

The paradigmatic adverbials reexamined after 35 years

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Abstract

Nølke (1983a) proposed a new category of (French) *Paradigmatic Adverbials (ParAdv)* comprising adverbials like *même, surtout, seulement*, ... In the late 1980s, linguists began to talk about focus particles, which in central aspects are similar to the ParAdv. This paper will have a closer look at what this new research has contributed to our understanding of their properties. After a brief recapitulation of Nølke's (1983) analysis, I introduce a focalisation theory based on Nølke (1983b, 1994, 2006). It occupies a central position in my new analysis, which tries to situate the analysis of the ParAdv in a more general theoretical framework. The central notion is still 'paradigm', and therefore the paper will end with an examination of the nature of the paradigm as used in linguistics.

1. Introduction

In Nølke (1983a), I proposed a new category of (French) adverbials called the *Paradigmatic Adverbials (ParAdv)* because of their key feature being a paradigmatising function. The sentences in (1)-(5) present some examples:

- (1) Il ressentit *même* une sorte de dégoût.
'He felt even a kind of disgust'
- (2) La vieille dame du premier étage sera appelée *aussi* à le reconnaître.
'The old lady on first floor will be called also to recognise him'
- (3) On parla *surtout* de politique étrangère.
'One talked especially about foreign politics'
- (4) Il les dirigeait dans Paris *seulement*.
'He conducted them in Paris only'

- (5) Cela échappe *précisément* à la gradation continue.
 ‘That escapes precisely from the continued gradation’

All the highlighted adverbials are ParAdv. Many of these had been subject to analysis, but at the time being, they had never been treated as constituting a category. In Nølke (1983a), I showed that they all share two properties which separate them from all other adverbials:

- i) like sentence adverbials, they are very mobile, but unlike sentence adverbials, the two different possible positions are linked to two clearly different interpretations.
- ii) they introduce a presupposition of the existence of a paradigm of virtual or imagined utterances. It is a result of a *paradigmatisation*, which is a constitutive element of the focalisation act.

Since 1983, especially Anglo-Saxon and German linguists have started to show an interest in this type of adverbials, which they often call *focus particles* because of their focalising function. There are many similarities between these new analyses and those in Nølke (1983a), so I have found it interesting to have a closer look on what this new research has contributed to our understanding of their syntactic and semantic properties.

After a brief recapitulation of Nølke (1983a)’s analysis, I introduce a focalisation theory based on Nølke (1983b, 1994, 2006). This theory occupies a central position in my new approach, which tries to situate the analysis of the paradigmatic adverbials in a more general theoretical framework. It occupies a central position in my new analysis, which tries to situate the analysis of the ParAdv in a more general theoretical framework. The central notion is still ‘paradigm’, and therefore the paper will end with an examination of the nature of the paradigm involved in the analysis of paradigmatic adverbials.

2. The 1983 analysis

An important characteristic of Nølke’s (1983a) analysis was that a clear distinction was made between respectively ‘adverbs’ which form a class of words or phrases and ‘adverbials’ which form a class of syntactic functions. The example in (6) illustrates this distinction:

- (6) ... mais *surtout* les pays industrialisés ont modifiés profondément leur attitude.

‘... but especially the industrialised countries have profoundly modified their attitude’

Without context, (6) has two (connected) readings. In the first one, the whole sentence constitutes an argument in a series of arguments for something which is not necessarily mentioned in the sentence. This might be that a certain year was remarkable for several reasons among which the fact mentioned is the most important one. In the second reading, (6) expresses that the industrialised countries had modified their attitude more than other countries. In both cases, *surtout* is an adverb, but in the first reading it is a connector adverbial whereas it is a ParAdv in the second one.¹ The syntactic position is important for this distinction. As a connector, *surtout* is always in the leftmost position, detached from the sentence; as a ParAdv, it has a special syntax as detailed below.

Three **syntactic features** characterise the ParAdv:

1. They may appear at all the main syntactic junctures, like other sentence adverbials.
2. They take scope over the smallest predication they are integrated in.
3. They are associated with a specific element in the sentence; unlike other sentence adverbials. This element is their nucleus.

NUCLEUS MARKING RULE

The syntactic position of a ParAdv marks its nucleus. There are two possibilities:

- If it is integrated prosodically into the utterance, the immediately following element constitutes its nucleus.
- If it is inserted into the structure receiving parenthetical intonation, the immediately preceding element constitutes its nucleus.

