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Adverbs of Viewpoint in English: A Linguistic Study

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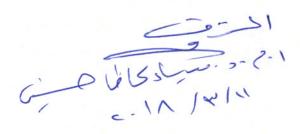
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(يَرْ فِعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمُ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَمَرَ جَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ) الْعِلْمَ دَمَرَ جَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ)

صدق الله العلي العظيم

(سورة المجادلة: 11)

Dedication

To:

Our families

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It is the will of Allah, the merciful God, to surround us with brilliant and supportive people. Words are not enough to express how grateful we are to our supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Maysa'a Kadhim.

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Abstract

Viewpoint adverbs are usually defined as those adverbs which provide a particular point of view from which what is said is true. These adverbs show the validity of what is said and how clear is that from a specific standpoint.

This paper is divided into two chapters. The first one is entitled as Semantic Study of Viewpoint Adverbs. It is divided into three sections, each one explains what is an adverb?, how an adverb can function in a given sentence?, and how viewpoint adverbs are semantically defined? respectively.

The second chapter deals with different forms of viewpoint adverbs. It also tackles how these adverbs are actually used and their recurrent positions in the sentence.

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Chapter one

Semantic Study of Viewpoint Adverbs

1.1 Definitions of Adverbs

An adverb is a class that contains a large number of words. These words represent the heads of the adverb phrases. Commonly, adverbs are formed from adjectives by the addition of -ly suffix, such as: 'Surprisingly, slowly and finally'. These adverbs are used to modify verbs or the whole sentences:

1.1 She sings *loudly*.

1.2 Kindly, she offered me a cup of tea.

In the above examples, the adverb 'loudly' modifies the main verb 'sings', while the adverb 'kindly' modifies the whole sentence. Adverbs are adverbials when they stand alone in the sentence. They can also be 'modifiers' when they modify other adjectives such as 'very funny', prepositional phrases 'immediately behind him', or other adverbs as in 'very happily' (Brown and Miller, 2013: 13). An adverb can be defined as a lexical class which contains large items.

These items usually function as the grammatical adjuncts of verbs. Such adverbs identify different semantic concepts **,time** such as 'tomorrow', **place** such as 'there' and **process** such as 'badly'. Though in certain cases, adverbs accept the comparative degrees as in 'badly –more badly', yet they do not take distinctive inflectional morphemes. Traditional grammar uses the adverb category as a grammatical *¹dustbin in regarding many words as adverbs. Those words do not have a distinct class like 'very, no, please and 'though' (Trask ,2013:9).

^{*1 &#}x27;dustbin' is a term used by Trask (2013:9).

An adverb is defined as a term which refers to a large group of heterogeneous items. Those items or words are mainly used to identify the action denoted by the verb. Many adverbs are known through the –ly suffix at the end. The common types of adverbs are those which denote time, place and manner. There are two terms that should be differentiated from each other: **Adverbs** and **Adverbials**. An adverb is a lexical category or a word class ,while an adverbial represents a sentence element. Many words are classified as being adverbs ,while they have different functions such as the negative particle 'not' and the intensifier 'very' (Crystal , 2008:14).

In a similar way, adverbs are defined as a major word class. It contains a large number of words which modify other sentence elements, verbs, adjectives and other adverbs. Adverbs are used to denote **time** 'then, yesterday', **place** 'there, here', **manner** 'clearly, sadly', **degree** 'so, very' and other words that do not show clear category 'just' and 'though'. Adverbs can be classified into two classes; those which represent a closed class such as 'tomorrow, however, too and far', and those which are derived by the addition of -ly suffix as in 'slowly, statistically ...etc.'(Leech, 2006:7).

The word class of adverbs is not easy to be distinguished, as it contains a large number of words that have different roles. Sometimes, a word is considered as an adverb if it does not fit to the definition of other word classes. Generally, adverbs provide new information about the action or other parts of the sentence (Altenberg and Vago, 2010:103).

