



Formal and semantic-discursive properties of mirative expressions (*it's*) *no wonder*: a synchronic-diachronic approach

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0. Introduction

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- topic: **mirative** qualifiers with *no/what/etc. wonder*
- **grammaticalization** associated with ‘**rhetorical structure**’ (Mann & Thompson 1988): justification (J) ^ qualifier (MQ) ^ proposition (P)

(1) You never did have a heart, Sophie. **No wonder** your first husband had an affair! (WB)

- MQs with Negative Polarity Item (*no/what/etc*) + *wonder* express
 - *speaker attitude*: ‘lack of surprise’
 - *discourse organization*: rhetorical structure = **opposite** of **concession**, where SoA **surprisingly** occurs **in spite of** (anti-causal) SoA
no wonder: P **expected** due to **causal** relation between J and P
→ **anti-concessive**: ‘of course’

0. Introduction

- in Present-day English **adverbial** uses of *no wonder* **predominate**
- 2 subtypes: distinct structural and semantic-discursive features

1. **disjunct** *no wonder*: typically precedes P which it qualifies

(2) **No wonder** he was a sea captain. He stays calm in a storm. (WB)

2. **anaphoric** *no wonder*: inherently follows P

(3) His wife was an alcoholic, **and no wonder**, if she knew what kind of man he was. (WB)

→ P retrieved anaphorically: adverbial “gives an instruction to include the pre-supposed proposition in the interpretation” (Halliday & Hasan 1976: 216), e.g.

(4) Will he be elected? – *Probably*. (‘Probably, he will be elected.’)

(5) Their publisher would accept nothing less, *and rightly so*. Critics rightly worry that the growing tax breaks are problematic on two ground

0. Introduction

- **historically**, 2 adverbial subtypes originate in distinct **multi-clausal** cxns in Old English, persisting as infrequent variants in Present-day English

1. **extraposition**: typically fixes MQ before P

(6) Lost so much blood ***it's a wonder*** he's still got anything for his heart to do. (WB)

- Note: in this case invited inference **concessive** relation with Positive Polarity Item

(7) ***It's no wonder*** Norwegians hunt whale. There's nothing else left to catch. (WB)

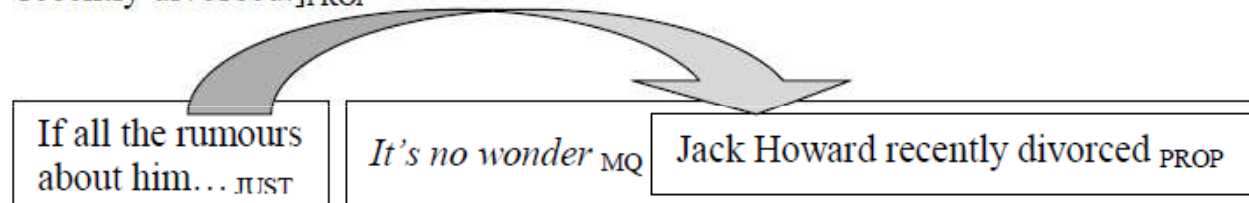
2. **paratactic** structure: MQ separate assertion referring back to P

(8) And then there's Jack Howard, recently divorced ***and no wonder***. If all the rumours about him are true, he's been in enough bedrooms to qualify as a top adviser for Laura Ashley furnishings. (WB)

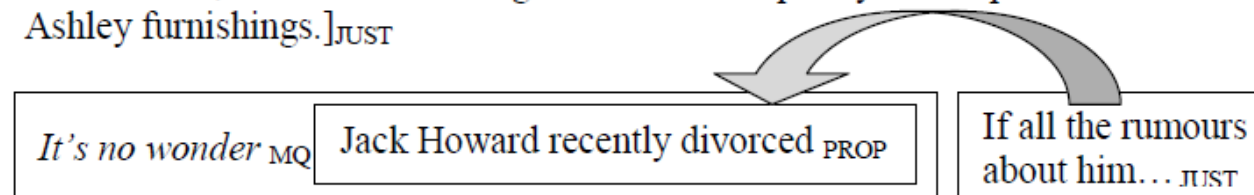
0. Introduction

- various discursive contexts containing *no/what/etc. wonder* instantiate **3 basic discourse schemata** (DS) (most common, with minor variants)