Thus, in both examples in (7):

¹ Today I consider ‘connector’ to be a text or discourse function, so the classification would be slightly different.

- (7) a. *Même Pierre est venu à la fête.*
 ‘Even Pierre has come to the party’
 b. *Pierre, même, est venu à la fête.*
 ‘Pierre, even, has come to the party’

Pierre is the nucleus of *même* and *Pierre est venu à la fête* constitutes its scope.

One **semantic feature** distinguishes the ParAdv from all other adverbials:

- ✓ They introduce a presupposition of the existence of a paradigm of utterances constructed by substituting the nucleus with another element of the same paradigm as this one. That is their paradigmatising function.

This semantic feature has definitional status, and it gives rise to further analysis of the particular types of ParAdv. *Même* may function as a prototypical example :

- (8) *Même Pierre est venu à la fête.*
 ‘Even Pierre has come to the party’

We can discern three components of the meaning of this utterance:

- (8’) a. Pierre has come to the party. (**asserted meaning**)
 b. Someone else (at least one other person) than Pierre has come to the party. (**strongly presupposed meaning**)
 c. The fact that Pierre has come to the party is from a certain point of view more significant than the fact that the other person(s) has come. (**weakly presupposed meaning**)

The three components are not communicated in the same way. Whereas (a) is asserted – it yields new information – (b) and (c) are presupposed. (b) is the paradigmatic presupposition that defines the category of ParAdv. Thus, we can note that *même*, in some sense, is bound to the subject (*Pierre*) at the same time as it is taking the entire sentence in its scope. It was in order to describe this double characteristic that I introduced the distinction between the **nucleus** and the **scope** of the adverbial. This distinction is crucial for the analysis. Thus I say about (8) that the nucleus of *même* is

Pierre, and that the scope of *même* is *Pierre est venu à la fête*. (9) illustrates this structure:

- (9) Môme Pierre est venu à la fête.
-

The surface structure marks the nucleus according to the rule in (10):

- (10) 1. If the ParAdv is pronounced with neutral intonation:
 (a) its nucleus consists of the string of words following the ParAdv until the end of the rhythmic group;
 (b) if the ParAdv immediately follows a finite verb, this verb is part of the nucleus.
 2. If the ParAdv is pronounced with parenthetical intonation, the phrase that immediately precedes it constitutes the nucleus.

I symbolise (9) by means of the formula in (9'):

- (9') MEME_k (VENIR À LA FÊTE (k)), where 'k' = 'Pierre'

The interpretation of the utterance can then be deduced from this formula by involving the particular lexical rules attached to the paradigmatic use of *même* and given in (8').

These rules are able to predict the distribution of the ParAdv as well as the relation between these adverbials and the interpretation of the utterance in which they appear. Every exception to the rule (and there are very few) can be explained easily by incidental properties of certain lexemes and certain context types. Nonetheless, for certain kinds of ParAdv some systematic modifications should be added to the general rules governing the detection of the nucleus.

Two categories of ParAdv can be distinguished. In the first one, we find adverbials like *même*, *aussi* and *surtout*. These ParAdv are much like (real) sentence adverbials. Roughly speaking, they have the same syntax and they never have any influence on the truth conditions of the sentence where they appear. They are also all additives in so far as their

paradigmatic presupposition is positive as we saw in (8). The second category is less homogeneous than the first one. It contains adverbials like *seulement*, *exactement* and *au moins*. These adverbials are less mobile and they sometimes have an influence on the truth conditions of the sentence. Furthermore, some of them – in particular those of the type *seulement* – are negative in the sense that all the other members of the paradigm of utterances are false (if the actual utterance is true):

- (11) Il les dirigeait dans Paris seulement (...)
 ‘He conducted them in Paris only’

If (11) is true, an utterance like *Il les dirigeait dans la province* is false.

