(UN)MARKED PATTERNS OF VERB-MOVEMENT: THE CASE OF ROMANIAN

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1. Introduction

In the literature about verb-movement, a great deal of attention has been paid to the contrast between Germanic and Romance. Using the negation and sentence-medial adverbs as diagnostics for the displacement of the verb outside the *v*-VP, it has been noted that these two families differ in that Romance languages typically display verb-movement to the inflectional domain, while Germanic languages like English do not[1]. Regarding Romance in particular, it is traditionally assumed that this family behaves uniformly in exhibiting a version of V-to-I movement[2]. However, a number of more fine-grained studies have begun to reveal a more nuanced picture, whereby different Romance (non)-standard varieties exhibit different patterns of verb-movement[3].

In the light of the evidence for Romance-internal variation presented in the above-mentioned studies, the aim of the present article is to explore the placement of the verb in Romanian, in order to assess the target of its movement in more detail[4]. By adopting a rich clausal structure, it will be shown that the behaviour of the Romanian finite lexical verb is apparently ambiguous, as it seems to be able to target both a very high position in the clausal spine, climbing over very high adverbs, and a low position, below low adverbs (§2). In order to explain this apparent optionality, Romanian will be argued to be a high verb-movement language whose Adv-V patterns are derived through exploitation of the left periphery (§3).

2. (Un)marked patterns of verb-movement in Romanian

Two main views have been expressed in the literature about Romanian verb-movement. On the one hand, some authors have argued that its finite lexical verb targets the highest functional head in IP (Dobrovie-Sorin 1994; Rivero 1994; Motapanyane 1995; Ştefănescu

[1] Cf., among others, Pollock (1989); Belletti (1990); Vikner (1997); Bobaljik, Thráinsson (1998); Biberauer, Roberts (2010); Roberts (2010); Koeneman, Zeijlstra (forthcoming); Ledgeway (2012).

[2] Cf. for example Zanuttini (1997: 220): "the finite verb [...] in the Romance languages is standardly taken to have raised to I°".

[3] Cf., among others, Cinque (1999); Ledgeway, Lombardi (2005; 2014); Ledgeway (2012, 2014, in press); Rowlett (2007); Tortora (2002); Fedele (2010); Schifano (2014a,b, in prep.); Tescari Neto (2013).

[4] For the sake of the present discussion, only lexical present indicative verbs will be taken into account. However, the picture is even more nuanced once lexical vs. functional, finite vs. non-finite and various mood, tense and aspect specifications are taken into account (Nicolae 2013; Ledgeway 2014; Schifano in prep.).

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1997; Cornilescu 2000), mainly looking at the placement of the verb with respect to aspectual adverbs. Contrary to this view, other authors have invoked a lower placement (Cinque 1999; Ledgeway, Lombardi 2005, 2014; Ledgeway 2012, 2014, in press), on the basis of the obligatory preverbal placement of the negator, pronominal object clitics and clitic adverbs (1):

(1) *Elevii mei* *nu le mai* ***văd*** (Ledgeway 2014).
students.DEF my not them again see
'My students no longer see them'

In Nicolae (2013), a reconciliatory view is advanced: the Romanian verb still targets the highest projection of the Mood-Tense-Aspect region of the sentential core, which, however, in a richly articulated clausal structure is not necessarily the highest projection, thereby accounting for the distributional facts in (1). Abstracting away from the details regarding the fine structure of the highest region of the I-domain, the data presented in this article will confirm the general intuition that Romanian is a high-movement language, under the specific interpretation that its verb targets the highest functional field of a cartographic clausal spine, i.e. the Mood-related one[1].