- (i) justification + mirative qualifier + proposition
[If all the rumours about Jack Howard are true, he's been in enough bedrooms to qualify as a top adviser for Laura Ashley furnishings.]_{JUST} [*It's no wonder*]_{MQ} [he recently divorced.]_{PROP}



- (ii) mirative qualifier + proposition + justification
[*It's no wonder*]_{MQ} [Jack Howard recently divorced]_{PROP}. [If all the rumours about him are true, he's been in enough bedrooms to qualify as a top adviser for Laura Ashley furnishings.]_{JUST}

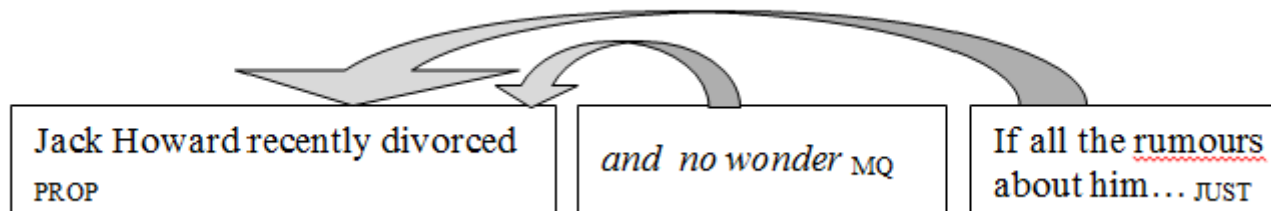


0. Introduction

- various discursive contexts containing *no/what/etc. wonder* instantiate 3 **basic discourse schemata** (DS) (most common, with minor variants)

(iii) proposition + (anaphoric) mirative qualifier + justification

[And then there's Jack Howard, recently divorced]_{PROP} [*and no wonder.*]_{MQ} [If all the rumours about him are true, he's been in enough bedrooms to qualify as a top adviser for Laura Ashley furnishings.]_{JUST}



0. Introduction

Aim of talk:

- describe and reflect on

diachronic development of 2 types of **adverbials** *no wonder*:

- 1) disjunct
- 2) anaphoric (hitherto neglected type)

which inherited

- syntagmatic structural features
- association with discourse schemata and rhetorical strategies

from distinct multi-clausal patterns

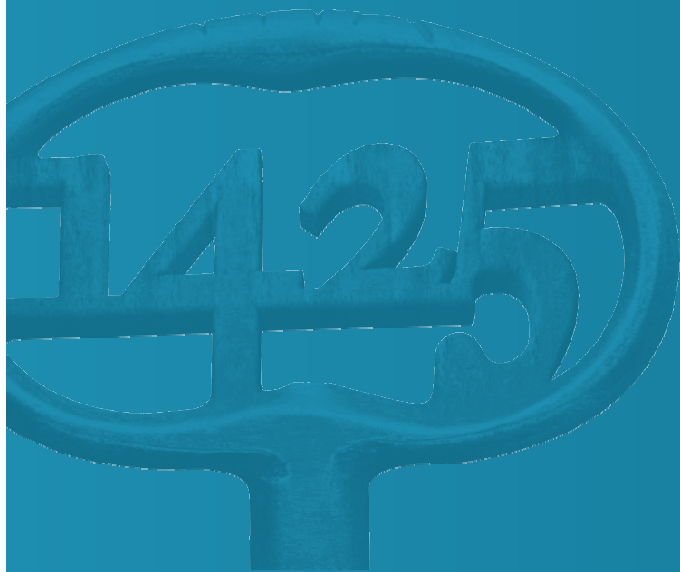
- 1) extraposition
- 2) paratactic structures (hitherto neglected type)

and which manifest distinct prosodic features in **synchronic** spoken data

Structure of talk

1. Data
2. Diachrony of *no wonder* constructions
 - 2.1. Old English: multi-clausal origins
 - 2.2. From Middle to Present-day English: the rise of the adverbials
3. Synchronic description of *no wonder* constructions:
 - spoken data and their prosody
4. Theoretical reflections

