

Sentence-final Adverbs and "Scope"

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The "standard" analysis of sentence-final adverb attachment holds that adverbial phrase structure ascends rightward. Sentence final adverbs adjoin recursively, either to VP or TP (1):

(1) John [_{VP} [_{VP} [_{VP} knocked on the door] **at home**] **yesterday**]

A second (far less accepted) view holds that adverbial phrase structure descends rightward. On the proposal advanced in Larson (1988,1989; cf. also Stroik 1990, 1992a, 1992b, 1996; Alexiadou 1994, 1997), adverbs are lowermost V-complements or specifiers, stranded by a V that undergoes successive raising through a series of recursive VP-shells (2):

(2) John [_{VP} knocked [_{VP} on the door t [_{VP} **at home** t [_{VP} t **yesterday**]]]]

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Although unconventional, the second approach has a number of virtues. For one thing, it allows for a simple account of domain phenomena, such as negative polarity licensing in cases like (3). The trigger (*few people*) stands in a direct c-command to the NPI (*any days this week*) under the rightward descending analysis. By contrast, the standard theory must appeal to a weaker, stipulative condition involving M-command (or X-command, see Ernst 1995)

(3) John talked to [few people] [any days this week]

The second approach also accounts for certain morphological ordering phenomena involving adverbial affixes, such as those discussed by Anderson (1992) and Bach (1996). These raise problems for the Mirror Principle (Baker 1985) under the standard analysis, but are straightforward under the rightward descending account.

At the same time, the first approach has been taken to hold an important advantage with data like (4a,b), due to Andrews (1983). As Andrews notes, there appears to be a difference of adverb scope in these cases. (4a) asserts that John did something twice, namely knock on the door intentionally, whereas (4b) asserts that John did something intentionally, namely, knock on the door twice. The difference is truth conditional:

- (4) a. John knocked on the door **intentionally twice**.
b. John knocked on the door **twice intentionally**.

Andrews suggests that this interpretative difference accords naturally with the structures assigned by the stacking theory. (5a) gives widest scope to *twice*, whereas (5b) assigns widest scope to *intentionally*:

- (5) a. John [_{VP} [_{VP} [_{VP} knocked on the door] **intentionally**] **twice**]]
b. John [_{VP} [_{VP} [_{VP} knocked on the door] **twice**] **intentionally**]]

Andrews' argument has been repeated and amplified with additional examples by many subsequent authors.

In this talk, I argue that Andrews data can be accommodated under the rightward descending analysis, using the semantic approach to adverbs as event predicates proposed by Davidson (1967). As I show, when the semantics of these constructions is understood in Davidsonian terms, they not only fail to support the stacking analysis, but actually provide evidence for the rightward descending analysis under the Mapping Hypothesis of Diesing (1992). In essence, then, a Davidsonian analysis removes the strongest argument for the standard stacking theory.