Before presenting the data about V-placement in Romanian, a number of clarifications regarding the methodology employed and the composition of the clausal spine assumed here are in order. As for the methodology, I shall be assessing the displacement of V outside its base position by looking at its distribution with respect to adverbs, in line with much of the literature on this topic[2]. However, instead of recurring to sentential-medial adverbs only, typically taken as markers for the left edge of the *v*-VP, I will adopt a wider array of adverbs which will allow me to identify not only the displacement of V outside the *v*-VP, but also its target inside the inflectional domain. In particular the adverbs employed in this article lexicalize distinct positions placed at various heights of Cinque's (1999 *et seq.*) hierarchy of functional projections. In order to function as a reliable diagnostic, all the tested adverbs are to be read with a flat, neutral intonation, as the manipulation of the intonational properties of adverbs can license different structural configurations (Rizzi 2004: 235). In particular, the parenthetical or "comma intonation" use of the tested adverbs must be avoided, as this allows adverbs to appear in positions from which they are normally banned (Cinque 1999: 32, 87). Similarly, the tested adverbs must be interpreted as having scope on the entire event, i.e. I have abstracted from any "focusing" usages of adverbs, whereby adverbs do not sit in their dedicated FP but are freely merged in a variety of positions, depending on the specific constituent over which they take scope (Belletti 1990: 130, fn29; Cinque 1999: 31; Ledgeway in press). Regarding the composition of the clausal spine, I shall be considering the placement of the verb and its target inside a functional space which can be broadly subdivided into three major functional fields, i.e. a high Mood-related field, a clause-medial Tense-related field and a low Aspect-related field, following the distribution of the related FPs in Cinque's (1999 *et seq.*) hierarchy[3].

[1] A crucial assumption of the approach developed here is that Romance verb-movement, in general, should be viewed as targeting fields of the clausal spine, rather than single positions (Schifano 2014c; in prep.). For the more general purposes of the present discussion, that is assessing Romanian V-movement, the proposal advanced here is compatible with Nicolae's (2013) claim that V targets the highest MTA projection of the sentential core.

[2] See references in Schifano (in prep.).

[3] On the identification of these functional fields and their relative ordering, see also arguments in Tortora (2002); Cinque (2004); Holmberg, Roberts (2012); Nicolae (2013); Schifano (2014c; in prep.).

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We can now consider the data supporting the view that the Romanian verb reaches the highest functional field of the I-domain. Starting from the highest region of Cinque's (1999 *et seq.*) hierarchy, the following examples show that the verb preferably precedes high adverbs such as *probabil* (2a), *de obicei* (2b), *adesea* (2c) and *înadins* (2d), while the opposite placement, i.e. Adv-V (cf. bracketed options), is perceived to be grammatical but pragmatically marked (see §3)[1]. Note that, in spite of their marked reading, the preverbal adverbs are still pronounced with a flat intonation, namely they are not intonationally marked as a contrastive focus:

(2) a. *Andrei greşeşte* ***probabil*** *(greşeşte)*
Andrei is.wrong probably
'Andrei is probably wrong'

b. *Andrei greşeşte* ***de obicei*** *(greşeşte)*
Andrei is.wrong usually
'Andrei is usually wrong'

c. *Ion merge* ***adesea*** *(merge) la cinema*[2]
John goes often to.the cinema
'John often goes to the cinema'

d. *Mi-a spus că soția sa pregăteşte* ***înadins*** *(pregăteşte)*
to.me-has told that wife his prepares intentionally
o plăcintă cu legume.
a pie with vegetables
'He told me that his wife prepares a vegetable pie for this purpose'

Similarly, when we move down the hierarchy, we observe that the verb precedes low adverbs such as *deja* (3a), *întotdeauna / mereu* (3b, b') and *bine* (3c) as the unmarked option, while the lower placement of V is only admitted as a marked option in (3a-b'). Note again that preverbal adverbs are endowed the same flat intonation as postverbal ones:

(3) a. *Ea cunoaşte* ***deja*** *(cunoaşte) rețeta*
she knows already recipe.DEF
'She already knows the recipe'

b. *Andrei greşeşte* ***întotdeauna*** *(?greşeşte)*
Andrei is.wrong always
'Andrei is always wrong'

b.' *Mi-a zis că nevastă-sa face* ***mereu*** *(face) desertul*
to.me-has said that wife-his makes always dessert.DEF
'He told me that his wife always makes the dessert'

c. *Andrei răspunde* ***bine*** *(*răspunde) la întrebare.*
Andrei answers well to.the question
'Andrei answers well the question'

[1] The following selection of data comes from a questionnaire run with two native speakers from the province of Muntenia. The patterns reported reflect the judgements of both of them, unless otherwise stated.

[2] For sentences 2(c-d), only one of my informants expressed a preference for the V-Adv ordering, while the other judged the two orderings equal.

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In conclusion, once a wide array of adverbs than the one traditionally employed is exploited, two apparently opposite patterns of V-placement emerge, i.e. a very high one, in which V precedes both high and low adverbs, and a low one, in which V follows all of them[1]. In what follows, I shall demonstrate that this paradox is only apparent, in that only the former pattern should be taken as a diagnostic for the extent of V-movement in Romanian, while the latter should be interpreted as the output of the displacement of the adverb to a left-peripheral position.