1.2 Functions of Adverbs

Adverbs cannot be always distinguished according to morphology. There are many adverbs that do not accept the –ly suffix, such as: 'big, small, young and others'. Some adverbs have the same forms of the adjectives. These adverbs are considered as irregular adverbs ,such as:

1.3 She runs fast and not

* She runs fastly.

A much more confusion happens when there are certain adverbs that end in -ly suffix ,but can act as adjectives when they modify the nouns and not the verbs ,for example:

- 1.4 She kindly gives him the letter.
- 1.5 She gives him the letter kindly.

'kindly' in the first example modifies the subject which is represented by she ,while in the second example, modifies the verb 'gives' (Tallerman, 2011: 61).

Such a problem can be solved by identifying the two functions which the adverbs take. **First**, they can function as **adverbials**. When it is adverbial, an adverb can stand alone. It is a clause element or a constituent which differs from other sentence elements: Subject, verb, object and complement. **Second**, they modify other elements, so they are **modifiers**. Adverbs can modify adjectives. In this case ,commonly, the intensifier 'very' is used as in:

1.6 John saw a very good film.

They also modify other adverbs , such as : 'Very loudly' and 'very many'.

There are certain intensifiers as: 'quite, rather and such' that can modify noun phrases, such as:

1.7 He likes such a good student (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973:126-128).

Syntactically, when adverbs are adverbials, they can be classified into four functions: **Adjuncts** ,**Subjuncts** ,**Disjuncts** and **Conjuncts**. Generally, both adjuncts and subjuncts are characterized by being inserted within the structure of the sentences as in :

1.8 Aggressively, he opened the door.

1.9 Would you kindly speak to her?

The first adverb 'aggressively' is an adjunct ,while the second one 'kindly' is a subjunct. On the other hand, both disjuncts and conjuncts act as marginal in the sentences. Disjuncts are usually used to evaluate what is stated. The form of communication and meaning is considered while using disjuncts ,as in the following example:

1.10 Honestly, he is the best.

Conjuncts are used to show the relation between two clauses according to the speaker's evaluation of this relation, as in:

1.11 Although he is talented , yet he is unknown.

Each of these classes contains sub-classification according to their semantic roles(Quirk et al., 1985: 440).

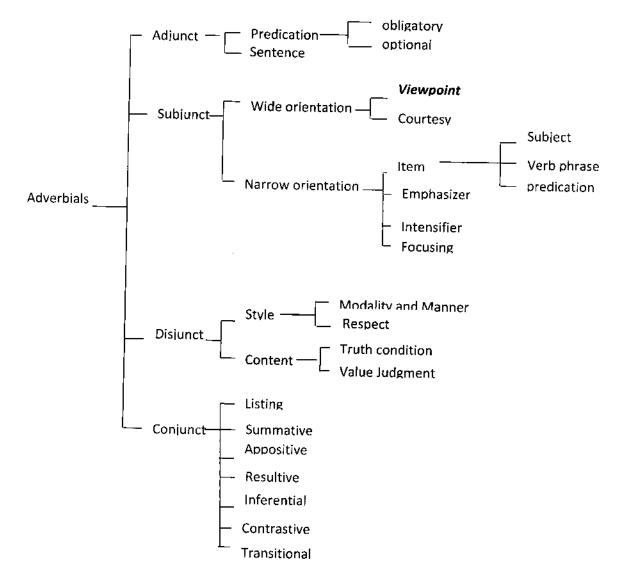


Figure (1): Classification of Adverbials after Quirk et al. (1985: 503).

One of the main four syntactic classes of adverbs is subjunct. A term which is used to distinguish a type of adverbials. Subjuncts are elements which have more or less subordinate roles than the other elements in the clauses. The subjunct adverbial may modify the whole clauses in which it has a 'wide orientation' or it may modify one single element, for example the verb, in which it has a 'narrow orientation' (Ibid. :566-567).

