# A New Way of Looking at *Adverb But Adverb* Constructions

The English contrastive conjunction *but* has been analyzed and discussed by numerous researchers with the aim of investigating its various meanings and functions. The purpose of this article is to propose a new view of a unique and rather neglected pattern *adverb but adverb* within the framework of construction grammar as formulated inter alia by Hilpert (2014), Goldberg (2003, 2006, 2011) and Gisborne and Trousdale (2008). The main idea advanced in this article is that the pattern *adv but adv* as in "He *excitedly but carefully* sealed it in a bag", qualifies as a construction in English and accordingly displays characteristics of a construction. The analysis will propose that the speaker assumes that *excitedly* does not include the semantic aspect of carefulness and thus imposes this new meaning component on *excitedly*. As a result, the initial adverb *excitedly* is given a new lexical entry such that does include this aspect. The article is divided as follows: Section 1 describes in brief some of the earlier research on the conjunction *but*. Section 2 provides a description of the main principles and assumptions of construction grammar. Section 3 presents an analysis of *but* based on these assumptions. Section 4 describes a schematic taxonomic hierarchy in order to demonstrate the place of the construction in the speaker's knowledge of language. Section 5 concludes the discussion and suggests some theoretical implications of the analysis, its contribution to the study of language and suggestions for future research.

## 1.      Previous Studies of *but*

Researchers generally agree about two main meanings of *but*, the meaning of "contrast" and the meaning of "denial of expectation". Grice (1961) proposed that the following sentence

1.      She is poor *but* she is honest.

expresses an implication relation of contrast between poverty and honesty. Later, in Grice (1975) he claimed that this is a case of conventional implicature associated with the word *but*. Other researchers developed the idea further and suggested various ways to account for the meaning of *but*. Lakoff (1971) suggested the meaning of denial of expectation of as in the next example:

2.      John is a Republican *but* he is honest.

According to Lakoff the first part of the sentence is based on some presupposition which the second part denies. Eventually, the implicature deriving from the sentence is that Republicans are normally dishonest. A second meaning proposed by Lakoff is that of simple "contrast":

3.      Peter is rich *but* john is poor.

Anscombre and Ducrot (1977) proposed a meaning of "correction":

4.      A: Oh, your brother looks exactly like you.
        B: He is not my brother *but* my friend.

In this conversation, B corrects an assumption of A. Bell (1998) suggested a use he called "Discourse":

5.      A: I am very happy, we've had a very nice diner today.
        B: *But* did anybody see my wallet?

According to Bell, the function of *but* is to cancel A's utterance and return to the previous conversation topic, a function referred to as "cancellation". A discussion of Hebrew *aval* and *ela* (two variants of *but*) is presented by Dascal and Katriel (1977). According to their analysis, sentences with *aval* and *ela* appear in response to a prior utterance and cancel various layers of meaning such as presuppositions, modality, illocutionary force and felicity conditions. Abraham (1979) compares meanings of *but* in German and English and suggests that there is more than one lexical *but,* which renders the word ambiguous. This proposal is supported by Horn (1989) who demonstrates how *but* is translated in various ways in other languages. Iten (2005) provides an extensive review of previous studies and elaborates on the degree of accessibility of the hearer's assumption regarding the information provided by the speaker. Hussein (2009) is based on the theory of Relevance and proposes that the four meaning of *but* "contrast", "denial of expectation", "correction" and "cancellation" are in fact four applications of the procedural function of *but*. According to Hall (2004:199), "but indicates that the hearer is to suspend an inference that would result in a contradiction with what follows, so diverts him from a conclusion that he could potentially have drawn" .Tobin (1986) accounts for the differences between three Hebrew variants *aval, ax* and *ela* of the contrastive conjunction *but.* He argues that the three forms differ in the degree of their relative potential exclusiveness which renders their distribution non-random. The most comprehensive account of *but* is probably that of Blakemore's (1987, 1989, 2002). Within the

framework of the theory of Relevance, she argues that the meanings of "contrast" and "denial of expectation" derive from the same source. And so both examples 6a and 6b

6.    a. Mary likes skiing *but* Anne plays chess.
      b. John is a Republican *but* he is honest.

express some kind of incompatibility between the two parts of the sentence which may be attributed to a feature which is present in one activity but absent in the other. Blakemore elaborates further the extent to which different uses of *but* present a manifest assumption to the hearer.