3. Focus and scope

In the late eighties, some German and Anglo-Saxon linguists started to be interested in the linguistic units that I had called the paradigmatic adverbials. For these linguists², it is the focalising function which is constitutive of the class and the term *focus particles* was born. Ekkehard König’s book, published in 1991 (*The Meaning of Focus Particles*) is undoubtedly the most important single contribution to these studies. König shows that it is vital to rigorously keep apart the notions of scope and focus, where scope and focus apparently correspond to my scope and nucleus, respectively. However, according to König’s analysis, it is only the interpretation of the utterance that indicates what is the scope and what is the focus of the particles. It seems to me that if we accept this analysis, we give up any hope of arriving at an explanatory level. Unlike König, I believe that the structures of scope and focus do leave some systematic traces in the syntactic surface structure, insofar as the syntax puts (more or less precise) constraints on their creation. Since 1983, I have tried to explicate these constraints within a modular framework, and this work has led to the elaboration of a genuine (utterance act) theory of focalisation and to an outline of a formal scope theory. Here, I shall only present the focus theory and merely refer to my treatment of scope in Nølke (1994: 98-104).³

² See for example Altmann (2007), de Cesare (2010), Dimroth & Klein (1996), König (1991), Moser (1992), Reis & Rosengren (1997), Rooth (1992).

³ In the linguistic literature, *focus* has a number of different meanings. See Nølke (2006) for an overview of different information structure elements found in the literature and the relation between them.

3.1 The focalisation theory

In the Utterance Act Theory of Focalisation (UATF) presented in Nølke (2006), *focus* is the result of a focalisation act which takes place at the very moment the utterance act occurs. In this sense, and just like the illocution, it may be seen as a qualification of the locutionary act. The identification of the purpose of the focalisation constitutes a necessary part of the interpretation process. The focus is characterised by three constitutive and interdependent properties:

- The *syntagmatic property*. The focus appears in the utterance as a continuous string of utterance elements. It may be a series of words, a single word, or just a fragment of a word. The hearer must establish the extension of focus.
- The *paradigmatic property*. The focus is presented as the result of a choice made among the elements of a paradigm. The hearer must re-establish this paradigm.
- The *intentional property*. The paradigmatic choice was made with a special end in mind. The hearer must realise this objective.

I distinguish two major categories of focalisation: *neutral focalisation* and *specialised focalisation*. As an immediate consequence of its paradigmatic property, every instance of focalisation performs an act of identification. If the identification is the only purpose of the focalisation, we have neutral focalisation; if further purposes are involved, we are dealing with specialised focalisation. Depending on what these additional ends are, we get different types of specialised focalisation.

In spite of the fact that focalisation is defined as an utterance act, it nevertheless leaves many traces in the linguistic form of the sentence. Most focalisation types are in fact indicated or *marked* by syntactic, lexical and other means. It is above all this marking that makes focalisation an interesting phenomenon for system linguistics, which is my main framework. When focalisation is marked in this way, I talk about *bound focalisation*. Neutral focalisation is always bound. As we might expect, this marking is not decisive. Focalisation is linguistically underdetermined, since the exact extension of focus also depends on the hearer-specific interpretation of the utterance.

For the description of the syntactic constraints on focalisation, I apply the formal term *focus domain*.⁴ Focus domains are generated by syntax and the global rule governing the relation between syntax and focalisation can be formulated as follows:

RULE 1

During the utterance act, a focalisation has to take place within the limits of every focus domain generated by syntax.

Every focus domain – neutral or specialised – is structured. As a default, it is right branching, but in general, particular syntactic rules govern the structuring. Every utterance conveys a neutral utterance focus. When the hearer seeks to establish the extension of a given focus, he performs a *stratification* of the utterance analysing it into *focus* and *base*. The content of the base is conveyed by a presupposition, while that of focus is asserted. Such a distinction is exemplified in (12):

(12) Peter has been walking in the forest.

The neutral focus domain is:

(12') (walking (in the forest)),

where the brackets indicate the right branching structure. In the reading where the hearer interprets 'in the forest' as focus, we get the stratification in (12'')

(12'') [Peter has walked somewhere]_{base} ['somewhere' is instantiated by 'in the forest']

In this interpretation, the hearer takes the purpose of the utterance in (12) to be an "answer" to the implicit question "Where has Peter been walking?".

4. Modularity and focalisation

UATF has been applied to a wide range of phenomena, from word order in different languages, at different analytic levels, to uses of focus particles,

⁴ The term *focus domain* (or *scope of focus*) is not new and has been used for different phenomena more or less analogous to what I call *focus domain*. Anglo-Saxon linguists also talk about *scope of focus* for a similar phenomenon.

including punctuation in written texts and prosody in spoken language. This has been possible because the focalisation act interact with a wide range of linguistic phenomena: semantic, syntactic, prosodic and cognitive. A thorough focalisation analysis should therefore be inscribed into a modular framework (Nølke 1994). Here I shall content myself with pointing to some connexions with semantic features.

