A Usage-based Study of Verb Phrase Adverbs in Present-day English

現代英語における動詞句修飾副詞の実証的記述研究

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Abstract

This thesis addresses traditional issues regarding the relationship between the syntax and semantics of verb phrase adverbs in English, especially manner adverbs. Using COCA (the Corpus of Contemporary American English), it attempts to expand the descriptive study of adverbs and clarify the relationship between the structure and meaning of adverbs. In the analysis of examples in COCA, it is important to decide what method of analysis is used. This paper will provide an overview of past literature and show that assuming a verb phrase structure incorporating thematic roles is important for investigating the reality of verb phrase adverbs. This structure allows for analysis while focusing on both structure and meaning. Through a close examination of actual examples, the typical and peripheral uses of verb phrase adverbs will be investigated.

Previous studies have revealed a novel view of the adverbial system. However, it is also true that various linguistic facts have been ignored in the process of building the system. The verb phrase structure assumed in this study will prove to be useful in analyzing and clarifying

these previously unexamined linguistic facts. To show the usefulness of this verb phrase structure, this study analyzes two types of adverbs, namely subcategorized adverbs (Jackendoff 1972) and core pure manner adverbs (Schäfer 2002). It will show that the proposed structure can explain the features of these two different kinds of adverbs.

Chapter 2 will provide an overview of adverb research, and show the basic properties of adverbs, mainly verb phrase adverbs, and their various usages. This chapter also reviews previous studies on how adverbs are positioned in the syntactic structure and highlights some of the problems. To analyze verb phrase adverbs, including manner adverbs, it is helpful to suggest a structure that incorporates macro semantic roles (Kaga 2001). The assumption of this structure allows for the categorization of Theme/Location -oriented adverbs. As a consequence of the assumed syntactic structure, Theme/Location-oriented adverbs are expected to be in postverbal position and to have meanings related to state change. To demonstrate the validity of this new category, it is argued that an analysis of subcategorized adverbs and core pure manner adverbs is appropriate.

Chapter 3 will revisit subcategorized adverbs. It has been argued that these adverbs cannot be placed before the verb, nor can they be omitted. It will be illustrated that previous syntactic and semantic explanations fail to account for their characteristics. However, if it is assumed that these adverbs are Theme/Location-oriented adverbs that modify state change rather than manner adverbs, the characteristics can be described, and the classification of subcategorized adverbs will be unnecessary. The validity of this claim will be demonstrated through a detailed examination of examples from COCA.

Chapter 4 will examine core pure manner adverbs, such as loudly, tightly, brightly, and woodenly. These adverbs are basically restricted to the postverbal position. It is argued that this property can be explained by supposing that these adverbs are not manner adverbs that

modify the action, but Theme/Location oriented adverbs that modify state change. Furthermore, it will be clear that core pure manner adverbs occur in the preverbal position with a high probability when they co-occur with particular verbs. Such cases are peripheral, given the basic nature of these adverbs. Through examining these examples in COCA, it will be shown that these adverbs are developing new usages.