# *THE ADVERB IN THE CONTEMPORARY ROMANIAN LANGUAGE. CURRENT ASPECTS AND TENDENCIES*

**Florenţa-Eugenia VONICA***

***Abstract**: The current work paper is an overview of the status of adverbs within the morphology of contemporary Romanian language. The adverb is characterized by well defined lexical meaning, fact that stresses its importance and distinction in the whole of inflexible parts of speech. Starting from this status, the adverb is defined by many morphological, lexical-grammatical features, by orthographic aspects (with a semantic and grammar approach, un-analyzable structures, exceptions) and specific stylistic and by the category of comparison analytically or periphrastically (distinct analogies and aspects reported to adjective - flexible part of speech). The paper also insists on the current tendencies of wrong use of certain adverbs, solved by correct situation contexts. Finally, there are shown several stylistic values displayed by some Romanian adverbs.*

***Keywords**: morphological features, orthographic aspects, stylistics.*

A. Status of the adverb within morphology

Yet from the times of Latin bookmen, the adverb has not constituted a distinct class. The Danish linguist Otto Jespersen considered it as taking part to a heterogeneous class, classifying it both in the *category of the parts of speech* and in the *category of particles*.

Situated in the context of the ten parts of speech (flexible and inflexible) that constitute the main object of study of morphology, *the adverb* is remarkable by distinct features that provide it a special place. Its special status is supported by the following features:

● from the *morphological* point of view, the adverb is *invariable,* which allows its falling within the category of un-flexible parts of speech, together with preposition, conjunction and interjection;

● it is an extremely numerous and un-homogenous *a lexical - grammar class*. This dominant feature eliminates the possibility of expressing a unitary definition for the whole inventory of adverbs and of a general overview lacking disputes or mudguards;

● the adverb has generally, *a non-analyzable structure*. Rarely, when it is analyzable, may be recognized in the structure of adverb a lexical suffix or a deictic particle, but never morphemes (suffix or terminations);

● despite the other parts of speech, the adverb knows *the category of comparison* (*periphrastic* or *analytically*), fact that get it closer to the adjective. The comparison degrees are not enough to include the adverb in the category of flexible parts of speech, because the adverb does not change its form depending on this grammar category. It is required the specification that not all the adverbs have comparison degrees;

* University of Pitesti, eugvon@yahoo.com



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● compared to the other parts of speech, the adverb is featured by well defined lexical meaning, which stresses its importance and distinction in the whole of inflexible parts of speech..

B. Ortographic aspects

The adverb, as un-flexible part of speech, does not raise special problems from the orthography point of view. The adverbs and adverb phrases that have in their structure several parts of speech are written: *in one word*, *separately* or *with hyphen*.

1. *There are spelled in one word* the adverbs of which component items, due to the high welding degree, don't keep any more their semantic individuality, behaving as a single word. The following structures take part to this category:

- *a preposition + an adverb, substantive, numeral, pronoun*

*home, hardly, seldom, patchy, rarely, above, than, for nothing, fast, below, anyhow, not at all, at the same time, certainly, far, tonight, early, before, outside, inside, hither, across, back, always, contrary, around, together, deliberately, behind, there, soon, maybe, as, second, around.*

- *the prepositions in, of + another part of speech*:

*enough, closely, available, generally, especially, tonight*

- *pronouns or pronoun adjectives + other, the other*:

*whilom, otherwise, aforetime, as a matter of fact, elsewhere, another time, the day before yesterday, the night before last night.*

- *adverbs composed on an invariable element each-, -er, so, -ful-, any-, any-* : *when, how, where, when, how much, how, where, sometime, somehow, anyhow, wherever, anywhere, abroad,*
*any time, anyhow, anywhere, sometime, some, where, somewhere, sometimes, often, rarely, other times.*
- *the adverb once* and its compounds: *short, sometime, never, at the same time, any time*. Exception is the adverbial phrase *all of a sudden*, made of the numeral *all*, opposed to *two times*.
- *the adverbs composed by -mite* : *yet, probably*
- *adverbs composed of heterogeneous elements*: *today, certainly, decent, just, instantly, like.*

