

Lecture 1

Adverbials: Adjuncts, Disjuncts and Conjuncts

Please note that in this lecture we cover some adverbs but in the context of different types of adverbials rather than as distinct and discrete words.

Main Issues

- 1. Defining Adverbials**
- 2. Units Realising Adverbial Functions**
- 3. Classes or Types of Adverbials**
- 4. Adjuncts**
- 5. Disjuncts**
- 6. Conjuncts**

1. Defining Adverbials

As noted in the attached graphic, adverbials usually give us extra information about the verb. Specifically, they answer the four questions in the graphic. Adverbs, as we will see, also tell us about the verb and are, therefore, a special type of adverbials. More specifically, adverbs tell us about:

- How
 - *She walked **ridiculously slowly**.*
- Where
 - *She walked **out**.*
- When or How often
 - *She **frequently** walked,*
 - *She walked **yesterday**.*
- How much
 - *She walked **extensively**.*



Though many forms of English language which give us information about the verb (where, when, why, how) can be classed as adverbials and taught that way, we must note that adverbs are all adverbials but adverbials are not all adverbs. Very briefly:

1. He went *yesterday*.

The sentence here contains an adverb, *yesterday*, acting as an adverbial telling us when the person left. By some definitions, even this is really a **noun** acting as an adverb.

2. He went *by car*.

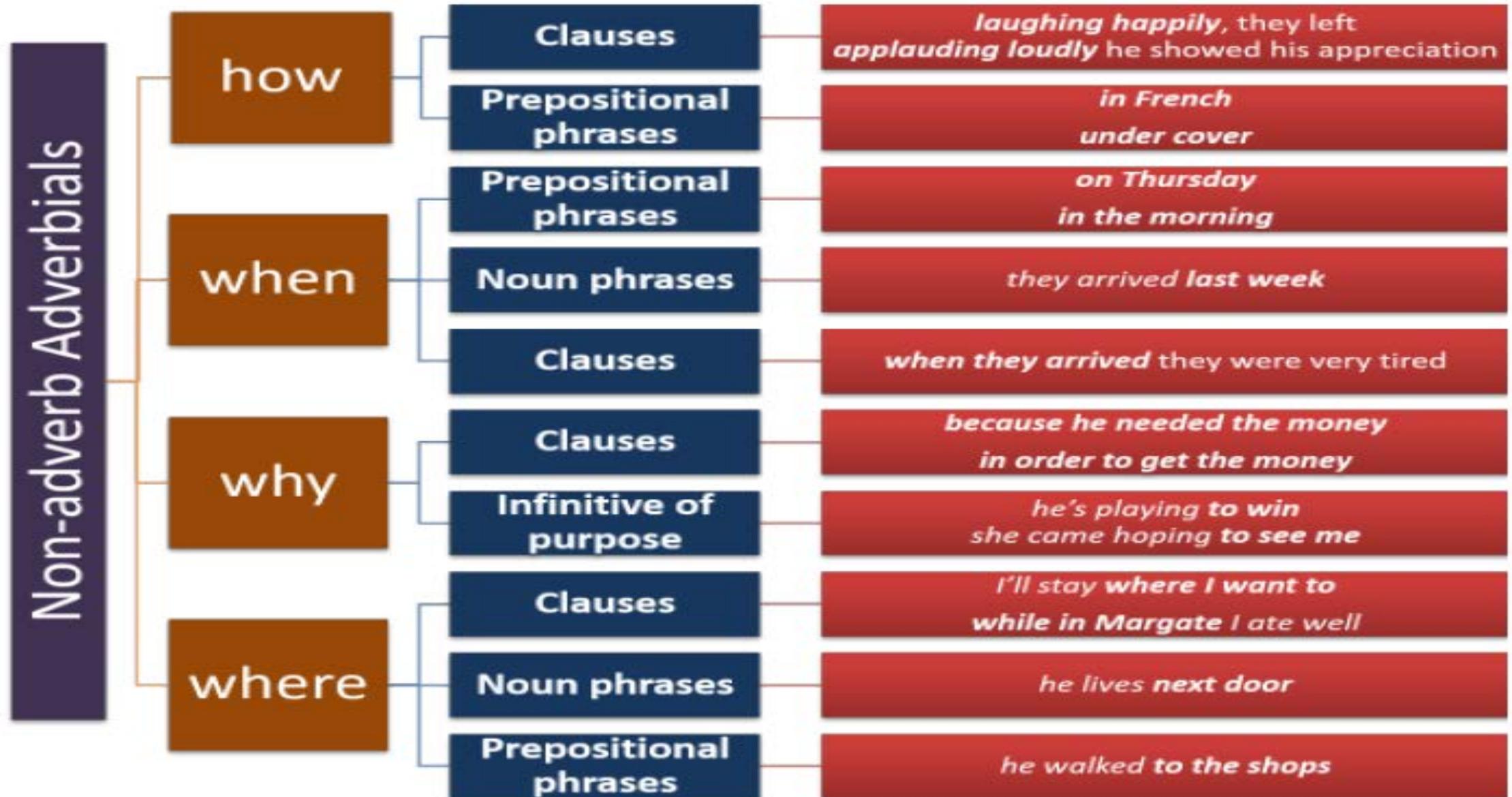
The sentence contains a **prepositional phrase**, *by car*, acting as an adverbial telling us how the person travelled.

