result*.

Beside adverbs a head in *Adverbial Phrase* can be represented by other structures that function as adverbs known as *adverbials*, such as adjectives, nouns, particles, etc.

Adverbs tell *when*, *where*, *why* or *under which condition* something happens or happened. Adverbs frequently end in *-ly*; however, many words and phrases not ending in *-ly* serve an adverbial function but an *-ly* ending is not a guarantee that a word is an adverb. The words *lovely*, *lonely*, *motherly*, *friendly*, *neighborly*, for instance, are adjectives:

*That lovely woman lives in a friendly neighborhood.*

Adverbs can be divided differently according to different criteria according to the meaning.

*Adverbs of Manner*

11. She move *slowly* and spoke *quietly*.

*Adverbs of Place*

12. She has lived *on the island* all her life.  
13. She still lives *there* now.

*Adverbs of Frequency*

14. She takes the boat to the mainland *every day*.  
15. She *often* goes by herself.

*Adverbs of Time*

16. She tries to get back *before dark*.  
17. It's starting to get dark *now*.

*Adverbs of Purpose*

18. She drives her boat slowly *to avoid hitting the rocks*.  
19. She shops in several stores *to get the best buys*.

*Adverbs of Direction*

20. She lives *abroad*.

*Negative Adverbs*

21. I have *never* been to England.

There is another classification of adverbs considering meaning such as:

**1. Qualitative adverbs**

- a. *Adverbs of manner*: desperately, fast, perfectly

**2. Quantitative adverbs**

- a. *Adverbs of degree*: extremely, hardly, too, very  
b. *Adverbs of measure*: long

**3. Circumstantial Adverbs – Time Adverbs**

- a. *Adverbs of definite time*: yesterday, then, now, in the morning  
b. *Adverbs of indefinite time*: soon, always, often, sometimes, ever

Subgroups of Adverbs of time can answer the questions like:

*Adverbs of definite time* answering the question **When?** – yesterday, last week, early, late.

*Adverbs of frequency*, answering the question **How often?** – always, never, seldom, sometimes

*Adverbs of duration*, answering the question **How long?** – hours, for hours, the whole night, since yesterday

We can distinguish three major subclasses of adverbs, according to their function on a clause and sentence level:

- *Conjuncts*
- *Disjuncts*
- *Adjuncts*

Adverbs that are *conjuncts* (conjunctive adverbs) are logical connectors that generally provide a link to a preceding sentence or a clause. They involve a great deal of compression of meaning, as paraphrases can show.

*Disjuncts* provide comments on the unit in which they stand. Two major types of disjuncts are distinguished: *style disjuncts* and *content disjuncts*. Style disjuncts can be paraphrased by a clause with a verb of speaking; for example, the style disjunct *frankly* by the paraphrase *I say to you frankly*, in which *frankly* functions as a manner adverb *in a frank manner*. Content disjuncts may be modal or evaluative.

There are *adjuncts* as well, which can be adjuncts of time, manner and place and they represent the basic function of adverbs and adverbial phrases on a sentence level.

Adverbs, like adjectives, have three degrees of comparison – ***the positive, the comparative and the superlative***. The different degrees of comparison are formed in different ways:

Short adverbs having just one syllable form the comparative and the superlative by adding *-er* and *-est* to the positive.

hard (positive), harder (comparative), the hardest (superlative)

soon, sooner, the soonest

fast, faster, the fastest

Note that almost all adverbs which are also used as adjectives belong to this class.

Two or more syllable adverbs are compared by *more* and *the most*.

Adverbs which end in *-ly* take *more* for the comparative and *the most* for the superlative.

softly (positive), more softly (comparative), the most softly (superlative)

happily, more happily, the most happily

swiftly, more swiftly, the most swiftly

### ***Exceptions***

The adverb **early** is an exception to this rule.

early (positive), earlier (comparative), the earliest (superlative)

Some adverbs form their comparative and superlative degrees in an irregular manner.

far (positive), farther/further (comparative), the farthest/furthest (superlative)

late, later, the last/latest

well, better, the best

It should be noted that only adverbs of time, degree and manner have three degrees of comparison.

