The diachrony of grammatical non-identity: manner and speaker-oriented adverbs in English

Dagmar Haumann[1], Kristin Killie[2]

[1] University of Bergen, [2] UiT The Arctic University of Norway

dagmar.haumann@uib.no, kristin.killie@uit.no

The synchronic English lexicon is rich in non-accidentally homophonous manner adverbs (1)–(4) and speaker-oriented adverbs (5)–(8) (data from BNC):

(1) His eyes challenged her to answer *honestly*. (HA9)
(2) The girl shook her head and smiled *sadly*. (FRK)
(3) They all heard *clearly* what he said, difficult though they found it to believe. (EFW)
(4) And her mother nodded *wisely*. (GW8)
(5) *Honestly*, some people have no pride. (CAE)
(6) But, *sadly*, he's ill at the moment. (FRU)
(7) *Clearly*, we have plenty of powder and it's dry. (HYE)
(8) He *wisely* kept the two women apart as much as possible. (B34)

While there is tacit agreement among researchers from various theoretical backgrounds that speaker-oriented adverbs develop from manner adverbs, the conditions for and the mechanisms behind the reanalysis of manner adverbs as speaker-oriented adverbs remain elusive (see e.g. Swan 1988, 1997; Tabor & Traugott 1998; Fischer 2007; van Gelderen 2011).

AG 6

The aim of this paper is threefold: first, based on a historical corpus study of selected adverbs, it isolates the structural factors that feed into the delimitation of bridging contexts (Heine 2002) for the reanalysis of manner adverbs (1)-(4) as illocutionary (5), evaluative (6), evidential (7) and subject-oriented adverbs (8). It is shown that only clauses that license speaker-oriented adverbs, notably clauses with root properties (Haegeman 2012, Endo & Haegeman 2019), constitute potential syntactic contexts for reanalysis (cf. Haumann & Killie forthc.). Second, is argued that the reanalysis of manner adverbs as speaker-oriented adverbs does not involve "adverb preposing" from the lexical layer to the left periphery (Swan 1988; van Gelderen 2011), but the merging and licensing of adverbs homophonous with manner adverbs in higher functional domains. Third, the paper addresses potential lexical and syntactic changes that initially warranted and ultimately forced the merging of the elements under consideration outside the lexical layer of the clause.

Selected References: Endo, Y. & L. Haegeman (2019). Adverbial clauses and adverbial concord. Glossa 4(1), 48. 1–32. Gelderen, E. van (2011). The linguistic cycle: language change and the language faculty. Oxford: OUP. Haegeman, L. (2012). Adverbial clauses, main clause phenomena, and the composition of the left periphery. Oxford: OUP. Haumann, D. & K. Killie (forthc.). Bridging contexts in the reanalysis of naturally as a sentence adverb: a corpus study. In K. Bech & R. Möhlig-Falke (eds.). Grammar – Discourse – Context: Grammar and Usage in Language Variation and Change. Berlin: de Gruyter. Heine, B. (2002). On the role of context in grammaticalization. In I. Wischer & G. Diewald (eds.). New reflections on grammaticalization. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 83–101. Swan, T. (1988). Sentence adverbials in English. A synchronic and diachronic investigation. Oslo: Novus. Swan, T. (1997). From manner to subject modification: adverbialization in English. Nordic Journal of Linguistics 20, 179–195.