3. Towards a structural analysis

3.1. *Unmarked V-Adv patterns*

The data reported above have shown that adverbs can apparently both precede or follow the verb. The judgements expressed by native informants, however, reveal that the two orderings should not be equated. In particular, while the V-Adv ordering is perceived to be the default option, the opposite placement is perceived to be grammatical but pragmatically marked (in the sense to be defined below). Again, note that the "(un)markedness" applies to the relative ordering of the verb and the adverb; in both cases, this latter is rendered with a flat intonation. Now, if we assume that only adverbs sitting in their semantically-related FP constitute a reliable diagnostics for V-movement, and if we assume that in such a configuration they should do not trigger any pragmatically marked reading, as this is the manifestation of an operation of dislocation to a peripheral position, we can conclude that only the unmarked ordering is indicative of the extent of V-movement. As the unmarked option is the one in which V precedes all tested adverbs, including very high ones, we can conclude that in Romanian the present indicative lexical verb targets the highest field of the I-domain, i.e. Mood[2].

3.2. *Marked Adv-V patterns*

Having established that Romanian is a high V-movement language, we need to explain how this analysis is compatible with the grammaticality of Adv-V patterns presented in §2. As already anticipated, the relevant empirical fact is the perceived markedness of such orderings. Elaborating further the notion of pragmatic markedness at stake here, consider (2b), reported below as (4a). In this case, the preverbal adverb seems to be endowed with an emphatic reading, in spite of its flat intonation, in the sense that it elicits an implication which is not perceived in the unmarked V-Adv ordering (4b):

(4) a. *Andrei **de obicei** greşeşte* (marked)
Andrei usually is.wrong
(perceived implication: … *but this time he may be right*)
b. *Andrei greşeşte **de obicei*** (unmarked)
Andrei is.wrong usually
'Andrei is usually wrong'

[1] The only exception is the adverb *bine*, which marks the lowest boundary of the I-domain and which is obligatorily preceded by the verb, showing that the Romanian verb cannot remain in situ.

[2] As specified in §2, this claim is consistent with an approach to Romance verb-movement which – for independent reasons – sees the verb as targeting fields rather than single positions. Consequently, the above claim does not amount to saying that the lexical verb targets the highest functional *head* of the I-domain. Cf. Nicolae (2013) and Ledgeway (2014), among others, for a fine-grained cartography of the positions in the highest region of the Mood-field and for the distribution of different preverbal elements there.

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If it is correct to assume that a pragmatically marked reading can only be triggered by the displacement of the relevant element, the emphatic reading of the preverbal adverbs in (2)–(3) must necessarily follow from their movement to a left-peripheral position. Note that the other logically plausible analysis of strings like (4a), i.e. low placement of V, must be excluded, as it would fail to account for the marked reading of the adverb.

Having established that Adv-V orders in Romanian are derived through the left dislocation of the adverb, with V still sitting in its default high position, we need to identify the landing site of the adverb with greater precision. As shown by a considerable number of fine-grained cartographic studies, the left periphery is to be conceived as a richly articulated area, consisting of at least two macro-fields, i.e. the *Topic*-field and the *Focus*-field (Rizzi 1997; Poletto 2000; Benincà 2001; Benincà, Poletto 2004; Ledgeway 2010, among others), each of which can be further decomposed into distinct positions, as summarised in (5) (adapted from Ledgeway 2010: 46):

(5) $[_{CP}\{_{\mathbf{Topic}}[_{FrameP1}\,[_{FrameP2}\,[_{ThemeP1}\,[_{ThemeP2}\,\{_{\mathbf{Focus}}\,[_{CFocP1}\,[_{CFocP2}\,[_{IFocP1}\,[_{IFocP2}\,[_{FinP}\,[_{TP}\,...]]]]]]]]]]$.