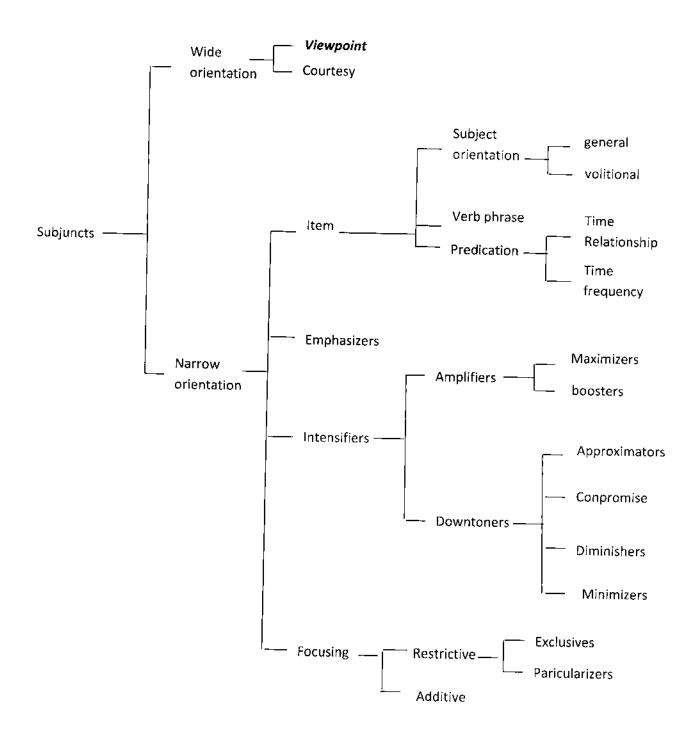


Figure (2): Classification of Subjuncts after Quirk et al. (1985: 567).

1.3 Viewpoint Adverbs Semantically Defined

1.3.1 The Different Considerations of Viewpoint Adverbs

Viewpoint adverbs are described as borderline between adjuncts and disjuncts. In Quirk and Greenbaum (1973), these adverbs are classified as adjuncts, while in Quirk et al.'s book (1985), they are classified as subjuncts. Syntactically, they follow the criteria of adjuncts found in Quirk et al. (1985:504). Biber et al. (2007:855) on the other hand, classified these adverbs as 'epistemic stance adverbials'. This classification applies them to be similar to disjuncts in Quirk et al.'s book (1985).

1.3.2 Definitions of Viewpoint Adverbs

Viewpoint adverbs are defined as "if we consider what we are saying from an adjective phrase or noun phrase point of view". Commonly, these adverbs are formed by adding -ly suffix to adjectives, such as:

1.12 Mathematically, this equation is difficult.

The viewpoint adverb 'mathematically' means from a mathematical point of view. All viewpoint adverbs that end in -ly correspond to the participle clause of 'speaking', as in:

1.13 Linguistically speaking, this sentence is unacceptable to be said.

They can also correspond to prepositional phrases which come as 'from an adjective point of view':

1.14 From a geographical point of view, these islands are rich of metals.

1.15 As far as science is concerned, these animals are cannibals.

There are other types of viewpoint adverbs ,those which can be derived from nouns by adding -wise suffix at the end of the nouns. Such adverbs are

usually considered informal ones:

1.16 Weather-wise, today is going to be cloudy.

In fact, viewpoint adverbs are nongradable adverbs, as they do not accept the comparative degrees or any preceding modifiers, as in:

1.17 * Very mathematically, he is genius (Quirk et al., 1985 : 568-569).

Similarly, Quirk et al (1985 : 429-430) defined viewpoint adverbs as those which express our consideration of our speech from a specific point of view. These adverbs can be classified into two types, first, those which are formed by the addition of –ly suffix to adjectives such as: 'visually, morally, politically, geographically and linguistically' for example:

1.18 *Visually*, this is a horrific play.

