

The concept of manner and its linguistic realizations
SLE Conference 2023 - National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Olivier Duplâtre (Sorbonne Université) & Patrick Duffley (Université Laval)

Keywords: manner, adverb, adverbial, modification, motion verb.

The concept of manner originates in Greco-Latin rhetoric and has roots in Aristotle, emerging from the categories of position (*He is sitting*), action (*He is cutting*), and affection (*He is cut*). Indeed, one can be positioned in various ways, one cannot act without some mode of acting, and one is necessarily affected by an action in a given way.

Grammarians have tried to capture it empirically by using the question *how?* Already in 1773, Restaut defines the “manner adverb” as a word “that expresses how or in what way things are done and which answers the question *how?*”. However, this definition raises three problems:

Firstly, the question *how* used to detect the presence of manner covers not only manner, but also instrument, place, time, frequency, etc. (Duplâtre 2021; Duplâtre & Modicom 2022). This makes ‘manner’ a term that covers heterogeneous notions, rendering this notion impossible to define.

Secondly, the definition is circular in that it uses the word ‘manner’ as an explanation. In the sentence *He spoke to John in a sharp manner*, it is not *sharp* that expresses manner, no more than the noun *manner* itself, but rather the whole phrase *in a sharp manner*. Moreover, the paraphrase itself is problematic, as there is no *a priori* evidence for the equivalence between it and the adverb (cf. the awkwardness of paraphrasing *She turned sharply to the left* by *?She turned to the left in a sharp manner*).

Thirdly, the definition focuses exclusively on the adverb, but as intimated above regarding Aristotle, the modalities of position and action can also be expressed by the verb, as noted by Stosic (2000) and illustrated by the following example:

He is running down the street.

Since one could add an adverb to the verb above, the following questions arise concerning such constructions: Are there different categories of manner? A primary one, expressed by the verb, and a secondary one, expressed by other elements as in the examples below, or is manner fully saturated as soon as it is expressed by the verb:

He was running down the street screaming/naked/dressed in a yellow tutu/frantically,
etc.

Do the postverbal items represent mere secondary predications or do these indications affect the action? To what extent? Are they mere illusions of manner? How do these facts jibe with Dik (1997)’s theory, where manner is latently present in every nuclear predication expressing a position or an action and is expressed by filling the slot devoted to manner with specific information by means of an adverbial lexeme?

This leads to a further question: is manner lexical or notional? It is lexical if we consider manner to be latent in or subcategorized by the verb (McConnell-Ginet 1982). On the other hand, it is notional if we see it as implied by any action or position (Dik 1997).

One might be tempted to identify manner by means of morphology, and adverbs in *-ly* or *-ment(e)* are indeed frequently used to express this notion. However, this morphological class is far from being semantically homogeneous: some adverbs (cf. French *divinement*¹) can express agency, others time (cf. *nuitamment/nightly*), others degree (cf. *extrêmement/extremely*), etc. In many cases, it is not adverbial morphology that serves to identify manner, but manner that serves to identify the adverb: although the frequency facts preclude treating it as the prototype of the adverbial category (Ramat/Ricca 1994), the manner adverb is the preferred basis for typological generalizations (Hengeveld 1992a, b; 2004). In addition, it is the vehicle for a fourth function called “adverbation” (Haspelmath 2012) – in contrast to nouns, verbs and adjectives, which are used respectively for the functions of reference, predication and attribution. What is more basic here however – the notion of manner or the grammatical category of adverb – or do both enjoy equal status? Furthermore, if an adverb modifies the predicate in the same way that an adjective modifies a referent (Haser & Kortmann 2006), does this mean that the adverbial class is reducible to the manner adverb? One thing is certain however: the manner adverb, and by extension the notion of manner itself, must be distinguished from circumstantial indications (Golay 1959, see also König 1995 on converbs). Hence a syntactic question: is the manner adverb really an adjunct?

In any case, the manner adverb is not an adverb like any other: from a morphosyntactic point of view, it can generate other functions (framing adverbs, degree adverbs, etc.) or interpretations (Schäfer 2002). From a syntactic point of view, it is a lower adverb (Cinque 1999). Semantically, it is defined by the fact that it has several possible orientations (Platt & Platt 1972, Bartsch 1972, Duplâtre & Modicom 2022), a particularity which is not observed with adverbs of time or place.

Finally, if manner adverbs are to be distinguished from secondary predications (Hallonsten Halling 2018), this means that their function must be that of modification. In Croft (2003)’s model, these two functions (modification and predication) are mutually exclusive. However, might there be a way out of this dichotomy: if we treat manner adverbs as representing a function just like reference, predication and modification, could they not combine both (secondary) predication and modification? Concretely, this would mean that manner adverbs could both modify the verb and predicate something of the subject at the same time. Of course, this predication is not explicitly expressed, so that manner adverbs are considered by some authors to be “neutral” with respect to predication (see Geuder 2002). But this possibility appears very clearly in *John opened the door enthusiastically*, where *enthusiastically* “attributes enthusiasm to John” (Jackendoff 1972). At the same time, the question arises whether modification is the proper term to describe the relation between manner adverbs and verbs. Should manner adverbs be considered rather to be “two-place predicates” (Dalrymple 2001), whose arguments would be the subject and the verb? As far as the verb is concerned, do they fit the definition of Dionysius Thrax according to which the *épirrhêma* is a predication on the rheme (Lallot 2003), which would make them secondary predications?

¹ **divinement** avertis en songe... (Mt 2, 12)/being warned by **God** in a dream...

Manner therefore appears to be a protean concept, as it can be expressed by adverbs, prepositional phrases, verbs, converbs, etc., yet it is used to identify the adverb. Is this a contradiction or the seeds of a solution to the characterization of the adverbial category?

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