1. Data and data analysis



1. Data and data analysis

period	<u>subperiod</u>	total extracted per <u>subperiod</u>	relevant tokens per <u>subperiod</u>	total extracted per period	total relevant tokens per period
Old English	Early	111	30	807	113
	Late	696	83		
Middle English	Early	117	44	228	102
	Late	111	58		
Modern English	Early	97	23	1002	302

Diachronic datasets

1. Data and data analysis

- Synchronic data
 - **written** data from the British English subcorpora of Wordbanks *Online*: 500 random examples in which an expression with *wonder* relates to a state-of-affairs
 - corpus of **spoken** British English data created by Jacobs (2014), analysed with Praat and transcribed on the basis of extractions
 - from LLC and COLT (with audio files)
 - from British National Corpus (BNC), British Academic Spoken English (BASE) and Collins Wordbanks (WB) (contexts for which no audio files available were spoken in by native speakers of English and recorded)

2. Diachrony of *no wonder* constructions



2.1. Old English: multi-clausal origins

- **grammaticalization** of clausal expressions with *be no/what wonder*
- triggered by **negative** polarity item (NPI):
denies conceptually negative notion: ‘wonder’ implies ‘unexpected’
→ *no wonder*, ‘**not** unexpected’, emphatic and **grammaticalized**

(9) Nu cwæð se halga Beda ... þæt hit nan wundor nys, þæt se halga cynincg untrumnyse gehæle nu he on heofonum leofað

‘Now said Bede the Holy, ... that it is no wonder that the holy king heals weaknesses now that he lives in heaven.’ (YCOE 950-1050)

- *it is no wonder*: cannot be probed by *how much wonder is it?*
→ grammaticalized, discourse secondary **modifier** of p
(Boye & Harder 2012)
- cp. lexical use: *How much trouble is it? It is no/much trouble.*

2.1. Old English: multi-clausal origins

2 multi-clausal subtypes in which MQs originate:

1. **extraposition:**

- MQ fixed before P → unit of ‘miratively qualified p’
- 2 discourse schemata

DS (i): **J + MQ(P)**

(10) Be ðæm is awriten, Se wisa suigad, oð he ongiet ðæt him bið nyttre to sprec-anne. *Nis hit nan wundur, ðeah he swugie, & bide his timan.* (YCOE, 850-950)

‘On this it is written: the wise man is silent until he thinks that it is more useful for him to speak. It is no wonder, that he is silent and waits his time.’

- conceptually ‘logical’ order: justification + miratively qualified P
- processed as rhetorically causal, anti-concessive, ‘of course’ relation
- P in final position: foregrounded

2.1. Old English: multi-clausal origins

DS (ii): MQ(P) + J

(11) Nu cwæð se halga Beda þe ðas boc gedihte, þæt *hit nan wundor nys*,
þæt se halga cynincg untrumnyse gehæle **nu** he on heofonum leofað
'Now said Bede the Holy, who wrote the book, that it is no wonder that the
holy king heals weaknesses now that he lives in heaven.' (YCOE 950-
1050)

- order MQ(P) + J, but justification of MQ linked to miratively qualified P by **explicit** structural marker (relative clause or conjunction)
- justification in final but subordinate clause → P and J both rhetorical weight