The present study differs significantly from the ones briefly discussed above. This study does not aim to point out the variety of meanings and functions of *but* as did previous studies. Based on the assumption that speakers' body of knowledge about a language is made up of constructions, the purpose here is to provide evidence that *adv but adv* is a pattern which qualifies as a construction. The study will therefore concentrate on identifying the pattern as a construction and describing its characteristics as one.

## 2.    Construction Grammar

The purpose of this section is to outline the main principles and assumptions which underlie research in the field of construction grammar. The theory of construction grammar "grew out of a concern to find a place for idiomatic expressions in the speaker's knowledge of a grammar of their language" (Croft, 2004:225). Cognitive linguistics emerged then as an attempt to provide a rethinking of syntactic representation. Construction grammar, a branch of cognitive linguistics attempts to provide a usage-based approach based on psychological plausibility, dynamic view of meaning in context, motivation and little formalizations (Boas, 2013). Other schools of construction grammar exist, but their principles differ in a number of ways such as the idea of usage-based analysis, frequency and the extent of their generalizations.

According to the theory as formulated by Hilpert (2014), Goldberg (2003, 2006, 2011) and Croft (2004), speakers' knowledge of language consists of a network of constructions which are pairings of form and meaning and which can be placed in a taxonomic hierarchy. In this taxonomy, constructions vary from a high level schematicity to more specific and idiosyncratic ones. Each of these constructions inherits its properties from a more general construction in the network. Yet, some constructions display behavior which is rule-governed

by the context of the specific construction and their interpretation is thus unpredictable. The vast knowledge which speakers hold of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics is directly realized in constructions. In other words, the speaker's knowledge of a certain construction is in fact the total of his or her experience with that construction.

A construction may express a great extent of internal variation. Such variation may be realized in a diverse internal structure such as the construction "let alone" (Fillmore et al. 1988) which requires several steps and models in order to arrive at an appropriate interpretation. In addition, a construction may express variation in terms of its different representations among different speakers. A construction may also exhibit variation in terms of usage, context and frequency.

Hilpert proposes several strategies to enable researchers to identify a construction. The four main strategies are:

i.   Does the expression deviate from canonical patterns?
ii.  Does the expression carry non-compositional meaning?
iii. Does the expression have idiosyncratic constraints?
iv.  Does the expression have collocational preferences?

The analysis pursued in this article is based primarily on the second strategy. Accordingly, "Any linguistic pattern is recognized as a construction as long as some aspect of its form or function is not strictly predictable from its components or from other constructions recognized to exist." (Goldberg, 2011:32). Clearly not all constructions display an unpredictable aspect of meaning. In cases where the meaning of a construction is fully predictable from the meaning of its parts, it is also regarded as a construction as long as it appears with sufficient frequency in the language. (Goldberg, 2006). The second strategy will be applied here primarily in order to argue that constructions in the form of *adv but adv* carry non-compositional meanings. The article will show that this non-compositionality leads to a rule-governed behavior which cannot be predicted from more general rules of syntax, semantics and pragmatics (Croft 2004). Furthermore, the discussion within the guidelines of construction grammar will illustrate the immense productivity and internal diversity displayed by this pattern, as well as its relation to other more general constructions and its place in the speaker's body of knowledge.

As part of the second strategy, Hilpert proposes an important concept in identifying constructions. He presents the term "coercion" of meaning . From the principle of coercion it follows that the meaning of a lexical item changes in accordance with the construction in which it figures. To put it differently, a construction coerces meaning into the meanings of the lexical items which figure within it. A construction has the power to change or suppress certain semantic properties of one of the components of the construction and thereby override word meanings. When we observe a change of meaning of a lexical item within a construction we speak of the effects of coercion.