Adverbs such as ***now, then, once, there, where, why, how, not, never, ever***, etc., cannot be compared and hence they do not have the three degrees of comparison.

Adverbs are regularly, though not invariably, derived from adjectives by suffixation. In addition, a correspondence often exists between constructions containing adjectives and those containing the corresponding adverbs. The simplest illustration is with adverbs equivalent to prepositional phrases containing a noun phrase with the corresponding adjective:

22. He liked Mary *to a considerable extent*.

Sometimes either adjective or adverb forms may appear, with little or no semantic difference. But normally, the adjective and its corresponding adverb appear in different environments:

23. Her *incredible* beauty: her beauty is *incredible* – she is *incredibly* beautiful.

Whatever has been previously said about adverbs is very important in identifying a head in an *Adverbial Phrase*. According to their structure, a lot of adverbs such as *adverbs of place, time, interrogative adverbs*, etc. can be represented as *simple phrases*.

### **Premodifiers and Postmodifiers in Adverbial Phrase**

Premodifiers in adverbial phrases are expressed by:

24. Your engine is running *very/ absolutely/fairly smoothly*- the same *intensifiers* and (*qualitative adverbs*) as in adjectival phrases
25. Jack is very popular *around here*; He stood *close by*.- *some adverbs of place and time* (around, close, down, far, nearly, right, shortly, soon, straight).
26. *Two months afterwards, an hour later, the day before* – *nominal phrases* – primarily when the adverbial headword is either adverb of time or place.
27. An intensifier can be premodified by an adverb – It takes *far too long* for us.

*Postmodifiers* in Adverbial phrases are expressed by:

28. He spoke *distinctly enough* – the adverbs *enough* and *indeed* only.
29. They would like to stay *here in Ljubljana*; The restaurant is *over there near the bridge*. – *prepositional phrases* (functioning as apposition to the headword)
30. He has *somewhere to go this afternoon* – *infinitives* or *infinitival clauses* (occur particularly when the headword is premodified by *too* or postmodified by *enough*, cf. Clauses of Result)
31. The students work *harder than we expected* – finite clause with the comparative form of the adverb.

When it comes to the syntactic construction, the adverb phrase always has an *endocentric construction*. Endocentric or the *headed construction* consists of an obligatory head and one or more modifiers, whose presence serves to narrow the meaning of the head. Aart and Aart (1982: 123) mentioned the so called *discontinuous modifier* in the Adverbial phrase, which appears in four structures such as:



*Too* + adverb + infinitive clause

*So* + *Adv* + *that* – clause

*As* + *Adv* + *as* + *NP*- Comparative clause

*More/less* + *Adv* + *than* + *NP* – Comparative clause

## MEANING AND FUNCTION OF AN ADVERBIAL PHRASE

It is obvious that *according to meaning* an *Adverbial Phrase* corresponds to the meaning of either an *Adverb* or and *Adverbial Clause*, answering the question *when, where, how, why*, etc. and expressing the meaning of *time, place, manner, reason*, etc.

From the point of view of function, an *Adverbial Phrase* appears on a *phrase level structure* and on a *clause or sentence level structure*, as it is mentioned before.

On a phrase-level structure, it functions mostly as *premodifier* in different structures. Sometimes it may function as a *postmodifier*, too.

Being a subordinate element in an endocentric structure, a modifier is a word or word group that affects the meaning of a headword. In that it describes, limits, intensifies, and/or adds to the meaning of the head. Modifiers may appear before or after the head word they modify, and sometimes they are separated from the head by an intervening word.

An adverb may *premodify another adverb*, and function as intensifier:

32. They are smoking *very* heavily.

33. They did not injure him *that* severely.

34. I have seen *so very* many letters like that one.

As with adjectives, the only postmodifier is *enough*, as in *cleverly enough*.