2.1. Old English: multi-clausal origins

2. Paratactic pattern

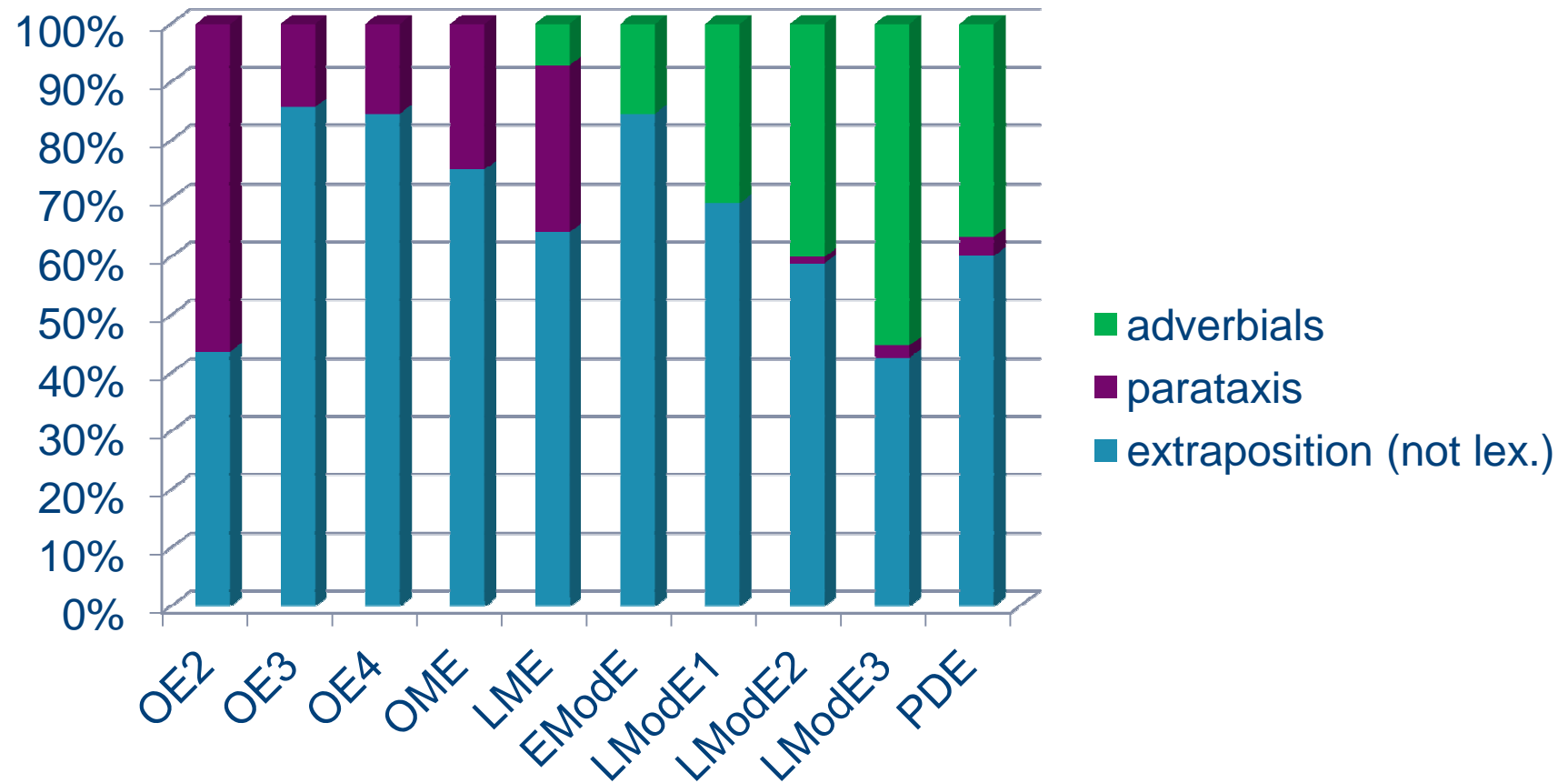
DS: P + anaMQ + J

(12) Ðanon he welt þam gewealdleðerum ealle gesceaftu. *Nis nan wundor,*
forþam ðe he is cyning & dryhten & æwelm & fruma & æ & wisdom rihtwis
dema

‘Henceforth he rules all creation with reins. It is no wonder, for he is the king, the lord, the beginning, the creator, the law, wisdom, and the righteous ruler.’ (YCOE 850-950)

- P followed by MQ, which anaphorically refers back to P
- *forþam* ‘for’: consequential, i.e. anti-concessive, relation between P+J
- position of MQ in a separate main clause, in between P and J
→ justification often rhetorically as, if not more, important as P

2.1. Old English: multi-clausal origins



2.2. From Middle to Present-day English: the rise of the adverbials

- crucial change:
- emergence of adverbials in Late Middle English,
- which increasingly replace
 - extraposition
 - paratactic structures
- strikingly, two distinct adverbial types
 - disjunct
 - anaphoric adverbial
- inherit structural-syntagmatic and discursive-pragmatic features of two multiple-clause types