3. She spoke *hurriedly*.

The sentence contains an **adverb**, *hurriedly*, acting as an adverbial telling us something about the person's manner of speaking.

Please note that only two of the sentences above (1 and 3), is *the adverbial* actually *an adverb* and one of those is slightly questionable.

The following graphic shows the different types of non-adverb adverbials



Adapted from <https://www.eltconcourse.com>

2. Units Realising Adverbial Functions

Realization of adverbials

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graph TD; A[Realization of adverbials] --- B[Adverb phrases]; A --- C[Noun phrases]; A --- D[Prepositional phrases]; A --- E[Finite clause]; A --- F[Non-finite clause]; A --- G[Verbless clause];
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Adverb phrases

Finite clause

Noun phrases

Non-finite clause

Prepositional phrases

Verbless clause

Realization of adverbials

Adverb phrases

E.g.: I have never been *there*.

Noun phrases

E.g.: I saw her *last week*.

Prepositional phrases

E.g.: She sat *in a dark corner*.

Realisation of Adverbials

Finite Clause

Peter was playing *although he was very tired*

Verbless Phrase

Peter was playing, *unaware of the danger*

Non-Finite Phrase

Infinitive

Peter was playing *to win*

- *ing* participle

Wishing to encourage him, they praised Tom

- *ed* participle

If urged by our friends, we'll stay

3. Classes or Types of Adverbials

Adverbials come in three types or flavours: adjuncts, disjuncts and conjuncts. Let us consider the following sentences, focusing on the bit in red:

1. I saw him *yesterday afternoon*.
2. **Obviously**, he didn't seem happy.
3. He isn't happy **yet** he gets on with life.

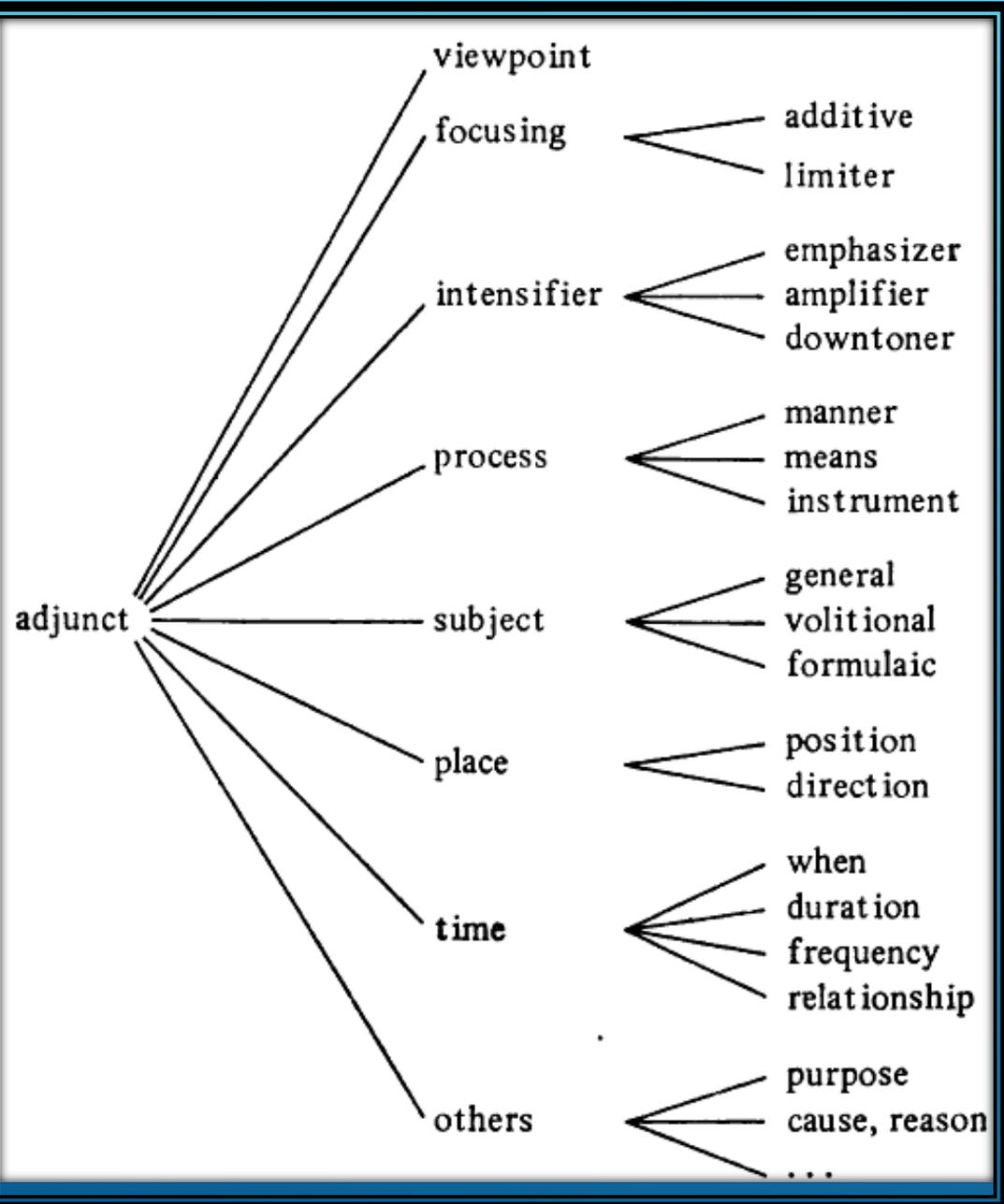
4. Adjuncts (qualifies or completes the meaning)