The composed adverbs, graphically expressed by one word, must not be confounded to the free combinations or to the adverbial phrases made of the same terms that are separately written:

*some other time* = aforetime, a long time ago / *another time* [You will come *another time*.]
*sure* = certainly, obviously / *certain + ly* [The message of lines was *certain*.]
*now and again* = from time to time, sometimes / *now and again* [Each one answers *now and again*.]
*aside* = crabwise, isolated, islanded / *on the one side* [The planes are aligned *on the one side* of the street.]
*soon* = early, / *by age* [The old man seems to be forgotten *by age*.]
*interminably* = always, all the time/ *one of* [He came *one of* these days.]
*anymore* = never / *neither nor* [He *neither* said hello when he came *nor* when he left.]
*anyway* = not at all, anyhow / *neither nor* [It's *neither good* as you said, *nor* as you wrote.]



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*just* = only, than / *any more* [I can't wait *any more*.]
*the same* = anyway/ *one, too* [He shows *one, too*, of his first work papers.]

2. *There are written with hyphen* the adverbs and adverbial phrases made of several words un-bound one to each other:

a. those where the first composition term is: *prepositions in* or *from* (which lost the vowel *-u* before a word that starts with a vowel): *from there, contrary, of both, once, in that, over there, truly, on purpose, idly, in, so, hidden, once*.

b. those made of the *preposition after* or of *the demonstrative adjective this* and *a substantive with temporal meaning*: *this afternoon, afternoon, after lunch, last winter, last night, light spring, this evening, last autumn, last summer, etc. (the adverb today makes an exception)*

c. those made by binding two substantives, of a substantive with an adverb, of two adverbs, of two interjections or of two rhymed items that are not independently used in the language:

*this summer, last summer, this evening, this morning, dog-doggish, yesterday morning, last night, around, slowly, mincemeat, tomorrow night, out of the blue, too, all of a sudden, mixed, so-so, hardly, willy-nilly, the short and the long of the family, truly*, at down*in the afternoon, afternoon, expressly, on purpose*.

♦ The writing with hyphen both marks the intermediary welding degree of certain compound adverbs: *last night, last evening,* , and phonetic phenomena (elision and contraction): *indeed, from there*.

♦ By hyphen, too, it is expressed the bind spelling of words in a more or less fast tempo: *enough, closely, from now on*, although, usually, they are separately written (see point 3).

3. *There are separately written* the adverbial phrases and the compound adverbs of which component elements keep their lexical and grammar independence:

*of therefore, closely, also, usually, especially, last evening, beforehand*; *-ly definitively, truly, outside, finally*; *at handy, minimum, aside*; *on next, on the one hand, by heart*; *by unduly, impulsively, meantime*. Likewise, there are written the adverbial phrases made by a *compound preposition of*:

*head over heels, altogether, riding, across, downright, along, ready, "de-a poarca", touchwood, " de-a puia-gaia" , always, in - out, head over heels, for nothing, caper.*

♦ The mode adverbs made of substantives or verbs with the suffixes *–iş / - âş* are written without *-i* in the end: *cross, by the beard, sly, side, rough*, despite the adverbs *again, any, however*, and the popular or archaic forms *"acuşi", "cumvaşi"* made of *again + and -*; *as + and, all + and* (adverb and conjunction).

♦ The correct form of time adverbs resulted by conversion from the feminine substantives with definite article for singular is: *Monday*, *Tuesday*, *Wednesday*, *Friday*; *exception* makes *Thursday*.

♦ It is correctly said and spelled *încontinuu (continuously)*, not incontinuu, because it is about an adverb created in Romanian language by: *preposition in + adverb continuous*.

♦ The adverb *both* appears with two different graphs, in different contexts: verb + *both*(*a*), *so*(*a*) + verb ; *so*(*a*) ... that; as ... *as*(*a*); *as*...as, *as* much (without the deictic particle *-a*).