2.2. From Middle to Present-day English: the rise of the adverbials

1. Extraposition ~ disjunct adverbial

(13) For few men ever had a bolder flight of fancy, more steddily governed by Judgment than he had. **No wonder** a young man so made and so improved was very acceptable in Court. (PPCEME, 1640-1710)

- “content disjunct” (Quirk et al 1985: 615) qualifies propositional content
- disjunct MQ - P: interpersonal modifier - head (cf. McGregor 1997)
- parallel to modifier status of discourse-secondary matrix extraposition
- disjunct remarkably non-flexible: almost exclusively initial position
- position seems to be fixed by requirements of 2 basic DS of disjunct that developed originally in extraposition structures

2.2. From Middle to Present-day English: the rise of the adverbials

- disjunct *no wonder*: discourse schemata

(i): J + MQ(P)

(13) For few men ever had a bolder flight of fancy, more steddily governed by Judgment than he had. **No wonder** a young man so made and so improved was very acceptable in Court. (PPCEME, 1640-1710)

- 'logical' causal, anti-concessive 'of course' order: justification + MQ(P)
- p in final position: foregrounded

(ii): MQ(P) + J

(14) '**No wonder** the earth has quaked,' said one, 'when it held such a monster!' (CLMETEV, 1780-1850)

- J linked to MQ(P) by **explicit** structural marker (e.g. conjunction)
- justification in final but subordinate clause → p and J both rhetorical weight

2.2. From Middle to Present-day English: the rise of the adverbials

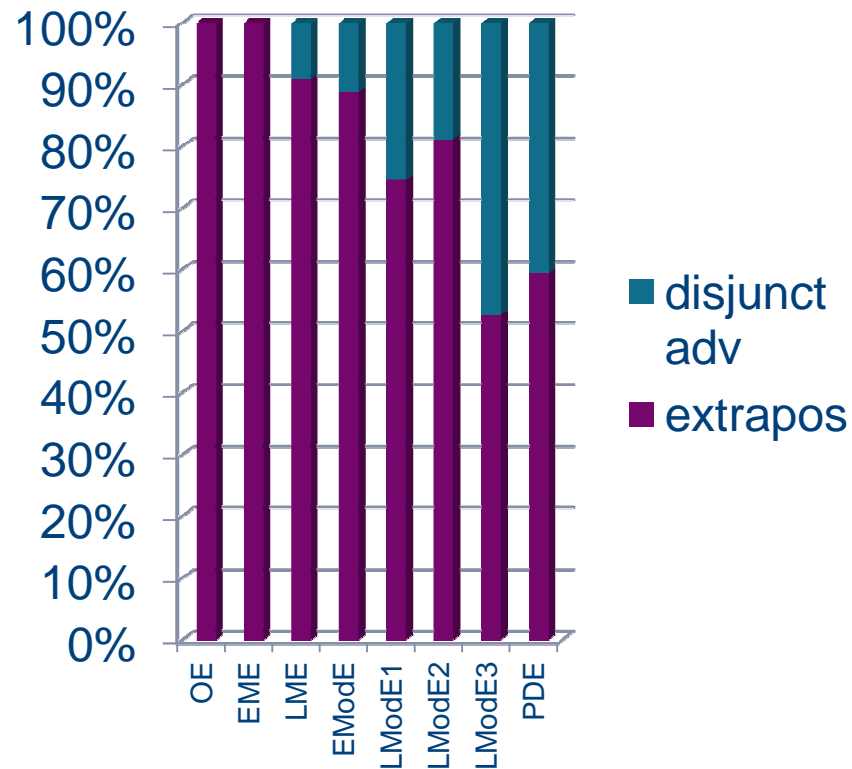
2. Paratactic structure ~ anaphoric *no wonder*

(15) His heart's only half in his profession since he and Julia swore their oath; and ***no wonder***, --he made something his own that won't go under lock and key. (CLMETEV, 1710-1780)