This means that different landing sites for the preposed adverb are potentially available. The first distinction we need to determine is the one between the *Topic* and the *Focus*-field, i.e. we need to establish whether Romanian marked adverbs are topicalized or focalized elements. As discussed by Rizzi (2004: 238–241), a number of interpretative and distributional arguments undermine the possibility, in general, that preposed adverbs are topics. From an interpretative point of view, for example, Rizzi observes that preposed adverbs, in spite of sharing with topics their left dislocation, do not share with them the necessary connection to the discourse background, as shown by their compatibility with out-of-the-blue contexts, from which topics proper are banned. Interestingly, the same argument applies here, i.e. Romanian preverbal adverbs are not interpreted as information already given in the discourse, as shown by the contrast in (6), where topics proper (6B), but not preverbal adverbs (6C), are excluded from "what happened?" contexts:

(6) A: *Ce s-a întâmplat?*
what refl-has happened
'what happened?'
B: *#La cinema, am fost ieri*[1]
to cinema, I.have been yesterday
'#As for the cinema, I went there yesterday'
C: ***Deja** au plecat.*
already they.have left
'They have already left'

Having established that Romanian marked preverbal adverbs should be treated as focalized elements, we need to identify their exact landing site inside the *Focus*-field, which can be further decomposed into two sub-fields, i.e. the Contrastive *Focus*-field and the Informational *Focus*-field (Rizzi 1997; Belletti 2001; Benincà, Poletto 2004; Cruschina 2011, among others). An initial working hypothesis could be that the adverbs under consideration here target the Informational *Focus*-field, which provides dedicated positions for indefinite quantifiers and informationally focused constituents, as in (7) (adapted from Ledgeway 2010: 44):

[1] This sentence is well-formed only if *la cinema* is interpreted as a contrastive focus, not as a topic.

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(7) {$_{\text{Focus}}$ [$_{\text{CFoc-field}}$ … [$_{\textbf{IFocP1}}$ Indef-Q [$_{\textbf{IFocP2}}$ IFoc [$_{\text{FinP}}$ …

After all, it could be claimed that the perceived slight contrastive interpretation of these adverbs (cf. the perceived implication in 4, which would suggest a contrastive focus interpretation, as Contrastive Focus activates presuppositions, Zafiu 2013: 574) is simply lexically determined, on account of the inherent scalar meaning of the relevant adverbs, which, once focalized, may license a contrast (Silvio Cruschina p.c.). However, one distributional counterargument undermines this hypothesis. This is illustrated in sentences (8)–(9), which show that Romanian preverbal adverbs can felicitously co-occur with both preverbal quantifiers (8) and indefinite subjects (9), both sitting in IFocP1:

(8) a. ***De obicei*** *nimeni nu ajunge târziu la conferință*
usually nobody not arrives late to.the conference
'Nobody usually arrives late for the conference'

b. ***Niciodată*** *nimeni nu ajunge târziu la conferință*.
never nobody not arrives late to.the conference
'Nobody ever arrives late for the conference'

(9) a. ***De obicei*** *un copil plânge când mama lui pleacă*
usually a child cries when mum.DEF his leaves
'A child usually cries when his mum leaves'

b. ***Mereu*** *un copil plânge când mama lui pleacă*.
always a child cries when mum.DEF his leaves
'A child always cries when his mum leaves'

The fact that the relevant preverbal adverbs can co-occur with both preverbal quantifiers and indefinite subjects excludes the possibility that they target IFocP1, on the assumption that they would be competing for the same position. Moreover, the fact that they linearly precede these elements also excludes the possibility that they sit in IFocP2.

Having ruled out the possibility that Romanian marked preverbal adverbs are displaced to the Informational *Focus*-field, we are left with the Contrastive *Focus*-field. According to Benincà and Poletto (2004: 61), this consists of two dedicated positions, hosting contrastively focalized circumstantial / quantificational adverbs on the one hand, and contrastively focalized objects and other adverbial types on the other hand, as in (10):

(10) {$_{\text{Focus}}$[$_{\textbf{CFocP1}}$adverbs / objects [$_{\textbf{CFocP2}}$circumstantial / quantificational adverbs [$_{\text{IFoc-field}}$ ...

Before we discuss these two positions in further detail, it is worth noting that the intonational unmarkedness of these adverbs is still compatible with the hypothesis that they have been focalized (cf. Benincà, Poletto 2004: 56 – „focalized elements do not necessarily have to be intonationally stressed"). As for the exact location of Romanian marked adverbs inside the Constrastive *Focus*-field, it is reasonable to claim that they target CFocP2, as they are able to co-occur with contrastively focalized objects (in capital letters). However, there seems to be an interesting asymmetry in the behaviour of circumstantial (or non-quantificational) and quantificational adverbs.[1] Although they are both allowed to co-occur

[1] Although Benincà and Poletto (2004) draw a distinction between quantificational and circumstantial adverbs, it is more appropriate to reinterpret this distinction as involving quantificational vs. non-