One of the most frequent example which appears in the literature on constructions is that of the argument structure of the verb *sneeze* as in example 7:

7.      John sneezed his tooth right across town (Goldberg, 2011:34)

The example with the verb *sneezed* has led to an extensive discussion regarding the ability of a construction to coerce meaning into its components. No dictionary defines *sneeze* as having the meaning of "moving something through sneezing". This meaning is a direct derivation of the construction. This example as well as others have led Goldberg to conclude that construction grammar  removes the need to list such improbable meanings. In a dictionary model of linguistic knowledge listing such meanings would be mandatory. (Goldberg, 1995:9).

## 3.      An Analysis of *but* in Construction Grammar

The purpose of this section is to provide an account of the pattern *adv but adv* based on the strategy of non-compositionality in order to support the idea that the pattern may be viewed as a construction. The analysis will demonstrate several points: 1) The second adverb in the construction coerces a component of meaning into the lexical entry of the first adverb. 2) An aspect of the meaning of the initial adverb becomes unpredictable. As a result, 3) the entire construction overrides the meanings of the first adverb.

Consider the meaning of *quietly* in the following sentence:

8.      He worked at his desk *quietly* all evening.

The meaning of the adverb *quietly* is well recognized and easily conceptualized and the average speaker has a rather good idea what characterizes an action which is being carried

out in a quiet manner. Yet, let's examine what happens to *quietly* when it appears in a construction of the type *adv but adv*:

9.    The lion was *quietly but effectively* hunted by the tiger[1]

In 9, none of the meanings attributed to *but* as suggested in section 2 are evident. The pattern here does not aim to present a "contrast" between *quietly* and *effectively* at least not a contrast where one feature is either present or absent. Nor is there a "correction" or a "cancellation" meaning apparent. The meaning "denial of expectation" is also not a plausible one. The speaker in example 9 bases his utterance on the presupposition that the lexical entry of *quietly* means "non-effectively". This assumption is compatible with the kind of assumptions Blakemore and others attribute to the speakers in her examples. However, the assumption here is significantly different from the assumption speakers make in the examples of a "denial of expectation" as in 2:

2.    John is a Republican *but* he is honest.

In 2 the speaker presents a presupposition that Republicans are honest which he then denies by suggesting that they are not in fact honest. The speaker in 2 manipulates some world knowledge about Republicans. By suggesting that Republicans are not honest, the speaker has not altered the meaning of the lexical entry Republican, has not changed the semantic components of the item and has not fused an unpredictable feature into it.

This is not the case with the pattern in 9. In this example the speaker assumes that the meaning of the lexical entry *quietly* does not include the semantic component *effectively* but he posits a reservation to this implied assumption and coerces this new semantic component into the meaning of *quietly*. In other words, the lexical entry of *quietly* has now received a new semantic aspect, that of being effective. To sum, there are two factors interacting here: 1) The speaker assumes some definition regarding the lexical entry of *quietly* in the

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[1] All the examples of the pattern *adv but adv* in this study are taken from the online corpus *COCA The American Corpus of Contemporary English*. This corpus contains more than 360 million words of spoken and written American English.

construction. 2) The speaker imposes a new semantic aspect on *quietly* which leads to an unpredictable aspect of meaning.[2]

According to Hilpert, a construction displays substantial variation in the lexical items that can figure within it. This is evident from the abundance of instances which are found in the corpus. The wealth of instances found in the corpus shows how productive this pattern is in English. Consider the following examples:

10.     The editor *completely but reluctantly* believed the reporter.
11.     He *excitedly but carefully* sealed it in a bag for DNA testing.
12.     … and the dog snuffed around *excitedly but aimlessly…*
13.     He saw the Goblin King, Groog, approaching *proudly but fearfully* on his horse.

In example 10, the speaker assumes that the first adverb *completely* does not include the meaning of *reluctantly*. He then goes on to coerce this semantic aspect into the meaning of *completely*, thereby creating a new lexical entry for *completely*. The novelty of the new lexical entry is that doing something *completely* has now the added feature of doing it *reluctantly*. This is of course not a feature of *completely* that a dictionary would list. However, the speaker changes the dictionary meaning as he sees fit to match the circumstances of the context.