The second type is those adverbs which are formed through adding the suffix -wise to nouns. This type is considered informal. Generally, all -ly viewpoint adverbs can correspond to 'speaking' participle clause and to prepositional phrases, as in:

1.19 From a personal point of view, he is the most distinctive student.

1.20 In our perspective, she is a failure.

Viewpoint adverbs accept all features of adjuncts except that they do not take modification.

1.21 * Very morally, he is ideal.

Adverbs of viewpoint are also defined as how people show what they say or write from a particular point of view by using adverbs. Those adverbs vary in the meanings they indicate ,for example 'clearly ,surely ,really and honestly' indicate the meaning of 'I am sure'. Other adverbs 'anyhow ,in

brief, in a few words and in short' can express the meaning of 'to be brief'. Certain adverbs can show an opinion like 'in my opinion, as far as I'm concerned, frankly and I think' (Alexander, 1998: 104).

It is said that viewpoint adverbs are those which show a specific aspect or viewpoint from which the situation is looked at. It is not necessary that those adverbs modify the whole sentence ,rather they sometimes modify the adjectives , such as :

1.22 The factory is *economically* beneficial ,but *environmentally* disastrous (Eastwood, 2002: 275).

Those stance adverbs express the point of view or the perspective from which what is said is true. These adverbs are of different expressions ' in our view, from my perspective, to our knowledge and to the best of my knowledge' (Biber et al., 2003: 384). These *2epistemic adverbials are often formed by using the possessive pronouns, as 'in my opinion' (Biber et al., 2007:856).

Yule (2012: 188) defined viewpoint adverbs as those which are used to indicate the points of view as well as the perspectives which are considered in the speech. These adverbs are free to be set in initial ,medial or final position. If they are not in final position, they are separated from the sentence by commas. Viewpoint adverbs are to be differentiated from comment adverbs which may overlap with them. While viewpoint adverbs show a particular point or aspect from which the situation is looked at ,comment adverbs on the other hand, are used to provide a comment on what is stated ,as in:

1.23 Financially, things are a bit difficult at the moment.

1.24 Unfortunately, we did not win anything.

These examples show the difference between the two types. Thus ,the adverb 'financially' can be paraphrased 'from a financial point of view'. In contrast, such

^{*2} Epistemic adverbials provide comment on a proposition. It is a category within stance adverbials, as mentioned by Biber et al. (2007: 856).

paraphrase cannot be applied to the adverb 'unfortunately' as it is impossible to say from an unfortunate point of view. Comment adverbs can be used to give a comment on the behavior of someone :

1.25 Dick wisely did not interfere.

They also show the reason behind saying something

1.26 *Honestly*, I think you are making the wrong decision (Eastwood, 2002: 275-276).

Yule (2012:118) defined comment adverbs as those which comment on what is spoken or written ,or provide opinion. Generally, these adverbs are used in initial or final positions followed or preceded by commas. While some of them can be used in medial positions:

- 1.27 Surprisingly, he failed.
- **1.28** I will refund the cost ,of course.
- 1.29 It was *probably* a misunderstanding.

These adverbs do not always provide comment as there are certain adverbs like 'seriously and fortunately' show the way the speakers feel ,whereas 'definitely and obviously' show how the speakers are sure of what they say:

- 1.30 I will definitely call you tonight.
- 1.31 Fortunately, no one was injured in the crash.

From all the previous definitions, the researchers tend to follow Quirk et al.'s definition (1985: 568) of viewpoint adverbs as a way of considering what someone says from an adjective or a noun point of view. This definition is adopted since it is widely used by other grammarians, gives a clear idea about this type of adverbs and explains how such type is generally formed?

Chapter two

Grammatical Study of Viewpoint Adverbs

2.1 Forms of Viewpoint Adverbs

2.1.1 -ly Viewpoint Adverbs

Viewpoint adverbs can be expressed by different forms. The most common one is that of adjective with the addition of –ly suffix, as in :

- **2.1** *Morally, politically* and *economically*, it is urgent that the government should act more effectively on aid to developing countries.
- 2.2 It could have been a serious defeat, not only *militarily* but *psychologically* and *politically*.