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with contrastively focalized objects, non-quantificational adverbs like *de obicei* follow contrastively focalized objects (11a), while quantificational adverbs like *mereu* precede them (11b)[1]:

(11) a. *ION **de obicei** citeşte multe cărti, nu Marcu*
Ion usually reads many books not Marcu
'It is John that usually reads many books, not Mark'
b. ***Mereu** ION (??mereu) citeşte multe cărti, nu Marcu.*
always Ion reads many books not Marcu
'It is John that always reads many books, not Mark'

I take the asymmetry illustrated in (11) as a possible clue for and additional split of the Contrastive *Focus*-field, in which quantificational and non-quantificational adverbs lexicalize two distinct positions:

(12) {$_{\text{Focus}}$[$_{\text{CFocP1}}$quantificational Advs[$_{\text{CFocP2}}$objects[$_{\text{CFocP3}}$non-quantificational Advs [$_{\text{IFoc-field}}$…

A decomposition of the Contrastive *Focus*-field as in (12) explains why the order contrastively focalized object + *de obicei* is grammatical, while the order contrastively focalized object + *mereu* is not, precisely because *mereu* occupies a higher position than the constrastively focalized object[2]. A further piece of empirical evidence in favour of the

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quantificational adverbs. This follows from the fact that the data discussed here (see also examples in fn. 2, this page) suggest that the class of adverbs which exhibits the same distribution as *de obicei* is wider than the class of adverbs which can be defined as "circumstantial", as it also includes items like *probably*, *already*, *often*, which all share the property of not being quantificational, strictly speaking, rather than being circumstantial.

[1] Unsurprisingly, the most natural ordering for both types of adverbs is in postverbal position:

(i) *ION citeşte **de obicei** multe cărti, nu Marcu*
(ii) *ION citeşte **mereu** multe cărti, nu Marcu.*

This follows from the pragmatic unmarkedness of the postverbal placement of adverbs (cf. discussion above).

[2] In turn, the fact that contrastively focalized objects and non-quantificational adverbs can co-occur suggests that they occupy distinct positions. Note that *de obicei* can also precede the contrastively focalized object:

(i) ***(De obicei)** ION **(de obicei)** citeşte multe cărti, nu Marcu.*

I take this ordering to follow from the possibility for a circumstantial adverb like *de obicei* to occupy the Scene Setting position, which is placed higher than the Focus field hosting contrastively focalized objects (Benincà, Poletto 2004: 66–67). As for distinct adverbials, the data below show that *din nou* 'again', *adesea* 'often' and *deja* 'already' pattern with *de obicei*, rather than with *mereu*, as they can either precede or follow the focalized object:

(ii) ***(Din nou)** ION **(din nou)** a spart geamul, nu Marcu*
again Ion again has broken window.DEF not Marcu
'It is John that broke again the window, not Mark'
(iii) ***(Adesea)** ION **(adesea)** citeşte ziarul, nu Marcu*
often Ion often reads newspaper.DEF not Marcu
'It is John than often reads the newspaper, not Mark'
(iv) ***(Deja)** ION **(deja)** ştie acest film, nu Marcu*
already Ion already knows this film not Marcu
'It is John that already knows this film, not Mark'

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decomposition in (12) comes from the possibility of filling all three positions simultaneously, as in (13), where the quantificational *mereu* precedes the contrastively focalized object *ION*, which is turn followed by the non-quantificational *probabil*[1]:

(13) ***Mereu*** *ION* ***probabil*** *greşeşte, nu Marcu.*
always Ion probably is.wrong not Marcu
'It is John that is probably always wrong, not Mark'

Note that this ordering is unexpected under Benincà and Poletto's (2004) original decomposition, as the quantificational adverb *mereu* should not precede the focalized object[2]. For the sake of completeness, one last potential landing site for Romanian marked preverbal adverbs must be excluded. According to Rizzi (2004: 241), the left periphery also includes a dedicated recursive position, called SpecMod(ifier)P which hosts „simple (nonfocal and nontopic)" preposed adverbs, as sketched below:

(14) Force Top* Int Top* Focus **Mod*** Top* Fin IP (Rizzi 2004: 242).