♦ It is correct: as *far as* I know, *as* I found out.

C. Semantic and grammatical aspects

1. Approached *semantically*, the following adverbs have a special status:

a. *always* (adv.) - *forever* (prep.+ adverb) have the same meaning



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b. adv. *only* (affirmative) is opposite to *than* (with a negative meaning): I have *only* one child. I don't have *but* two books.
c. *about – not* much: He is *about* used to difficulties. He is not *too* used to difficulties.
d. *and* (it is used in affirmative contexts) / *nor* (it is used in negative contexts):
He *also* speaks English and French. / He doesn't speak English, *nor* French.
e. some adverbs are synonym with adverbial phrases:
*like = also, hardly = toilsomely, just = so*;
*all of a sudden = unexpectedly, fully = entirely, so = so that, parallel= parallel, before = in front of, differently = too, purposely = expressly, enough = sufficiently, hardly = barely, Romanian = Romanian* (pop.), *else = or, soon = lately*.
f. some adverbs have a similar form, but the meaning is different:
*often* (frequently) / *often* (often)
*even* (just) / *just* (exactly)
*once* (earlier) / *once upon a time* (once more)
*any* (anyhow) / *originary* (originary)
*aforetime* (before) / *another time* (in another circumstance)
*otherway* (else) / *other way* (not the same way)
2. From the *grammatical* point of view, there are several adverbs that present a special status, depending on the context:
a. *meaning, namely* – with an explanatory meaning, are conjunctions that express a positive report in the sentence or in the phrase;
b. adv. *likewise* becomes preposition when the dative case is required;
c. *any*, in nominal context, is invariable and expresses the approximation (*few*);
d. *like, than, how much*, become prepositions in the structure of mode circumstantial complement because they are built with the accusative: *like* mother, *as high as* the mountain, *than* the colleague;
e. *probably* is semi-adverb (used in popular language), and in other contexts, it has the status of an incident word.
f. *dripping* is an adverb met in popular expressions: wet, look blue, splashed *dripping*.
g. *neither* is always semi-adverb in negative structures; semantically, it is opposed to *either (also)* of the affirmative constructions: Neither his friend entered. His friend *also* entered. Repeated, the semi-adverbs *too, nor* occur with a role of coordinator conjunctions: I received *both* a doll *and* a snow flake bouquet. / I don't have *either* sandals, *or* sabots.
h. At the level of a sentence, in a correlative context, *either - or* is no longer a relative adverb, it becomes a time adverb: He writes *either* with the stylo, *or* with the ballpoint.
i. *As*, repeated and used with a temporal meaning, becomes *subordinated conjunction* ( = as soon as) or *time adverb* ( = immediately) at the level of the sentence: *As* he enters the room, he asks about me.
j. *Where* with a temporal meaning (= all of a sudden) is no longer a relative adverb, becoming conjunction: *Where (as)* he started laughing[1]/ [2]/ *that* he couldn't stop anymore.[3]/

♦ The following adverbs have a complex grammatical status:

a. – *ready* - invariable adj.: The homework is *ready*. / The homeworks are *ready*. adverb: *Finally*, I understood.
- *made up* – adj. phrase: Made up man suit . / Made up clothes.
- *for nothing* – adv. phrase: He received all *for nothing*.

b. - *certain* – invariable adj.: A *certain* word hurts./ A *certain* decision surprise us.
- *as such* - adv. phrase with modal meaning: He talks *as such*.



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- adverbial phrase with conclusive meaning: You are wrong, *so* you'll pay.
- adjective phrase – *such*: Such a gesture is not forgettable.

c. *otherway, this way* - adv. when it determines a verb: He thinks *otherway (differently)* than (from) her. He expressed himself *this way*.

- adj. when it determines a substantive or a pronoun (rarely).

d. *other than, such* are adjectival phrases:

He obtained *other kind of* results. I am abashed by *such* circumstances.