These adverbs that are formed by the addition of -ly suffix and denote viewpoint can have a corresponding participle clause with 'speaking', such as *linguistically* ~ *linguistically speaking* or :

2.3 Many of these people have suffered ,*economically speaking*, because of their political affiliations.

The correspondence of viewpoint adverbs to the participle clause of speaking may seem similar to the correspondences of disjuncts to the same clause. However, the other correspondences for disjuncts are different from that of viewpoint adverbs, such as:' to speak morally' which may mean 'not immorally' or 'to speak in a moral way'. This adverb is a style disjunct which shows the speaker's moral superiority. It is different from the viewpoint adverb 'morally' or 'morally speaking' which means 'from the viewpoint of morals'. They may have a

corresponding prepositional phrase which is 'from an adjective point of view', such as visually ~from a visual point of view, or:

2.4 He has done better *from a personal point of view* than any other executive in the firm.

These adverbs may also have a corresponding prepositional phrases other than that of 'from an adjective point of view', such as:

- 2.5 They behave with respect to their morals as they always have done.
- 2.6 As far as mathematics is concerned, he was a complete failure.
- 2.7 Looked at politically, it was not an easy problem.
- **2.8** If we consider the financial position, the country is going to have a bad year (Quirk et al., 1985 : 568-569).

Sometimes a viewpoint adverb is combined to another adverb. Thus, such combination is unusual one ,as in:

2.9 Judaism is a covenant ,that unites an entire group of people into a religious community, and *for that reason historically* Judaism has been very opposed to elites.

In the example above, the viewpoint adverb is combined to a cause adverb (Hasselgard, 2010:93).

2.1.2 -wise Viewpoint Adverbs

The second form by which the viewpoint adverbs can be realized is that of a noun with the addition of –wise suffix. Such adverbs are considered informal, as in:

2.10 *Program-wise*, the new thing on TV last night was the first part of a new Galsworthy dramatization (Quirk et al. ,1985 : 568)

Adverbs that are formed by the addition of the suffix –wise have a long history in the language, as in;

2.11 push and twist a hole through each potato working crosswise.

However a new type of adverbs that are formed by means of –wise suffix has appeared. That is the viewpoint adverbs ,such as:

2.12 *Football-wise* we have been very good and in possession we looked strong ,but our problem is that we are not performing well without the ball.

In the above example, the adverb 'football-wise' shows a standpoint from which the statement is true (Lindquist, 2007:132).

The viewpoint adverbs like 'position-wise', 'budget-wise', 'careerwise', 'crime-wise', 'football-wise', 'health-wise', 'market-wise', 'percentage-wise' and 'style-wise' are all used especially in American English. Many scholars agreed that this phenomenon is an American innovation. Lenker (2002) reported that the use of viewpoint adverbs in — wise are called "gimmick" a "fad" or "trendy jargon." However, Howard (1993) mentioned that many commentators consider these adverbs as "eminently useful" and that 'career-wise' is easier than 'in relation to my career' and a more direct way to say 'as far as money is concerned' is 'money-wise' (Lindquist, 2007: 133).

There is a huge age-difference between these adverbs and other adverbs formed by means of –wise suffix. Although many speakers are not aware of this difference ,nevertheless viewpoint adverbs are fairly a recent phenomenon ,while the other adverbs have been used since middle English:

- 2.13 They are written on both sides and, following the run of the grain, lengthwise. [manner adverb]
- **2.14** *Health-wise*, brain cancer cannot be always treated with radiation [viewpoint adverb]
- **2.15** Shape-wise, the New York is hard to pin down ,not having an obvious parentage [viewpoint adverb] (Puffer and Plag, 2000:239).