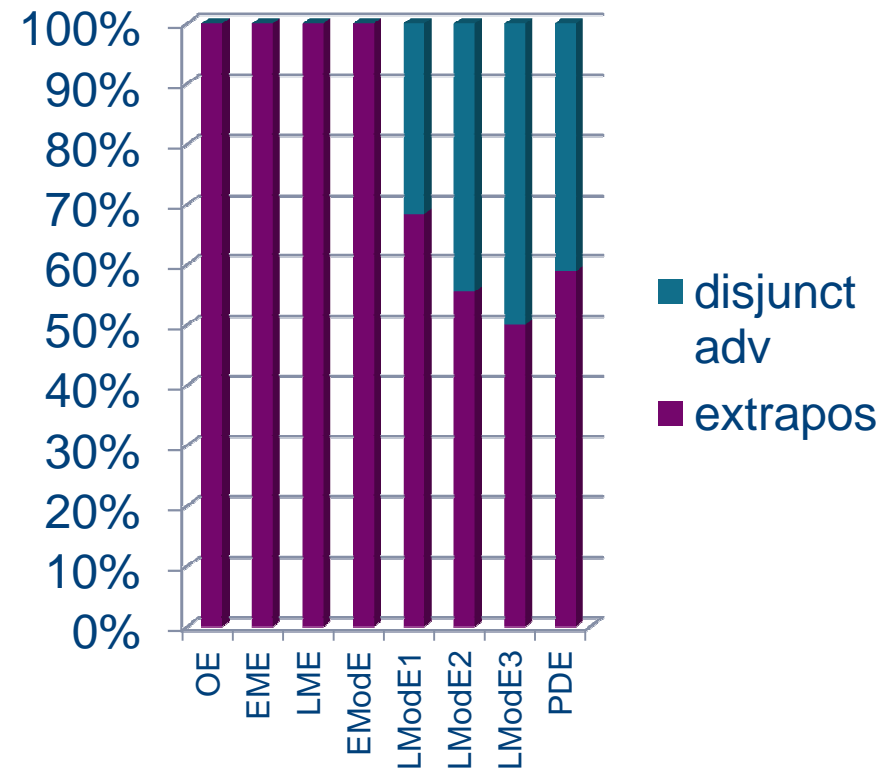
- P and MQ not head-modifier, but MQ paratactically related to P
- P retrieved anaphorically and presupposed in unit containing MQ
- justification relates to MQ + presupposed p:
 - (a) She likes Ritchie. No wonder. He could charm birds off a tree.
 - (b) She likes Ritchie. No wonder (she does). He could charm birds off a tree.
- DS: P + **anaMQ** + J: J makes rhetorically important point