♦ *Grammatical homonymy* of adverbs is illustrated by the following lexical units shown by adequate contexts:

- *closely* (place adverb) - He walks *closely*.
- *almost* (proximity mode adverb) - He is *almost* licensed.
- *how much* (mode adverb with quantity meaning) - *How much* did he cash?
- *how* (semi-adverb with the meaning of *all*) - Tell me *all* about you!
- *rather* (comparative adverb) - You would *rather* tell me the truth!
- *instead* (semi-adverbial phrase = *before*) - He is worried *instead* of careless.
- *afore* (adverb at comparative) - The headquarters of the company is *afore*.
- *before* (adverbial phrase = *a long time ago, first*) : *Before,* the Dacian was living on these lands. I give you a cup of coffee *before*, then we will walk.

D. Use tendencies of adverbs

In the contemporary Romanian language, there are registered wrong tendencies in the use of certain adverbs or adverbial phrases.

1. Adjective composition of adverb in different contexts

a. *by confusion with the adjective*, sometimes, the form of adverb with a quantity meaning is provided in gender and number:

**how many* more [*as* many as], **enough* few [*quite* few], **heavy* to bring over [*hardly* to bring over] **so many* talented [*so* talented];

b. *at the adjectives composed with an adverb*:

**noi (new)*-born [*nou (new)*-born], **noi (new)*-employed [*nou (newly)*-employed], **bad*-tough [*evil*-doers] **free lancers* [*liber*lancers], **liberi (free)* thinkers [*free*-thinkers]

c. *when the adverb determines an adjective* :

**firm* convinced [*firmly* convinced], **fresh* married [*newly* married], **severe* ill [*severilly* ill], **total* know-nothing [*totally* know-nothing].

d. in *the lexical units* made of: *subst.+ adv.+ verb at supine*, the adverb is frequently adjusted, the structures this way obtained being non-literary: decisions *easy* to made [decisions *easily* to make], difficult ways to climb [ways *hardly* to climb] , *difficult* persons to bear [people *hardly* bearable], *complicated situations* to solve, [situations *hardly* to solve], routes *impossible* to follow [routes *impossibly* to follow].

♦ These constructions always have in their structure a probability adverb: *difficult, hard, easy, possible, impossible, and complicated*.

♦ The tendency of adjective making of the adverb is the result of its relation to the substantive of construction: **deep* human feelings, **good* pay people, **carrion* rich families. Correct: *deeply* human feelings, *good pay* persons, *ultra-rich* families.

♦ This tendency is the consequence of a hyper-correctness phenomenon (the speaker adjusts the adverb with the substantive as if it is an adjective).

2. Confusion between the adverb *as* and the pronoun *much*: I invited *as* more specialists. Correct: I invited *much more specialists*.

3. Redundant, un-justified use of certain adverbs: She says *nothing if only* you ask her. Correct: She doesn't say *but if* you ask her.



