

Central adverbial clauses and the syntax of subject initial V2

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This paper speculates on the interaction between V2 and the external syntax of central adverbial clauses.

Central adverbial clauses are syntactically integrated As illustrated by (1), the English conjunction *since* may contribute two distinct readings to the clause it introduces. In (1a), *since*₁ has a temporal reading; in (1b), *since*₂ is near-equivalent to *given that*. In other words: in (1a) the *since* clause structures the event, that in (1b) structures the discourse, highlighting the relevant context of the associated proposition. Similar patterns are found with other conjunctions such as *as*, *while*, *if*, *when*. We call *since*₁ clauses ‘central’ adverbial clauses and *since*₂ clauses ‘peripheral’ adverbial clauses, reflecting the degree of syntactic integration of the clause types (Haegeman 2012a etc).

- (1) a. Since₁ he got his new job, John has given up smoking and taken up cycling.
b. Since₂ John doesn't have a job, he won't be able to join us.

Various distinctions have been shown to set apart central adverbial clauses and peripheral adverbial clauses: a.o. scope effects, VP anaphora, VP ellipsis, parasitic gap licensing and temporal subordination (Hornstein 1993, Haegeman 2012a: 164-165). As a first approximation, central adverbial clauses are considered to be syntactically (more) integrated than peripheral adverbial clauses, and this is reflected in their merge position. Being modifiers of a TP (contained) domain (temporal/modal values), central adverbial clauses are taken to clause internal, they are merged in the TP area or in the left periphery of the clause (CP), while peripheral adverbial clauses, modifying the speech act itself, syntactically not integrated and are merged as main clause external constituents (cf. Broekhuis and Corver 2017) outside the left peripheral area.

- (2) a.

[_{CP}	[_{TP} central adverbial clause...]]
[_{CP} central adverbial clause	[_{TP} ...]]

* [_{CP} central adverbial clause [_{CP} ...]]
b. [_{CP} peripheral adverbial clause [_{CP} ...]]

Initial central adverbial clauses and V2 In V2 languages the difference in syntactic integration schematized in (2) leads to a precise prediction. To be able to be syntactically integrated with the associated clause, central adverbial clauses in initial position should constitute the first constituent of a V2 root clause and hence be immediately followed by the finite verb (3a). Peripheral adverbial clauses, on the other hand, being syntactically unintegrated, can be merged outside the V2 root clause, and lead to a superficial V3 order (3b).

- (3) a. [_{CP} central adverbial clause V_{fin} subject...]
b. [_{CP} peripheral adverbial clause [_{CP} XP V_{fin} subject...]]

A concret prediction then is that central adverbial clauses cannot *precede* V2 root clauses and hence will not give rise to a V3 linear order: the order in (3c) should be ungrammatical because being in a main clause external position, the central adverbial clause will not be able to value the temporal/modal coordinates of the matrix domain.

- (3) c. * [_{CP} central adverbial clause [_{CP} XP V_{fin} subject...]]

The talk focusses on central adverbial clauses. At first sight the prediction summarized in (3a/c) may seem correct: the judgement in (4) is for Standard Dutch. In this example, a central adverbial clause is merged with a fully fledged V2 root clause and thus the central adverbial clause must be taken to occupy the main clause external slot. This entails that it will not be (sufficiently) syntactically integrated to provide the temporal or modal values for the associated proposition.

- (4) **[Als mijn tekst morgen klaar is], [ik] zal je hem opsturen.*
when my text tomorrow ready is, I will you him send
'When my text is ready tomorrow, I will send it to you.'

A first puzzle, though, is that in WF, itself a *bona fide* V2 language, the analogues of (4) are acceptable.

But even for StD, the prediction is not fully borne out. In (5), the initial central adverbial clause modifies the temporal or modal values of the associated clause, but in spite of this, it appears in what seems to be a main clause external position (in the sense of Broekhuis and Corver 2016):

- (5) *[Als mijn tekst klaar is], [aan wie] moet ik hem opsturen?*
if my tekst ready is to whom should I it send
'When my tekst is ready, to whom shall I send it?'

What distinguishes (4) and (5) is that the root clause in (4) is a subject initial V2 clause, while that in (5) is non subject initial V2. These data suggest that the nature of the V2 clause determines the possible syntactic integration of the central adverbial clause in the main clause external position.

A similar effect in which the nature of V2 interacts with discourse effects has been observed in a different context by Mikkelsen (2015), who shows how the distribution of VP anaphor *det* in Danish is sensitive to the nature of the V2 clause.

The presentation will develop an analysis for main clause external constituents. I will then show that the contrast between (4) and (5) provides support for an asymmetric analysis of V2 and that this impacts on the interpretation of the central adverbial clause. Time permitting I will also examine the difference between StD and WF.