In example 11-12, the speaker assumes on one occasion that *excitedly* means *not carefully* and on another occasion that it means *with an aim*. In the two sentences he imposes the new meaning on *excitedly* and adds it a new aspect of meaning. So in 11 now *excitedly* has received the added meaning of being careful and in 12 it means also being aimless. It seems that speakers can manipulate components of meanings as they find suitable and in accordance with the context. In 13, the speaker assumes a lexical definition of *proudly* to mean with no fear but he takes the aspect of meaning of *fearfulness* and imposes it on *proudly* to mean that someone can appear proud but with fear in his heart. Of course no dictionary will specify these unique added features of *completely, excitedly* and *proudly*. The construction however, allows such manipulations as they are subject only to the conceptualization of the speaker.

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[2] A somewhat similar pattern is analyzed in Panther and Thornburg (2009). They examine the pattern *nice and Adj*. According to their study, the construction imposes unpredictable formal and conceptual attributes on the meaning of *nice*.

This group of examples demonstrates a sizable degree of novelty which speakers can display in their use of the construction. The more novel the speaker's assumption the more novel will be the new lexical entry created.

The corpus provides further types of examples which display a high level of originality:

14.     The history is *broadly but compactly* told.

15.      I began to hear **-** *faintly but distinctly* – the sound of another piano…

16.     Michael pushes his words forward *hesitantly but forcefully*.

It seems that examples 14-16 display different kinds of contrast. In 14, the hearer is faced with an assumption made by the speaker that the lexical entry of *broadly* does not normally include the meaning component of *compactly*. This would seem like a redundant assumption because naturally one extreme of a property cannot be realized as the other extreme. The novelty of this construction is that the speaker forces *broadly* to include the meaning of *compactly* thereby forcing the hearer to conceptualize in what sense *broadly* can in fact include the semantic aspect of *compactly*. This may be resolved in the following way: We may conceptualize the meaning of *broadly* in terms of the large number of subjects the history includes. At the same time, each such subject provides only few pieces of information. This interpretation settles what seems to be a contrast between the two adverbs.

In 15, the hearer has to figure out the type of relation which exists between the two adverbs *faintly* and *distinctly*. It appears to be some kind of contrast yet, it is the hearer who has to come up with the most suitable interpretation in order to make this utterance felicitous. The hearer needs to recruit a significant piece of world knowledge in order to arrive at the intended interpretation. It seems that *faintly* would refer to the intensity of the music while *distinctly* to its uniqueness. In any case inferring the meaning of the imposition of *distinctly* on the meaning of *faintly* is not a simple task and is not one which can be derived from more general rules of syntax and semantics.

In 16 too, it appears that the hearer needs to construct a scale which would juxtapose *hesitantly* and *forcefully* in order to infer the extent and type of their contrast. Michael was perhaps hesitant and his words came out quiet, fragile, uncertain. Yet, at the same time they were strong in terms of their content. Perhaps they were blunt and sharp which stands in contrast with the hesitancy of producing them.

It would be interesting to check whether examples 14-16 can be analyzed with Blakemore's suggestion that *but* clauses may also deny an assumption made in the first clause in an indirect way (1987:129, 1989:25-27). In the following sentence according to Blakemore, an implication of the *but* clause denies an implication of the first clause:

17.     It's raining *but* I need some fresh air.

The meaning of "denial of expectation" is expressed in 17 in the following way: the implication of the first clause is that the speaker may not want to go out due to the rain. The implication of the *but* clause is that the speaker is going out after all because she needs some fresh air. The result is that the second implication denies or contradicts the first.

This is not the case with the collocations in our analysis. In 14 for example, the implication of *compactly* may be as we suggested that each topic provides little information. The implication of *broadly* may be that the number of subjects covered is long. Clearly, the implication of *compactly* does not deny or contradict the implication of *broadly*. The relation is more appropriately described as the coercion of one aspect into another. This is true for all the examples in our analysis.