The shape of the generated paradigm is intimately connected with the semantic features of the focused element. Thus we may state the following (meta)rule:

RULE 2

- The generic semantic features help establishing the paradigm.
- The specific semantic features establish the distinctions inside the paradigm.

The example in (13) gives an illustration of RULE 2:

- (13) C'est la robe que je veux.
'It is the dress that I want'

In (13), *robe* constitutes the focus. In a simple semantic analysis of this word we may say that the generic semantic feature is /clothing/ and the specific feature is /a particular kind of clothing/. This analysis gives us immediately the most probable interpretation of (13), namely the one in which *robe* is presented as a choice made within a paradigm of clothings. A consequence of RULE 2 is RULE 3:

RULE 3

- Only an element containing one or more specific semantic feature(s) can be focalised.
- The more specific semantic features an element contains, the more it lends itself to focalisation.

Specificity and genericity are not absolute notions. They rely on the semantic interpretation that the interpreter makes of the actual utterances. This interpretation depends of course on the lexical content, but it is also context-sensitive as illustrated by the examples in (14) and (15):

- (14) ☹ Dans la vallée, une rivière coule.
‘In the valley, a river flows’
- (15) ?? C’est tout le monde qui est venu à la fête.
‘It is everybody who has come to the party’

In (14), the verb *coule* (‘flows’) is focalised because it is the only element in the neutral focus domain. However, flowing is very much the normal thing to do for a river, so there is nothing specific about this focus, and hence the utterance is felt to be a little deviant.⁵ (15) is odd for a slightly different reason; namely that there are no alternatives to ‘everybody’ in a default reading of (15), in which the paradigm simply consists of the relevant persons. Nevertheless, we may (following Grice’s maxims) try to “save” the interpretation by constructing a paradigm which does contain alternatives. This may be difficult in this example but probably not impossible. At any rate, these interpretation considerations about more or less deviant examples seem to confirm RULES 2 and 3.

As another consequence of RULE 2, some linguistic items can never be subject to neutral focalisation⁶:

RULE 4

Linguistic items which cannot be focalised:

- Any element with a purely grammatical function.
(ex: prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs, ...)
- Any unstressed element.
(ex: articles, clitic pronouns, other clitics, ...)
- Any element with shown meaning.
(ex: interjections, sentence adverbials, connectors, ...)

5. New analysis of the paradigmatic adverbials

The development of the modular framework (Nølke 1994), and in particular the elaboration of UATF, has allowed me to explain several aspects of the

⁵ I mark this deviance with a sad smiley. As pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, (14) is “a candidate for locative or stylistic inversion”. But this is exactly because the verb would then no longer be in final position. Stylistic inversion seems to be a means to block the stratification process leading to the bipartition of the utterance in base and focus.

⁶ As all other kinds of linguistic items, they may of course be subject to specialised (contrastive or metalinguistic) focalisation (in French systematically assisted by heavy stress), where it is the choice of form rather than of content that is concerned.

analysis of the paradigmatic adverbials in Nølke (1983a) and hence to develop the analysis.

First, it is obvious that focus and nucleus are very similar phenomena, yet they are not exactly the same thing: The nucleus, as defined in Nølke (1983a), is not a focus but a focus domain. This becomes clear at closer scrutiny of an utterance like (16):

- (16) Marie a vendu même sa robe blanche.
‘Marie has sold even her white dress’

According to the analysis of Nølke (1983a), the string *sa robe blanche* is the nucleus of *même*, but (16) lends itself to two different (but of course related) interpretations, one in which *robe blanche* is focus and another one in which only *blanche* is focus. This is exactly what UATF predicts, if one reinterprets as focus domain what I called nucleus. Note that the fact that the possessive *sa* is included in the domain does not alter the analysis, since *sa* belongs to the set of items which “escape” focalisation. (17) yields more evidence for this analysis:

- (17) Marie a même vendu sa robe blanche.
‘Marie has even sold her white dress’

In most cases, (17) is felt as synonymous with (16). Indeed, (17) is open to the same two interpretations as (16), but (17) also allows for a third reading in which it “answers” an implicit question like “What has Marie done?”. This is what UATF predicts if the chain *vendu sa robe blanche* constitutes a focus domain. Incidentally, (17) is probably also felt to be more natural than (16), which, in my analysis, is due to the fact that the position between the auxiliary and the participle is the default position for sentence adverbials.