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4. The omission of the repetition of adverbs *more* and *very* in front of each element of a listing: He is *more* careful and concerned in this project. She was *very* assiduous and talented.
Correct: He is *more* careful and *more* concerned in this project.
She was *very* perseverant and *very* talented.
5. By analogy to *that*, formant of the relative superlative of adjective, it is mistakenly adjusted the article *that* of the structure of relative superlative of adverb: He is one of *those best* paid. Correct: He is one of *the best* paid.
6. Changes in the topics of certain semi-adverbs
a. *about, more, too, all* are mistakenly placed before the group: *verb + atone pronoun (personal* or *reflexive) + verb*: I am no more playing.:
*Correct* - I am not playing *any more*. / Probably he would try.
*Correct* - He would probably try. Scarcely is it heard. *correct* It is scarcely heard.
b. the preposition constructions are mistakenly dissociated by semi-adverbs:
He *almost* introduced her all the guests. *Correct* He introduced her *almost* all the guests.
I cooperate *only* with two persons. *Correct* I *only* cooperate with two persons.
I finished of *about* a week ago. *Correct* I finished *about* a week ago.
7. Confusions in the use of adverbs
In the dialect expression, the adverbs *only* and *just* are used in the contexts where their presence does not correspond to the expressed grammatical norms:
- in Ardeal, *only* is used in negative contexts (old forms);
- in Muntenia, *just* sis mistakenly extended in *positive structures*;
- in a careful expression, *only* is frequently used instead of the adverb *just*;
- the nite adverb *ever*, in a construction with a verb at the negative form, is used instead of the negative adverb *never*, in a less careful expression;
- it is also registered the occurrence, in some contexts, of pleonastic binds: *concluding, therefore, consequently, so*.
8. Use of adverbs with a changed semantic status
- the adverb *so* loses its conclusive meaning by the incorrect use, becoming an expletive particle. By the frequency of use, (youth and un-educated people), this adverb became an annoying verbal tic;
- *somewhere* (with locative meaning) is used as cliché with modal value (*somehow, to some extent*);
- during the last time, it is spread, the same annoyingly, the use of *effectively*: **I don't effectively* like him; *He doesn't *effectively* care for himself; *He is *effectively* interested in your situation; *He is *effectively* bearable.
- *from now on* (which marks the initial time of an action) is more and more used instead of *already* (specialized in underlining the final time of action);
- *not only* occurs frequently in current expressions with the value of blunted formula: My colleagues and *not only* expressed their opinion.
9. Incorrect writing of certain compound adverbs with prepositions welded to the following term: correct: *hardly, therefore, often, the day before yesterday, once, above, before, strictly, anyway, somewhere, and sometime*.
E. Stylistic values of adverbs
1. A special expressiveness is owned by *the derived adverbs with diminutive suffixes*: *quite well, quite easy, quite far, a bit,* absolute superlatives morphological synonyms with *very*.



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2. The absolute superlative made of the affective synonyms of morpheme *very* - *great, terrible, extremely, extraordinary* is more expressive than the form imposed by norm: *great*, *terribly* fast, *extremely* bad, *formidably* close.
3. The interrogative adverbs contribute to the issuance of interrogations and of eloquential invocations: *How* could you say such things?
4. The correlative adverbs retake the idea expressed in the subordinated sentence, draw the attention on it, shorten the expression and remove the repetitions: *When* you are always learning, *then* you have results.
5. The predicative adverbs mostly express the subjective attitude of the speakers: *I am certainly* waiting for you gladly.
6. In a conversational language, the adverbs are used for the issuance of elliptic sentences: Do we have more to walk? *A little*.
7. The adverbial phrases are more expressive than their equivalent adverbs: *by hook or by crook* = necessarily, *for nothing* = ineffectively.
8. The modal adverbs resulted by substantives, adjectives or participle verbs, used alone or in relation with other words may be: *epithets, comparisons, hyperboles, metaphors*.
9. Some adverbs may enter in interrogative sentences, in classifications, in repetitions and in rhetorical invocations.

F. Conclusions

The evolution of adverbial system in Romanian language must be approached from the perspective of the following aspects:

- *inventory of adverbs* demonstrate that "the properly (direct) loans occupy - even in the current language - a modest place, both quantitatively and as frequency." (Ciompec, 1985: 284). A specific feature of adverb in Romanian language aims the enrichment way of lexicon, issued by *composition* (for the old language) and by *the conversion of adjectives* (for the contemporary stage of Romanian language);
- consolidation of innovations at the level of contemporary Romanian language was made under the indisputable influence of French language and of other modern languages. The Romanic neologisms "certify the integrity of development of Romanian adverb in this tendency of Romanic westernization." (*Ibidem)*.
- "*functional - stylistic diversification* of adverbial forms and constructions." (*Ibidem)*. The stylistic expression potential of adverbs is based upon the lexical, morphological and syntactic resources, specific to this inventory of words.

Concluding the above mentioned tendencies "confer the current adverbial system the character of *modernity* and configure [...] its further evolution" (*Ibidem*, p. 285).

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