The following sentence is very difficult to understand but it illustrates how important it is for the speaker to make sure his intention is fully perceived:

18.     Going through names *innocently but ambitiously* given;
        going through deeds *ambitiously but innocently* committed…

Notice that the second utterance is a reversal of the first. In other words, in the first utterance the speaker coerces the meaning of *ambitiously* into the meaning of *innocently* and in the second the other way around. The following interpretation may be possible for the originality presented here: *innocently* takes upon itself the meaning of *ambitiously* in the sense that at some point along the innocent way a bit of ambition did pop out but it was not a characteristic of the entire way. *Ambitiously* takes upon itself the meaning of *innocently* in the sense that it was done with ambition but in order to make sure that the hearer does not attribute any malicious intention which is sometimes attributed to ambitious deeds, the speaker finds it necessary to impose the meaning of *innocently*. The task of arriving at the desired interpretation is quite complex here. As we saw, the hearer is required to construct two opposing concepts, each carrying a semantic feature of the other. The way to interpret such

utterances cannot be derived from any general rules of semantics, and so the meanings inferred are completely rule-governed and idiosyncratic.

The following two examples also seem to display a pair of opposites. The following instances require an enormous amount of imagination and experience in cooking in order to fully understand the speaker's intention:

19.     Ease it into an 8-inch pie pan, fitting it *loosely but firmly*. Roll out the top crust…

20.     Put the lettuce and herbs in a large bowl, add a pinch of salt and a grind of pepper and just enough vinaigrette to *barely but completely* coat the leaves. Mix *lightly but thoroughly*, and adjust seasoning if necessary.

In 19, the speaker coerces the meaning of *firmly* into the meaning of *loosely*. I will not venture to say what the speaker's means by that but it is safe to say that experienced cooks would know. Example 20 is perhaps a bit more comprehensible. One should *barely* coat each leave but he should do so with *all the leaves* in the salad and he should mix it *lightly* but make sure he does so with *the entire content* of the salad. These two examples serve as an illustration of the richness and diversity of the collocations which are allowed by this construction. Each such collocation is an innovation which leaves the hearer or reader with the burden of figuring out the speaker's intention.

The corpus provides an additional group of examples where an adverb collocates with two opposites of the same adverb:

21.     Jack and his ghostly team now *frantically but successfully* dodge a barrage of missiles.

22.     Sgt. Matthew Weeks … tried *frantically but unsuccessfully* to reach the convoy being ambushed…

 In 21 *frantically* takes on the semantic meaning of *successfully* whereas in 22 it takes on the opposite meaning namely, of *unsuccessfully*. The question remains how it is possible that for the same adverb *frantically* a speaker will hold two opposing assumptions. The answer to this question is that such inconceivable collocations are part of the richness, uniqueness and creativity allowed by the construction.

A similar contrast is found in collocations where the first adverb collocates with two contrasting adverbs:

23. …color patterns that are *simply but strongly* stated.
24.     Fouche, soon emerged from the gallery bearing great platters of *simply but delicately* prepared food.

In 23-24 *simply* collocates with *strongly* and with *delicately*, two contrasting adverbs. Even though they are not antonyms as in 21-22, they still raise the same question regarding the plausibility of such cases. It seems that *simply* is a term general enough to allow the coercion of opposing meanings into its lexical entry. In 23 then the colors are stated in a simple way and at the same time they make a strong statement. In 24 food was prepared in a simple way probably with simple tools and ingredients but at the same time it was prepared in a delicate way by the cook.

An analysis of the corpus elicits some fascinating and completely unpredictable instances:

25.     Treat the lady *gently but lovingly*.

The speaker in 25 works under the assumption that *gently* does not normally include the meaning of *lovingly*. He therefore coerces the meaning of *lovingly* into the meaning of *gently*. As improbable as this construction may be, it still requires consideration. It seems that the speaker wishes to say that treating a lady gently does not necessarily mean treating her with love. Naturally one does not have to agree with the new meaning imposed here on *gently* but the analysis demonstrates that innovative creations such as this are possible.