It seems to follow from these considerations that the 1983 analysis still holds if we just replace the notion of nucleus with the one of focus domain. However, do the syntactic rules I proposed for the detection of the nucleus still hold, too? Consider the following set of utterances:

- (18) a. Même [Paul] a mangé des gâteaux.
‘Even Paul has eaten cakes’
b. [Paul], même, a mangé des gâteaux.
‘Paul, even, has eaten cakes’

- c. Paul a même [mangé des gâteaux].
'Paul has even eaten cakes'
- d. Paul a mangé même [des gâteaux].
'Paul has eaten even cakes'
- e. Paul a mangé [des gâteaux]() même.
'Paul has eaten cakes_(,) even'

In all the examples the string of words within the square brackets constitute the nucleus according to the nucleus marking rule in Nølke (1983a), but the same chains are also focus domains according to UATF. One can therefore reformulate the 1983 rules in the UATF framework as follows:

RULE 5

1. If the ParAdv is integrated prosodically into the utterance, it marks the string immediately following it until the end of the rhythmic group as a focus domain.
2. If the ParAdv is inserted into the structure receiving parenthetical intonation, it marks the immediately preceding constituent as a focus domain.

2. turns out to be a particular instance of a general rule in UATF according to which any inserted element – with a few well-defined exceptions – marks the preceding constituent as a focus domain. 1., on the other hand, is specific to paradigmatic adverbials. This property distinguishes them from all other sentence adverbials:

- (19)
- a. Peut-être (que) Paul a mangé des gâteaux.
'Perhaps (that) Paul has eaten cakes'
 - b. Paul, peut-être, a mangé des gâteaux.
'Paul, perhaps, has eaten cakes'
 - c. Paul a peut-être mangé des gâteaux.
'Paul has perhaps eaten cakes'
 - d. ?? Paul a mangé peut-être des gâteaux.
'Paul has eaten perhaps cakes'
 - e. Paul a mangé des gâteaux, peut-être.
'Paul has eaten cakes, perhaps'

At first glance, the function of *peut-être* in (19) seems very similar to the function of *même* in (18). This resemblance is, however, an optical

illusion. In fact, while *même*, as a ParAdv, is marking the focus domain, *peut-être* simply associates itself with the focus already marked by the syntactic structure. This association follows a very general rule according to which sentence adverbials (and the syntactic negation *not*) associate with the focus yielding a kind of commentary to the choice of focus. They function as *adfocus* (see Nølke 1994; 2006). The difference in function becomes clear when one compares the acceptability of (18d) and (19d). The latter utterance is odd while the former is quite natural. The oddness of (19d) is due to the fact that the position of the adverbial is violating the general syntactic rule stipulating that a sentence adverbial cannot be inserted between the verb and the direct object. For the ParAdv, this rule is overruled by their special syntactic rule RULE 5.1.

Thus, the utterances in (18) yield further evidence for the analysis according to which the nucleus in Nølke (1983a) is a particular instance of a focus domain. Incidentally, this rule also explains why the paradigmatic adverbials have been considered as focus particles by most Anglo-Saxon and German linguists since König (1991).

6. The nature of the paradigm

Recent years have witnessed a growing interest amongst linguists and semioticians in the study of how the notion of paradigm is used in linguistic theory. I shall therefore examine the nature of the paradigm involved in the analysis of paradigmatic adverbials.

The introduction of the notion of paradigm into linguistics is of course due to Ferdinand de Saussure (1916), who distinguished the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes. For Saussure, every linguistic item is defined solely by its membership of a paradigm. The paradigmaticity is thus a fundamental property of the language system (*langue*), while the syntagmaticity belongs to *parole*. More precisely, the paradigmatic axis is conceived of as a vertical taxonomic axis – it is the axis of lexical choices and of substitution – whereas the syntagmatic axis is the one of speech production and of combining the words into strings.

It is obvious that the paradigm I am talking about is different from Saussure's, since it not only involves lexical units and their position in the lexical structure but also the context in which the utterance is produced. One may say that whereas Saussure talks about **paradigm in *langue***, I am talking about **paradigm in *parole***. The paradigm involved in the interpretation of paradigmatic adverbials is the result of a **paradigmatisation**, which is a constitutive element of the focalisation act. The paradigmatisation generates

a paradigm of virtual or imagined utterances during the interpretation process. The two types of paradigm are however closely related, because, as we saw, paradigmatisation is constrained by linguistic form, insofar as the interpreter creates the paradigm by substituting the focalised expression with other expressions having the same generic semantic feature but other special features.