2.2. From Middle to Present-day English: the rise of the adverbials

J+MQ+Prop

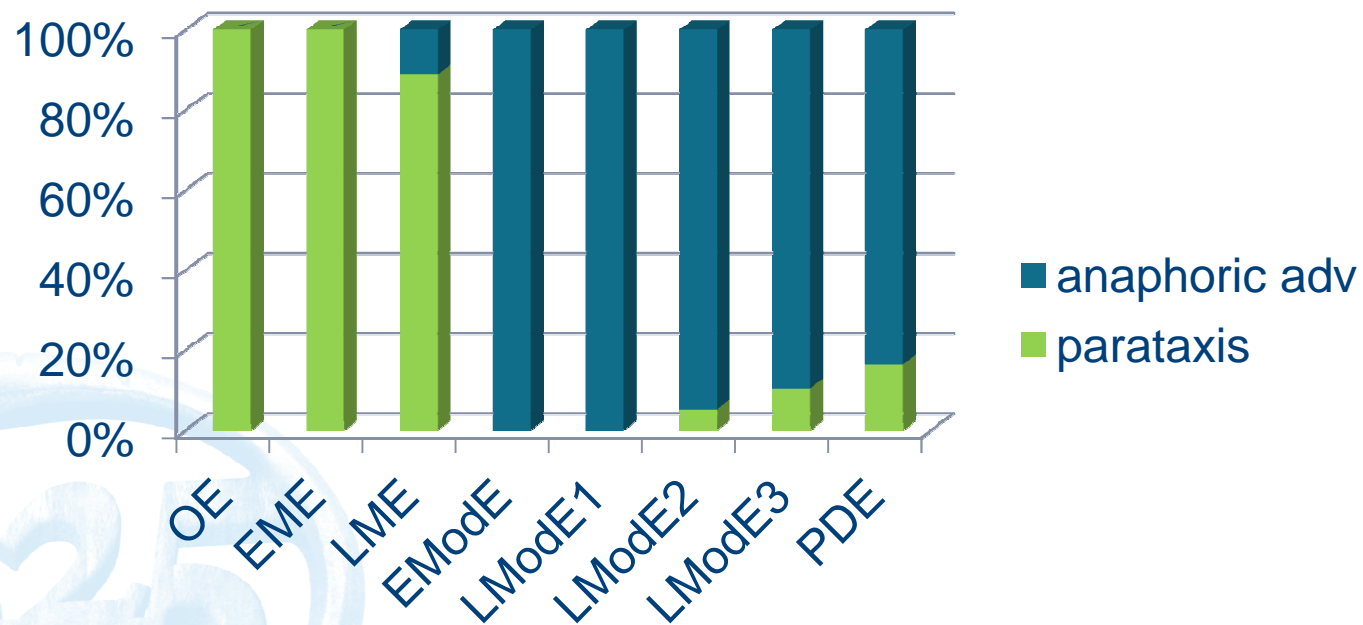


MQ+Prop+J



2.2. From Middle to Present-day English: the rise of the adverbials

Prop ^ MQ ^ J *



2.2. From Middle to Present-day English: the rise of the adverbials

- Since their emergence in LME,
 - Disjunct adverbials increasingly replace extraposition structures in DS (i) and (ii)
 - Anaphoric adverbials largely replace paratactic patterns, mainly in DS (iii)
- DS (i), with the logical, causal order J+MQ(P), becomes more predominant over time

	J+MQ(P)			MQ(P)+J			P^MQ^J		
	Extrap	Disj	TOT DS	Extrap	Disj	TOT DS	Taxis	Anaph	TOT DS
OE	18	0	32,1%	23	0	41,1%	15	0	26,8%
EME	9	0	60,0%	1	0	6,7%	5	0	33,3%
LME	10	1	42,3%	6	0	23,1%	8	1	34,6%
EModE	8	1	69,2%	3	0	23,1%	0	1	7,7%
LModE1	42	14	70,0%	13	6	23,8%	1	4	6,3%
LModE2	44	11	60,4%	11	8	20,9%	0	17	18,7%
LModE3	34	31	67,0%	8	8	16,5%	2	14	16,5%
PDE	215	147	73,1%	35	23	11,7%	10	65	15,2%
Total	380	205	67,01%	100	45	16,7%	41	102	16,4%

3. Synchronic description of *no wonder* adverbials:

Spoken data: prosody

3. Prosody of *no wonder* adverbials

- corpus of spoken data created by Jacobs (2014):
- 93 useable contexts from spoken British English containing adverbial *no wonder*,
- analysed with Praat
- and transcribed, indicating
 - position in tone unit (separate tone unit vs. final, initial, medial in tone unit) (Kaltenböck 2008)
 - stressed or unstressed (cf. Wichmann et al 2010, Halliday 1994)
 - tone unit boundaries: //
 - pitch change on tonic syllable: / rise; \ fall; ^ rise-fall; fall-rise V
 - stressed syllable: ‘ (within feet marking speech rhythm)

3. Prosody of *no wonder* adverbials

1. **disjunct** adverbials: 80 ex

- 77 tone initial, 75 with stress (not tonic) on '*wonder*
→ default prosody of disjunct use of *no wonder*

Sp 2: But that's what it cost, the fish itself, four pound.

Sp 1: I know. It is expensive. ...

Sp 2: Yeah. Yeah but I mean fish we we used to consider fish

Sp 1: Oh it was cheap.

Sp 2: as a cheap meal weren't it?

Sp 1: Yeah.