The corpus provides evidence of another fascinating phenomenon. There are some adverbs such as *quietly, simply, quickly* and *briefly* which can collocate with dozens of different second adverbs. *Quietly* for example figures in collocation with 40 other adverbs as exemplified in the following list:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Quietly but firmly* | *Quietly but efficiently* | *Quietly but powerfully* |
| *Quietly but effectively* | *Quietly but productively* | *Quietly but radically* |
| *Quietly but steadily* | *Quietly but profoundly* | *Quietly but deliberately* |
| *Quietly but forcefully* | *Quietly but aggressively* | *Quietly but consistently* |
| *Quietly but quickly* | *Quietly but willingly* | *Quietly but persistently* |
| *Quietly but insistently* | *Quietly but vigorously* | *Quietly but nervously* |
| *Quietly but clearly* | *Quietly but significantly* | *Quietly but confidently* |
| *Quietly but distinctly* | *Quietly but unmistakably* | *Quietly but furiously* |
| *Quietly but systematically* | *Quietly but repeatedly* | *Quietly but passionately* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Quietly but emphatically* | *Quietly but swiftly* | *Quietly but gradually* |
| *Quietly but increasingly* | *Quietly but brilliantly* | *Quietly but explicitly* |

This list is an illustration of the diversity and productivity of the construction which results in a long list of original collocations each displaying a new meaning of *quietly*. In each such collocation the speaker makes a different assumption regarding the lexical entry of *quietly*. These assumptions vary in their accessibility. In some cases the speaker's assumption may be logical and comprehensible such as in *quietly but effectively* and *quietly but confidently* because it is conceivable to think under some circumstances that working in a quiet way has the implication of working non-effectively or non-confidently. In other cases it may be unpredictable, implausible and may require effort and imagination on the part of the hearer such as in *quietly but brilliantly, quietly but increasingly* and *quietly but willingly*. Why would working quietly mean working non-brilliantly or non-willingly? In each such collocation the speaker imposes these new aspects of meaning on *quietly* and leaves the hearer to ask himself what it means to do something *quietly but willingly*. Constructions with *quietly* have apparently become highly conventionalized compared to other realizations of the construction. This explains their high frequency as well as the collocation with numerous adverbs.

Further support for the validity of the construction may be found in the historical development of *but*. *But* originated from Old English locative adverb and preposition *butan* (outside). *Butan* in turn, originated from West Germanic compound *be utan* (on the outside). Quite early the preposition made a shift from concrete meaning to abstract meaning in its use as "except" or "without". During the 13th and 14th centuries, *but* was grammaticalized into the exclusive adverbial function in the sense of "no more than" or "only" but this use declined gradually in later periods. (Nevalainen 1990, 1991).

The original meaning of "outside" is realized in a completely different way in the regular occurrences of *but* and in the construction. It seems that the meaning of "outside" recurs in all of the uses of *but* which are analyzed in previous research. Whether it is the meaning of contrast, denial, correction or cancellation, they all express some kind of removal or exclusion of entities from one domain to another, or placement of one entity outside another entity. The situation is different in the case of the construction. Here, quite the opposite process takes place. It is inclusion and incorporation rather than removal which are evident in the examples. Aspects of meaning of the second adverb are incorporated into the lexical entry

## 4. The Place of the Construction in our Linguistic Knowledge

According to construction grammar, constructions inherit their properties from more general and more schematic constructions in the network of our linguistic knowledge. In a taxonomy hierarchy, most general and schematic constructions are located at the top. As the taxonomy goes further downwards, constructions become more specific, more unique and more unpredictable. In this way, both central and less central instances have their place in the network of our linguistic knowledge.