Paradigms in *parole* also differ from paradigms in *langue* by the fact that they may exhibit a particular internal structure. Thus, at least three different structures can be marked by the linguistic form as illustrated by the utterances in (20)-(22):

- (20) Il **ne** connaît **que** Pierre.
‘He knows only Pierre’
- (21) Il **n**’a **que** trois enfants.
‘He has only three children’
- (22) Le statu quo **n**’est **qu**’acceptable.
‘Status quo is only acceptable’

In (20), the paradigm involved is unordered; in (21), it forms a quantitative scale; in (22), a qualitative scale. These examples show that the internal structure of the paradigm depends on the lexical unit which the ParAdv are combined with. However, it also depends on the ParAdv itself. Thus, *même* does not seem to allow for scalar paradigms, but it is open for another (fourth) structure as in (23):

- (23) Mads parle le français, l’anglais, l’allemand, l’espagnol et **même** le basque.
‘Mads speaks French, English, German, Spanish and even Basque’

In (23), the paradigm is accumulative.

In the following examples yet another type of paradigm appears:

- (6) (...) mais **surtout** les pays industrialisés ont modifié profondément leur attitude.
‘(...) but especially the industrialised countries have profoundly modified their attitude’
- (24) Et **même**, Pierre n’est pas venu à la fête.
‘And even, Pierre has not come to the party’
- (25) **Seulement**, Pierre est déjà parti.
‘Only, Pierre has already left’

As discussed in section 2 above, the analysis in Nølke (1983a) showed that (6) has an interpretation in which *surtout* functions as a connector and not as a ParAdv. (24) and (25) are similar cases, where adverbs often used as ParAdv function as connectors. Today, I call these words **paradigmatic adverbs** and some of these can, besides their function as ParAdv, also function as connectors. The two syntactic functions are in complementary distribution, insofar as the connector function requires that the adverb is in the leftmost position and separated prosodically from the rest of the utterance. The semantic function of the paradigmatic adverbs is, however, very similar in the two cases, for they also involve paradigmatisation in their connector function, except that the paradigm in this case is not created from the focus but from the entire sentence containing the adverb. The containing sentence is always presented as an argument within a series of implicit or explicit arguments for a certain conclusion. Thus, in (6), the conclusion might be that a particular year was remarkable for several reasons (given by other implicit or preceding arguments), amongst which the fact mentioned is the most important one. In (24), the conclusion might be that something is wrong with Pierre, and the fact that he has not gone to the party is the strongest argument for this conclusion. Finally, in (25), a preliminary conclusion might have been that it is time to start our project now that everybody is present. This preliminary conclusion is then cancelled by (25), because *seulement* belongs to the “negative” paradigmatic adverbs.

Incidentally, these examples also show that the paradigmatic function of the ParAdv stems from the lexical value of the paradigmatic adverbs which, in *parole*, interferes and “collaborates” with the general rules governing the focalisation act.

7. Conclusions and perspectives

In this paper, I have proposed a re-examination of the paradigmatic adverbials, which I introduced as a linguistic category in Nølke (1983a). I have shown that these adverbials are similar to what linguists have later called *focus particles*. In the first section, I briefly recapitulated my original analysis. Then I presented a more developed theoretical framework for the updated analysis. I introduced an Utterance Act Focalisation Theory (UAFT) developed in for instance Nølke (1983a; 1994; 2006). As a central element in a modular approach, UAFT allowed me to scrutinise the paradigmatic adverbials and pinpoint their similarities and differences with focus particles. In particular, I have shown the existence of a close

relationship between their syntax and their semantics (and pragmatics). This re-examination led me to take a closer look at the notion ‘paradigm’ as used in linguistics and I suggested to distinguish between paradigm in *langue*, which is the notion introduced by Saussure, and paradigm in *parole*, which is the type of paradigm that is involved in the interpretation process attached to paradigmatic adverbials.

The functioning of paradigmatic adverbials is very complex as it relies on diverse syntactic, semantic (and pragmatic) phenomena, but the modular framework I applied has allowed me to combine systematically insights gained from these different analytic levels. However, much is still to be done. I have not addressed questions like: Do the paradigmatic adverbials form a syntactic category or should they be coupled with for example focus particles? Which are the pragmatic and discursive consequences of their use? Which is the cognitive correlate to the paradigmatising function they induce? Do other languages have similar adverbials? There is ample material for future research.

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