In sentence 1, we have an **adjunct**.

The definition of what qualifies as an **adjunct** is a loaded area and much discussed. Technically speaking, some analysts see an **adjunct** as anything in a clause which can be removed in order to leave a well-formed sentence. That is, adjuncts are **integrated into the sentence** because their removal may not leave a well-formed and reasonable sentence. Therefore, analysts tend to confine the term **adjunct** to any adverbial which modifies the verb phrase in some way and which is an integral, though not obligatory in some cases, part of the clause.



Subclassification of Adjuncts (Quirk et al., 1973:210)



Adjuncts (Examples)

time adjunct (when)

He arrived

yesterday.

She left

when he arrived.

manner adjunct (how)

She learned

quickly.

She sings

like an angel.

place adjunct (where)

He walks

here.

He lost his dog

in the woods.

Lecture 2

Adverbials: Disjuncts and Conjuncts

Please note that in this lecture we cover some adverbs but in the context of different types of adverbials rather than as distinct and discrete words.

5. Disjuncts (marked by separation of or from usually nearby parts)

In sentence 2, we have a **disjunct**.

Obviously, he didn't seem happy.

Disjuncts are used to evaluate the form or the content of what is said. They occur outside the clause structure itself i.e. peripheral. Removing them may leave a well-formed sentence or clause but readers lose the speaker's viewpoint. **Disjuncts** frequently come in the initial position before the clause to which they refer but, as we see in the following example, they don't have to. For effect, in speaking, we insert a pause after a **disjunct** and that can be represented by punctuation in writing. For example:

- He *obviously* didn't seem happy. (Not in an initial position)
- *Obviously*, John was not interested. (Punctuation in needed)

Subclassification of Adjuncts (Quirk et al., 1973:242-243)

DISJUNCTS

Style disjuncts

Attitudinal disjuncts

Most disjuncts are prepositional phrases or clause

- convey the speaker's comment on the content of what he is saying
- generally appear only on declarative clauses

E.g.: *Obviously*, no one expected us.
Understandably, they were all annoyed when reading the letter.

- convey the speaker's comment on the form of what he is saying, defining in some way under what conditions he is speaking

E.g.: *Seriously*, do you intend to retire?
Personally, I don't approve of her.
Very frankly, I am tired.

6. Conjuncts (Joining)

In sentence 3, we have a conjunct.

He isn't happy *yet* he gets on with life.

Conjuncts are also outside the clause structure and connect ideas in sentences or between sentences. We can rephrase sentence 3 (He isn't happy *yet* he gets on with life) as in (He isn't happy. **However**, he gets on with life). The word (**However**) is still a conjunct. We should note also that some **conjuncts** are conjunctions (like *yet* in example sentence 3).

CONJUNCTS

Enumerative

Reinforcing

Equative

Transitional

Summative

Apposition

Result

Inferential

Reformulatory

Replacive

Antithetic

Concessive

Temporal transition

EXAMPLES

Enumerative

first, second, third...; one, two, three...; for one thing, for another thing; for a start, to begin with, next, then...

Reinforcing

also, furthermore, moreover, in addition, above all, what is more, then (informal), etc.