If we were to sketch a taxonomy of our linguistic knowledge in order to illustrate the location of the construction under discussion, the following diagram would suggest a partial taxonomic hierarchy ranging from the most specific level at the bottom to the most schematic level at the top:
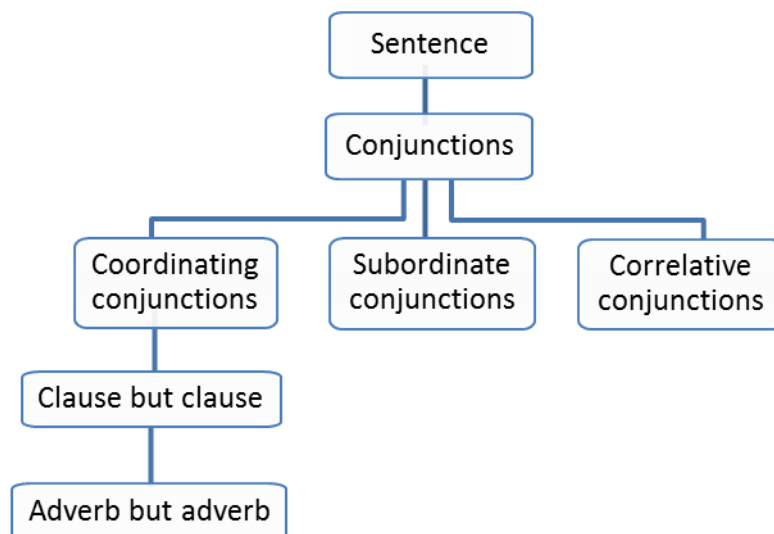


At the bottom of the hierarchy we find specific instances such as the ones discussed in this article namely *adv but adv*. Such instances inherit a more general syntactic structure of the conjunction *but* which coordinates clauses and which are located one level higher in the taxonomy. Clauses coordinated by *but* further inherit their structure from more general and schematic construction of coordinating conjunctions and conjunctions in general. Different schools argue for slightly different types of inheritance. In the taxonomy proposed, general and schematic constructions as well as more specific instances find their place in the network

of linguistic knowledge. In other words, speakers' knowledge of language consists of general rules as well as more specialized knowledge of syntax and semantics.

## 5.    Conclusion

Based on the principles of construction grammar, the analysis presented in this paper provides support for the idea that the pattern *adv but adv* may be viewed as a productive construction. We are faced here not with a single peripheral instance but rather with a large productive group which displays internal variation as well as idiosyncrasy. The construction inherits its syntactic structure from more general and schematic constructions, yet its semantic interpretation is unique and cannot be inferred from more regular and general rules of language. The construction holds an unpredictable aspect both syntagmatically-the sequence has a role in creating the new meaning and paradigmatically-a change of a second adverb with another second adverb is accompanied with a change of meaning of the first.

In fact, there is no one fixed meaning which can be attributed to the first adverb. All novel collocations are created ad hoc. In other words, new meanings are created and manipulated according to the needs of the discourse. Some of the new constructions have become conventionalized and are more frequent than others. Others are more unique and require substantial effort on the part of the hearer in order to interpret them. The construction is characterized as flexible, dynamic, unpredictable and at the same time fully controlled by the speaker's conceptualization and maneuvering of world knowledge.

Such rule-governed behavior requires the hearer to be fully attentive and to construct meaning based on the resources available. The hearer needs to recognize a lexical entry for each of the two adverbs, to construct a scale or an assessment of each in order to be able to evaluate the contribution of a new semantic feature and to construct a new lexical entry.

The present analysis contributes to our understanding of language. It allows us to view an increasingly growing number of so-called peripheral patterns as instances which are an integral part of a truthful description of language. The analysis allows us to account for the abundance of idiosyncrasies and irregularities in language. It also allows us to point out common denominators within such groups and between them and other patterns. It helps us explain what is different about them but also what is unique.

As already suggested, the construction is very productive. However, this productivity is not unlimited, a fact which leads to several directions of further research : The extent of the

universality of these constructions; The use of similar constructions with adjectives such as *poor but happy*; The fact that only few adverbs collocate with a large number of second adverbs; The improbability of collocations such as *slowly but happily* and an attempt to provide a systematic account for the type of meaning aspects which may be coerced.

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