2.2 The Position and Usage of Viewpoint Adverbs

2.2.1 The Usage of Viewpoint adverbs

Generally, viewpoint adverbs are infrequent in writing pieces. However, most of them are found in academic writing, a text type in which attribution of perspectives as well as opinions is important (Hasselgard, 2010: 255). This is also suggested by Biber et al.(2007: 860) as stance adverbials are used to a greater degree than any other text types. Part of the stance adverbials is the viewpoint adverbs that are used to make clear the perspective from which a sentence or an utterance is true, as in:

2.16 From our perspective, the criteria of social movement are cognitive.

Hasselgard (2010:256) mentions the conversation as being a text type with the second highest frequency of viewpoint adverbs. As conversation is as a text type which is preoccupied with people, surely, it will show the overt making of people's opinions. Little or no occurrence at all of viewpoint adverbs in commentary ,letters and fiction. They can also occur in news texts ,as in:

2.17 According to Scotland, the take up of the scheme is higher in rural areas because wages are low while employment is secure.

Viewpoint adverbs are ,generally, used to show the standpoint from which something is true. They can function as premodifying adverbs of other adjectives ,such as : *Artistically* justifiable ,*economically* weak ,*theoretically* sound ,*ethically* wrong ,*technically* possible or *politically* expedient ,which means expedient from political point of view. It is impossible for these adverbs to modify other adverbs ,as in:

2.18 * He reasoned theoretically soundly (Quirk et al., 1985:448-449).

Adverbs that express viewpoint may be used ,in an unusual case ,after the noun phrase. They supposed to be related to the adjective which is premodified within the phrase ,such as:

2.19 A good paper editorially can also be a good paper commercially.

A more usual form of such sentence would be

- **2.20** An *editorially* good paper can also be a *commercially* good one. Viewpoint adverbs should be distinguished from content disjuncts. Thus, the distinction is a fine one between them especially when the same item is used:
- 2.21 Technically, our task is to recycle the waste products.[disjunct]
- 2.22 Technically, recycling the waste products will be easy[subjunct] (Quirk et al., 1985:621).

It is noted that content disjuncts are closer to viewpoint adverbs. This is made clear by the test which involves repetition of a noun phrase:

2.23 As far as Germany's economy is concerned, Germany show

It's

signs of improvement (Ibid. :1074).

When they are used ,viewpoint adverbs are closely related to disjuncts in that both types give a perspective on the clause. What is important here ,is that this perspective is not the speaker's one. This leads to the fact that the real function of viewpoint adverbs is often to assign responsibility for the proposition to somebody other than the speaker (Hasselgard , 2010:30).

Most viewpoint adverbs are used ,pragmatically, as hedges of the matrix proposition by denoting that what is said or written stands as an opinion rather than an objective fact. According to meaning ,there is a little difference between a viewpoint adverb ,such as 'in my opinion' and expressions such as 'honestly' ,'presumably' and 'allegedly'. These adverbs are syntactically disjuncts. Therefore, viewpoint adverbs are said to be intermediate between the two of adjuncts and disjuncts and a problematic type of adverbials. Their discourse function is in the interpersonal domain ,giving a point of view and taking a responsibility for proposition conveyed (Ibid. :255-256).

Viewpoint adverbs are classified as being subjuncts. Although subjuncts, generally, cannot be realized by clauses, yet viewpoint adverbs are being the exception of that rule. Viewpoint adverbs can be realized in both finite and nonfinite or participle clauses. However, the verbs in these clauses form a restricted semantic set. On one hand, 'be concerned' and 'go' can occur only with finite clauses, while 'consider', 'look at ' and 'view' on the other hand, can occur in nonfinite clauses:

2.25 If we look at it from a historical point of view, they have little claim on the territory.

As it is noticed, the subject of the -ing clause ,which functions as a viewpoint adverb, is the 'I' of the speaker ,while the subject of the -ed clause is the superordinate clause itself. In such sentence :

2.27 If it is viewed objectively, he is definitely at fault.

It is obvious that the pronoun 'it', which is the subject of the clause, is an anaphoric reference for the superordinate clause which is ' he is definitely at fault' (Quirk et al., 1985: 1069).