Equative

equally, likewise, similarly, in the same way, etc.

Transitional

by the way, incidentally, etc.

Summative

then, (all) in all, in conclusion, to sum up, etc.

Apposition

namely, in other words, for instance, that is, that is to say, for example, etc.

EXAMPLES

Result

consequently, hence, thus, so, therefore, as a result,

Inferential

Else, otherwise, then, in that case, etc.

Reformulatory

better, rather, in other words, etc.

Replacive

alternatively, rather, on the other hand, etc.

Antithetic

instead, then, on the contrary, in contrast, by comparison, on the other hand, etc.

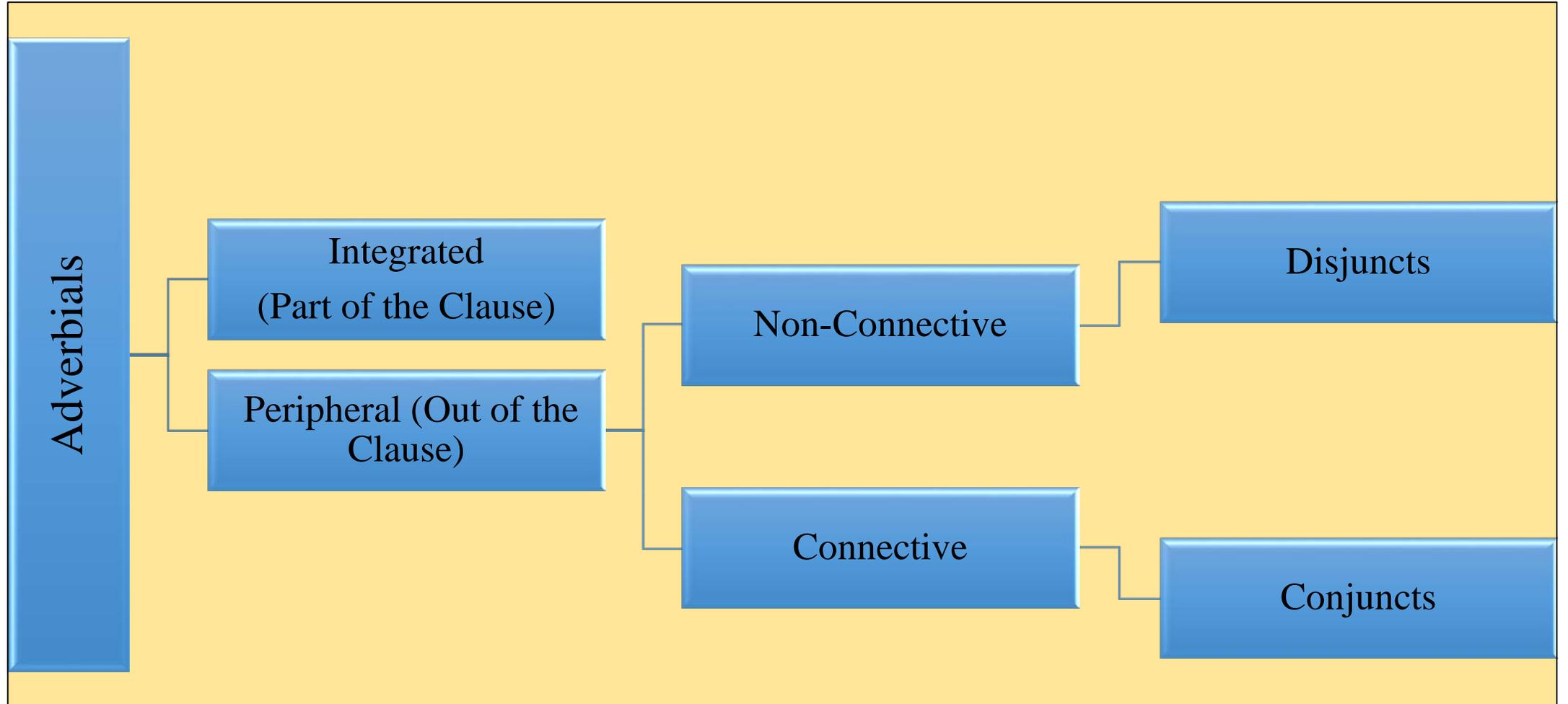
Concessive

Anyhow, anyway, besides, nevertheless, etc..

Temporal transition

meantime, meanwhile, in the mean time, etc.

Based on Quirk et al. (as is much of what has followed), the relationship between the three types of adverbials can be best conceptualized in the graphic below. However, a good deal of functional language such as expressing a viewpoint or connecting ideas logically depends for its success on the realisation through adverbials. Hence, the graphic may seem rather technical.





References:

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