

-12- Adverbials

Adverbs

One major part of speech that we have not yet explored is the ADVERB (Adv). Adverbs can modify verbs, because they tell how, when, where, or why the action occurred. **Consider the italicized adverb in the sentence:**

Frank gazed at the sky intently

Intently tells how Frank did the gazing, and so it modifies the verb gazed. We can add an adverb option to our VP rule:

$$\text{VP} \text{ -----} \{ \begin{array}{l} \text{V} \quad (\text{NP}) \\ \text{VL} \{ \text{NP} \} \\ \quad \text{AdjP} \end{array} \} \quad (\text{PP}) \quad (\text{Adv})$$

Frank gazed at the sky intently

- **Most adverbs are easy to spot because they are formed by adding the suffix -- *ly* to an adjective:**
rapidly, angrily, happily. Adverbs that do not end in *-ly* include *well, much, little, once, once, twice*, as well as many adverbs of time such as *often, soon, yesterday, now, and then* and many adverbs of place such as *here, there, eastward, and skyward*.
- While it can generate sentence like the one above, the above rule is still not satisfactory. It can generate an adverb following a prepositional phrase, **but some grammatical sentences have the reverse order:**
Frank gazed intently at the sky
- Perhaps, we also need a second verb-phrase rule to allow for adverbs that precede prepositional phrases.
- **The following sentences show still other possibilities as well:**

Frank gazed intently at the sky yesterday	--- adv PP Adv
Frank gazed at the sky intently with binoculars	--- PP adv PP
Frank gazed intently at the sky with binoculars	--- Adv Adv PP PP

 Prepositional phrases and adverbs seem to occur interchangeably in a variety of combinations. We could try to write a separate rule for each of them, but clearly there are many other possibilities as well --- in fact, a limitless number of them --- and we cannot write rules for all of them.

- Despite these problems, a solution is in sight. Because adverbs and prepositional phrases are interchangeable, we can hypothesize that they belong to the same general category, in the same way that articles and quantifiers belong to the general category of determiners.
- Further evidence is the fact that some adverbs and prepositional phrases are equivalent in meaning, such as enthusiastically and with enthusiasm. We will call the general category that includes them both ADVERBIAL PHRASES (AdvP) or simply adverbial.
- Any number of adverbial phrases can occur within a verb phrase. Until now our rule for a verb phrase allowed it to end with an optional prepositional phrase.

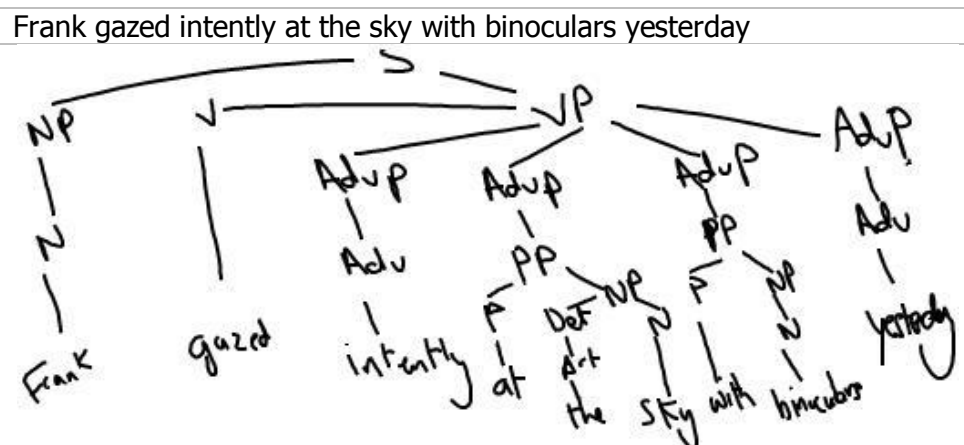
- **Let us change that so it can end with one or more adverbial phrases:**

$$VP \text{ -----} \{ \begin{array}{l} V \quad (NP) \\ VL \{ NP \} \\ \quad AdjP \end{array} \} \quad (AdvP)^+$$

- **These adverbial phrases can be either adverbs or prepositional phrases:**

$$AdvP \text{ -----} \{ \begin{array}{l} Adv \\ PP \end{array} \}$$

- The above rules can generate verb phrases with adverbs and prepositional phrases, such as **this example with four adverbial phrases:**



Adverbials That follow Linking Verbs

- Earlier, we saw that a linking verb can be followed by a noun phrase (for example ... **The plane is a jet**) or an adjective (for example... **The plane is new**). **An adverbial phrase can also follow a linking verb:**

The plane is here

The plane is on the runway

The departure is tomorrow

The departure is after the rainstorm

- **We can state this option as a phrase-structure rule:**

VP -----> VL AdvP

- Unfortunately, however, the previous rule is too powerful, meaning that it can generate some unwanted phrases. Only some --- not all --- adverbials can follow a linking verb. That is, a linking verb can be followed by **a place adverbial such as here and on the runway** or **by a time adverbial such as tomorrow and after the rainstorm**. But a linking verb cannot usually be followed by a manner adverbial such as beautifully or with enthusiasm. That is, we do not want the above rule to generate sentences such as (*** The plane is beautifully**).
- Fortunately, we can solve our problem if we differentiate between the standard unrestricted adverbials that modify a verb (which we can continue to call AdvP) and the time/place adverbials that follow a linking verb, which we might label AdvPL.

Rules for these two forms of adverbials are:

AdvP -----> { Adv }
PP

AdvPL -----> { Adv (Time/Place) }
PP (Time/Place)

With this distinction, we can update our rule for linking verbs as follows:

VP -----> VL NP
 { AdjP }
 AdvPL

Notes: _____