Just like the adverbs reviewed here, the preposed adverbs analyzed by Rizzi are neither contrastive foci nor topics, as shown by a number of distributional and interpretative arguments (Rizzi 2004: 238–241). However, they crucially differ from Romanian preposed adverbs because they have an intonational contour which is very similar to topic intonation and are intonationally separated from the remainder of the clause (Rizzi 2004: 238), as shown by the comma which accompanies them. This suggests that we are dealing with two distinct types of preposed adverbs that, as such, cannot occupy the same position. Also note that the Mod position identified by Rizzi is recursive. If Romanian preposed adverbs were to occupy that same position, the ordering restrictions identified above would be unexpected, inasmuch as we would not be able to capture why non-quantificational adverbs like *de obicei* follow contrastively focalized objects, while quantificational adverbs like *mereu* can only precede them, given that recursive positions are in principle not linearly ordered.

I take this to follow from the fact that only adverbs like *mereu* belong to the core set of quantificational adverbs, which have a reserved position (CFocP1), while the above adverbs occupy the non-quantificational position (CFocP3) when they follow the object, and the Scene Setting one when they precede it.

[1] Note that the most felicitous linear ordering is the one in (i):

(i) *ION* ***probabil*** *greşeşte* ***mereu****, nu Marcu.*

This naturally follows from the postverbal placement of *mereu*, which is the unmarked ordering. As for the preverbal placement of *probabil*, the informant who produced this sentence had shown some inconsistencies in the placement of this adverb in previous questionnaires, so the output in (i) is not surprising. The relevant point for the sake of the present discussion is the grammaticality of (13). The ordering in (ii) is equally possible and, possibly, more felicitous than (13):

(ii) ***Probabil*** *ION* ***mereu*** *greşeşte, nu Marcu.*

I take the grammaticality of this order to follow from the fact that *probabil* takes narrow scope over *ION* rather than over the entire event (cf. the "focalising" usage discussed in §2).

[2] The above discussion does not exclude the possibility that Romanian adverbs be simply contrastively focalized, in which case they are interpreted and pronounced as a contrastively focalized object and target the same CFocP2 (e.g. *MEREU merg la cinema, nu rar* 'I ALWAYS go the cinema, not infrequently').

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4. Conclusions

In this article I have investigated the placement of the present indicative lexical verb in Romanian. By testing its position with respect to a wide array of adverbs, lexicalizing distinct functional projections inside Cinque's (1999 *et seq.*) richly articulated I-domain, I have shown that two opposite orderings are admitted: one in which V precedes all tested adverbs and one in which it follows them. Although both orderings feature a non-parenthetical and non-focusing usage of the adverb, which is read with a flat intonation, speakers perceive the ordering V-Adv to be the most natural one, while the opposite ordering is considered to be a grammatical but pragmatically marked option. Consequently, I have taken only the former to be indicative of the extent of V-movement in Romanian, which, I claim, targets the high Mood-related field inside the I-domain. As for the opposite ordering, the pragmatic markedness of the reading that preverbal adverbs trigger suggests that they have been dislocated to a left-peripheral position. A number of interpretative and distributional properties of these marked adverbs indicate that the targeted position must be inside the Contrastive *Focus*-field which, elaborating the original formulation in Benincà and Poletto (2004), can be further decomposed as in (12).

In conclusion, the analysis presented in this paper has the advantage of accounting for the apparent optionality of adverb placement in Romanian (cf. Giurgea 2011: 274 – "most [...] adverbs have a great deal of freedom of placement"), which in turn lead to conflicting analyses of Romanian as a high vs. low verb-movement language. Moreover, the analysis of Adv-V orderings as involving Adv-dislocation to the left periphery, as strongly supported by their pragmatic markedness, provided new empirical evidence to further refine the internal cartography of the Contrastive *Focus*-field.

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(UN)MARKED PATTERNS OF VERB-MOVEMENT: THE CASE OF ROMANIAN

(*Abstract*)

This article investigates the placement of the present indicative lexical verb in Romanian inside a richly-articulated clausal spine, along the cartographic lines. By testing its position with respect to a number of adverbs lexicalizing the Spec of hierarchically ordered functional projections (Cinque 1999), it shows that Romanian is a high verb-movement language, with V reaching the highest Mood-related field, as witnessed by the placement of V before all the tested adverbs, including very high ones. On the other hand, it is argued that the opposite placement, i.e. the one in which V follows all the tested adverbs, should be analysed as the output of the displacement of the adverb to a position of Contrastive Focus in the left periphery, rather than the output of the low placement of V, as supported by a number of interpretative and distributional arguments.

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