Sp 2: // ^No / 'wonder people don't / b\uy it //

- 'exceptions' to default:
- 1 tone initial with separate tone unit and tonic on *wonder*,
- 2 final and 1 medial in tone unit with stress on *wonder*

3. Prosody of *no wonder* adverbials

- **disjunct** *no wonder* has comparable prosodic features that Wichmann et al (2010) find for grammaticalized (modal/discourse particle) uses of *of course*:
 - stressed (not tonic) status: correlates with delexicalization
 - integration in tone unit containing P: correlates with qualifying function (cf. Kaltenböck 2008)
- (16) I mean how many bank managers b-- (pause) force their businesses to sell off their fixed assets at a colossal discount for heavens sake. I mean if this is the way bank managers operate up and down the country // ^no / 'wonder the e / 'conomy's in a / m\less //.
- rigidification of order (MQ predominantly in initial position) and prosody
→ contributes to clear realization of predominant discourse schema (i), which rhetorically foregrounds P

3. Prosody of *no wonder* adverbials

2. **anaphoric** adverbials: 18 ex

- all form a separate tone unit
- with tonic prominence on *wonder* (12 fall, 4 rise fall, 2 (low) rise), despite its being a grammaticalized adverbial
- but P is anaphorically retrieved and presupposed in information unit
- information unit: communicative value of *whole* 'miratively qualified P'

// he says // they re **they re leaving** // and he says // no wonder // with well // what it is like around here //

Sp 1: And I can remember sobbing 'cos **I couldn't understand it.** <Sp 2: Mm>

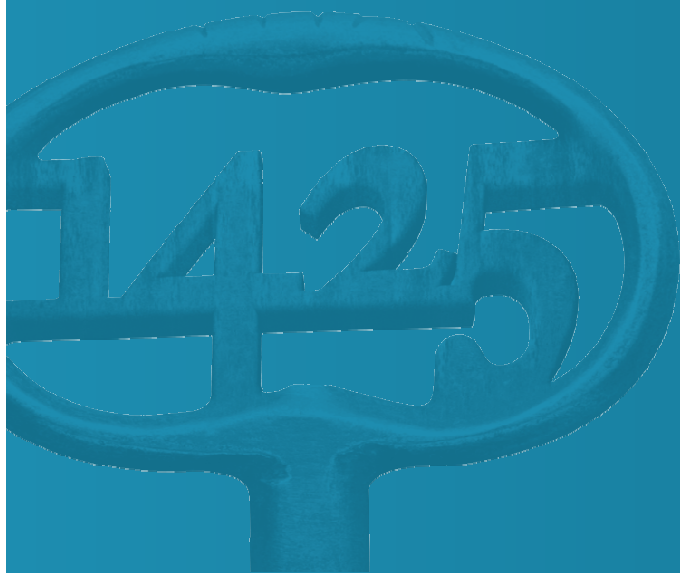
Sp 1: And I was thinking Oh no. But the point is the reason **I couldn't do them was** because I hadn't been taught them. <Sp. 2: laughs>

Sp 1: I hadn't been taught about fra percentages and fractions // so no wonder. //

3. Prosody of *no wonder* adverbials

→ prosodic features confirm:
distinction between disjunct and anaphorical adverbials

4. Theoretical reflections



4. Theoretical reflections

- hitherto, grammaticalization of ‘comment clauses’ studied within complex sentence: Hopper & Traugott (2003), Boye & Harder (2012)
- *larger rhetorical* (trans-sentential) units : locus for historical shift discourse
primariness > discourse secondariness
- combined force of Thetical Grammar (Kaltenböck et al. 2011) and discourse secondariness (Boye & Harder 2012):
 - Paratactic grammatical patterns:
 - MQ in separate (main) clause - - not included in Boye & Harder 2012
 - but still discursively dependent on the previous clause, i.e. its anchor (Kaltenböck et al. 2011),
 - As proven by tests for discursive secondariness (Boye & Harder 2012), e.g. cannot be probed by *how much wonder is it?* or polar interrogatives such as *Was it a wonder?*, unlike the lexical uses

4. Theoretical reflections

- *discourse schemata* (speaker-stance + discourse organization) informed large scale ‘replacement’ of *clausal* by *adverbial* qualifiers, with the latter ‘inheriting’ discursive, pragmatic and contextual features
 - -> support for position that specific *interactional, rhetorical* strategies may underlie changes such as grammaticalization (Schwenter & Waltereit 2010, Waltereit 2012)
- Among adverbial qualifiers, intriguing category of *anaphoric adverbial*, which has received little attention in synchronic literature, and even less in historical studies
- Distinction between *2 types of adverbials* (disjunct and anaphoric adverbials) not only related to different discourse schemata and different historical source patterns, also associated with different *prosodic behaviour*

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