As viewpoint adverbs are classified as adverbs related to wide orientation subjuncts, the items seem to have a superordinate role to other sentence elements. They may have a similar scope to that of disjuncts (Ibid. :568). This is also suggested by Quirk and Greenbaum (1973 :265) in which these adverbs have an extended scope, for example:

2.28 *Theoretically*, I have no objections to his proposal and neither have any of my colleagues.

Hasselgard (2010: 256) classified viewpoint adverbs as being adjuncts and in a sentence like:

2.29 From Sara's point of view, the job was so difficult despite the fact that she is really good.

This adverb can be applied to the four ways of identifying an adjunct, which are mentioned in Quirk et al.'s (1985: 504). This adverb can be the focus of a cleft sentence 'it was from Sara's point of view that it was so difficult' and an alternative question 'was it from Sara's point of

view or from other people's? '. Such adverb can be focused by a focus adverbial 'this was so difficult just from Sara's point of view', and can come within the scope of pro-form 'and so was John's '. However, what is applied for this adverb cannot be applied for all other viewpoint adverbs, as there are many viewpoint adverbs which cannot be applied to these four ways.

2.2.2 The Position of Viewpoint Adverbs

The viewpoint adverbs tend always to be placed in initial position, whatever their structure (Quirk et al., 1985: 569). Thus, they are free to be set in initial as well as end positions. However, their message makes them more appropriate for thematic position which is the initial one. As they indicate whose perspective the clause message represents, clause-final occurrence will, in fact, be a way of making them less prominent, as in:

2.30 The skill requirements will change from first-line supervisor to top managements ,*according to John* (Hasselgard , 2010 : 117).

The end position is clearly the most recurrent one for most types of adjuncts as well as subjuncts, thus viewpoint adverbs are being exception of that. They occur in end position in less than 50% of the cases, while they are common in both initial (35%) and medial position (29%) (Ibid.: 57,79).

When an adverb is used in initial position, this means that the adverb functions as clause theme. So when it occurs in initial position, a viewpoint adverb realizes the thematic function as "an orienter to the message." It is an orienter in the sense that it clarifies the message, which is about to be perceived, to the listener or to the reader and gives a framework for the interpretation of that message. The thematic function

of the viewpoint adverbs give important information about the validity of the message ,which is mainly either related to certain circumstances or a subjective one ,as in :

2.31 In their own estimation, their rule rested on right and not on mere force.

Although viewpoint adverbs contain information which should be focused on when interpreting the rest of the sentence ,nevertheless it is possible to place them in end position. So it is left to the writer to decide whether to give these adverbs a thematic prominence as they are placed in initial positions ,or a focal one as they are placed at end position (Hasselgard , 2010 : 117).

Conclusions

The researchers have arrived at the following concluded results:

- 1- Viewpoint adverbs are defined as these adverbs that are used to indicate the points of view or perspectives which are considered in the speech. They show a specific aspect from which the situation is looked at.
- 2- Viewpoint adverbs can sometimes be overlapped with comment adverbs. However, many scholars believe that the two types of adverbs are quite different. Viewpoint adverbs show a standpoint from which a sentence or an utterance is looked at, comment adverbs ,on the other hand, provide comment on what is stated.
- 3- Viewpoint adverbs are expressed by different forms. The most common one is realized by an adjective with the addition of —ly suffix. Another way of realizing these adverbs is that of the suffix —wise being added to a noun. These adverbs can also be realized by different prepositional phrases.
- 4- Adverbs of viewpoint which are realized by the -wise suffix are considered informal and they are used especially in American English. Although this type of adverbs is a new one, yet it is more direct and an easy way of expressing a standpoint.
- 5- Most of viewpoint adverbs are found in academic writing, in which variety of opinions and perspectives are needed. These adverbs can also occur in conversations, as it is important in such text type to show people's opinions.
- 6- In position, viewpoint adverbs whatever their structure, tend to be in initial position in most cases. Although, they can be used finally, nevertheless the initial position demonstrates their meaning.

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