A few *intensifying adverbs*, particularly *right* and *well*, *premodify particles in phrasal verbs*:

35. He knocked the man *right* out.

36. They left him *well* behind.

The few adverbs that *premodify particles in phrasal verbs* also *premodify prepositions or rather prepositional phrases*:

37. The nail went *right* through the wall.

38. His parents are *dead* against the trip.

39. He is there *now*.

Intensifying adverbs can *premodify indefinite pronoun, predeterminers and cardinal numbers*:

40. *Nearly* everybody came to our party.

41. *Over* two hundred injuries were reported.

42. I paid *more than* ten pounds for the book.

The indefinite article can be intensified when it is equivalent to the unstressed cardinal one:

43. They will stay *about* a week.

With ordinals and superlatives, a definite determiner is compulsory:

44. She gave me *almost* the largest piece of pie.

A few *intensifiers* may *premodify noun phrase*: *quite*, *rather* and the predeterminers *such* and exclamatory *what*. The noun phrase is usually indefinite, and the intensifier precedes any determiners. *Rather* requires the head to be singular count noun and gradable adjective

45. He told *such a* funny story / *such* funny stories.

46. I have never heard *such* wickedness.

47. He saw *quite* some player.

48. *What a* (big) fool he is!

*So* and interrogative and exclamatory *how* also precede the indefinite article, but they require the noun phrase to contain a gradable adjective and the head of the noun phrase to be a singular countable noun. In this use, they cause the adjective to move in front of the article:

49. I didn't realize that he was *so* big a fool.

50. *How* tall a man is he?

Some adverbs *signifying place or time postmodify noun phrases*:

*Place*: *the way ahead, the neighbor upstairs, the sentence below*

*Time*: *the meeting yesterday, the day before.*

The adverb can also be used as premodifier: *his home journey, the above photo, the upstairs neighbor*. A few other adverbs are also used as premodifiers: *the away games, the then president, in after years*. *Then* and *above* are probably the most common.

*Modifier in a Verbal Phrase* is one of the most important functions of adverbial phrase.

51. He *runs slowly*.

52. We *never stay* late.

53. She *has just seen* him.

On a *sentence level structure*, the usual function of an Adverbial Phrase is to be an *Adjunct*, but it as well can function as a *subject or object complement*.

54. She could not run very fast (*Adjunct*)

55. At least we are outside (*Subject Complement*)

56. I shall move these away (*Object Complement*)

To conclude, *adverbs are words that modify*:

- *a verb* (He drove slowly – How did he drive?)
- *an adjective* (He drove a very fast car – How fast was his car?)
- *another adverb* (She moved quite slowly down the aisle – How slowly did she move?)
- *a noun or a noun phrase* (He was quite a player.)
- *determiner* (Nearly everybody came to our party.)
- *a prepositional phrase* (His parents are dead about the trip.)

## ADVERBIAL PHRASES IN TEXTUAL DISCOURSE

### Analysis of a short story in by Sherwood Anderson “The door of the trap”

Firstly, we would like to concentrate on the adverbial phrases that appear only as one word, as one adverb, that is the head. These adverbial phrases appear as modifiers, and the first examples we would like to show are the examples of adverbial phrases that occur as a single adverb and premodify an adjective.

#### Simple Adverbial Phrases:

1. The house was ..... *comfortably* furnished. (p.1)
2. ....trying to grow *physically* tired. (p.5)
3. .... he grew *furiously* angry. (p.5)
4. .... who had become *suddenly* interested in ..... (p.6)
5. She was terribly afraid and her fright ..... (p.10)

In the above sentences, adverbial phrases premodify the adjectives. They are said to be premodifiers because they precede the adjectives they modify. In the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, *comfortably* premodifies the adjective *furnished*. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> *physically* premodifies the adjective *tired*. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence *furiously* premodifies the adjective *angry*. In the 4<sup>th</sup> sentence adverbial phrase *suddenly* premodifies the adjective *interested*. And in the 5<sup>th</sup> sentence adverbial phrase *terribly* premodifies the adjective *afraid*.

In the following examples adverbial phrases modify verbs:

1. ....he had spoken *aloud* .... (p.3)
2. .... but I stand *still*. (p.4)
3. .... he went *upstairs*. (p.7)

Adjectival phrases usually occur within verbal phrases, as these examples above show.

As we have mentioned previously, there are sentence adverbs which function as adverbial phrases, they can have a linking function or they can modify the whole sentence. As in these examples:

1. *Perhaps* it is the mother in her ..... (p.2)

#### Intensifier + Adverb

Adverbs can also modify other adverbs, and in this case these are called intensifiers. There are three such examples found in the excerpt:

1. ...the girl who *quite accidentally* attracted his attention. (p.5)
2. .... but *quite suddenly* and *unexpectedly* he looked like a boy. (p.4)
3. .... came to an end *very abruptly*. (p.9)

Here we have two adverbs in an adverbial phrase. One adverb functions as the head and the other is a premodifier, which functions as the intensifier. In the first sentence *quite* is the intensifier which premodifies the adverb *accidentally*. This adverbial phrase together premodifies the adverb *attracted*. In the second example *quite* is the premodifier, and functions as the intensifier. It modifies two

adverbs *suddenly* and *unexpectedly*. And in this example the adverbial phrase premodifies the verb *looked*. In the last example, *very abruptly* is an adverbial phrase consisting of an adverb functioning as a head of the phrase and that is *abruptly*, and the adverb *very* which is premodifying the head and serves as the intensifier.

Adverbial phrases can modify adjectives, and most commonly an adverb premodifying an adjective is called intensifier, there are five of them found in the text. Here are the examples:

1. .... and so the house was *rather* large. (p.1)
2. Her hair was not in *very* good order. (p.2)

In the first sentence the adverbial phrase functions as an intensifier, and it modifies the adjective *large*. In the same type they compose an adjectival phrase *rather large* with the head word *large*, an adjective, and a modifier *rather*, an adverb. In the second sentence the adverbial phrase *very* functions as the intensifier, premodifying the adjective *good*. They compose an adjectival phrase *very good*, which is actually the part of larger phrase, noun phrase *very good order*.

#### *Adverbial phrases premodifying prepositional phrases*

Here are the sentences in which adverbs modify prepositional phrases:

1. Hugh walked *directly* toward her .... (p.8)
2. *Then* for long periods ..... (p.2)
3. .... *completely* around the cornfield. (p.5)
4. He went *away* to his own room..... (p.7)

In the first example *directly* is an adverb functioning as an adverbial phrase, and this phrase premodifies the prepositional phrase *toward her*. In the second sentence *then* is an adverb functioning as the adverbial phrase which is premodifying the prepositional phrase *for long periods*. In the third example we have an adverbial phrase consisting of a single word *completely* which is the head of the adverbial phrase, it functions as the premodifier of the prepositional phrase *around the cornfield*. And in the last sentence the adverb *away* is the head of the adverbial phrase and it modifies the prepositional phrase *to his own room*.

#### *Adverbial phrase as postmodifier*

The only postmodifier, as in adjectival phrases, is the adverb *enough*:

1. .... understood some things *clearly enough*. (p.1)

In this example the adverbial phrase consists of two adverbs. The head of the phrase is the adverb *clearly*, and the adverb *enough* functions as a postmodifier in this phrase.

There are three types of Adverbial phrases used on a clause and sentence level: adjuncts, disjuncts and conjuncts. The function of adjuncts is the most frequent. Examples which we are going to show herewith are all taken from a short story *The door of the trap*.

### *Adjuncts*

An adjunct in an optional, or structurally dispensable, part of sentence, clause, or phrase that, when removed, will not affect the remainder of the sentence except to discard from it some auxiliary information. An *adverbial adjunct* is a sentence element that often establishes the circumstances in which the action or state expressed by the verb takes place. An adjunct can be a single word, a phrase, or an entire clause. Usually prepositional phrases function as adjuncts, and in this excerpt they appear very often. The following are examples of adjuncts found in the text:

1. He went inside the house. (p.2)
2. She continued reading, lost in her book. (p.3)
3. ....she was going to a barn. (p.3)
4. Young man and woman had come into the room.... (p.4)
5. One night he got ..... (p.5)
6. One afternoon in the winter he came... (p.8)

In the first sentence a prepositional phrase *inside the house* functions as an adverbial phrase. It represents an adjunct, and it modifies the verb *went*. The second example has a prepositional phrase *lost in her book* functioning as an adverbial phrase, it answers the question *How?*- and modifies the verb *reading*. In the third sentence *to a barn* is a prepositional phrase, functioning as adverbial phrase. It is an adjunct modifying the verb phrase *was going*. In the fourth example there is a prepositional phrase *into the room* which is an adjunct and modifies the verb *come*. The fifth example is a prepositional phrase functioning as an adverbial phrase *one night*. It answers the question *When?*- and serves as an adjunct modifying the verb *got*. And, in the last example the prepositional phrase consisting of two phrases *one afternoon* and *in the winter* is functioning as an adverbial phrase. This is an adjunct answering the question *When?*- and it modifies the verb *came*.

### *Disjuncts*

They represent a type of adverbial adjuncts expressing information that is not considered essential to the sentence it appears in, but which is considered to be the speaker's or writer's attitude towards, or descriptive statement of, the propositional content of the sentence, expressing, for example, the speaker's degree of truthfulness or his manner of speaking. A specific type of disjunct is the sentence adverb (or sentence adverbial) which modifies a sentence, or a clause within a sentence, to convey the mood attitude or sentiments of the speaker, rather than an adverb modifying a verb, an adjective or another adverb within a sentence. There are no examples of disjuncts in this excerpt.

### *Conjuncts*

The term conjunct adds information to the sentence that is not considered part of the propositional content (or at least not essential) but which connects the sentence with previous parts of the discourse. Here are the examples:

1. *Still* she stood looking..... (p.4)
2. He stood for a moment and *then* unlocked the door..... (p. 7)

In the first sentence the adverb *still* functions as an adverbial phrase, it is a conjunct. In the second example *then* is an adverbial phrase, an adverb functioning as a conjunct connecting two clauses *he stood for a moment* and *unlocked the door*.

## CONCLUSION

This paper offers some basic insights about adverbial phrases, their structure, meaning and function. Our goal was to explain their importance in a concise and simple way.

Another aim of ours was to introduce how adverbial phrases appear in discourse and different types of texts. Therefore, for the purposes of the research we chose a literary text by Sherwood Anderson and made an analysis of adverbial phrases and their functions in discourse. Our analysis has led us to conclusion that adverbial phrases may appear in different positions throughout the text, can modify various types of other phrases and even clauses, etc. When it comes to this particular excerpt that we chose for our analysis, the most frequent type of adverbial phrases were prepositional phrases which function as adverbial phrases and are usually called adjuncts.

Lastly, we would like to emphasize that this paper came out as a result of a joint effort and research conducted by professors, assistant professors and several students, throughout the semester. A significant number of classes was dedicated to this particular issue of adverbial phrases and we found it appropriate to round this activity off by producing a paper of this kind.

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## ПРИЛОГ ИЛИ ПРИЛОШКЕ СИНТАГМЕ – СТРУКТУРА, ЗНАЧЕЊЕ, ФУНКЦИЈА

**Апстракт:** Предмет овог рада су синтагме, пре свега прилошке синтагме у енглеском језику. Наши циљ у овом раду је био да представимо и објаснимо значај прилошке синтагме у енглеском језику и то представљањем њене структуре, значења, врста и функција које им се додељују у језику. Представљајући резултате и закључке истраживања и преданог рада групе студената и њихових наставника, показали смо начин на који се прилошке синтагме могу појављивати у различитим врстама дискурса као и у различитим граматицама. За потребе овог истраживања, одлучили смо се за кратку причу америчког писца Шервуда Андерсона као корпус истраживања.

**Кључне речи:** синтагма, прилошка, главна реч, модификатори, функција, значење.