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ON THE SYNTAX OF SO-CALLED FOCUS PARTICLES IN
GERMAN – A REPLY TO BÜRING AND HARTMANN 2001*

ABSTRACT. In this paper I take issue with the ‘adverb-only’ theory proposed by Büring and Hartmann [*Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 19 (2001) 229–281] for German focus particles (=FPs). Concentrating on the syntactic aspects, I argue (i) that both versions of this theory incorrectly delimit the FP adjunction sites, (ii) that it crucially depends on a Closeness condition that is spurious, (iii) that the central ‘(no) reconstruction’ argument does support a distinctive trait of the adverb-only theory but also supports the ‘mixed’ theory which it was designed to eliminate, and (iv) that postposed FPs are not covered at all. The resulting picture suggests that a more modular account is needed, but is as yet unfeasible until the many descriptive gaps concerning the crucial FP occurrence restrictions are closed.

1. INTRODUCTION

In their NLLT paper on ‘The syntax and semantics of focus-sensitive particles in German’ (2001), Büring and Hartmann propose a comprehensive account of the distribution and interpretation of German focus particles (FPs) such as ‘*nur*’ *only*, *auch* ‘*also*’, *sogar*, ‘*even*’. Their main syntactic claim is that FPs always adjoin to non-arguments (defined as: VPs, IPs, APs, root CPs), but never to argument DPs/PPs/CPs. This ‘adverb-only’ theory (henceforth ‘a-theory’) is directed against the ‘mixed’ theory (henceforth ‘m-theory’) of German FPs by which FPs adjoin to XPs of any sort. The most notable consequence of the a-theory – and its most striking difference vis-à-vis the m-theory – is the analysis of preverbal FP-XP structures such as (1)–(2) as XP-XP sequences,

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which apparently violates the V2-constraint (3) standardly assumed for German, but is claimed by Buring and Hartmann to be nonetheless correct.

- (1) Nur/auch/sogar PETER kooperierte.
only/also/even Peter cooperated
- (2) Nur/auch/sogar mit Eiern ist das Brot belegt.
only/also/even with eggs is the bread topped
- (3) "V2-Constraint": Within German minimal clauses involving a fronted finite verb V^0 , there is just one preverbal XP-position to be overtly filled.

Buring and Hartmann (henceforth B/H) argue forcefully for their account, contributing new observations and intriguing arguments to the debate on German FP syntax. Still, as I want to show in the following, their argumentation misses the mark, not only with respect to validating the a-theory but also with respect to refuting the m-theory. The upshot is that we are much farther away, descriptively as well as theoretically, from *the* particle theory for German than a first reading of B/H's article may have led us to believe.

2. SETTING THE STAGE: TWO ACCOUNTS OF GERMAN FP-SYNTAX

2.1. *The 'Mixed' Theory*

Let us begin with a comparative sketch of m- vs. a-theory. They share a number of basic assumptions: (i) An FP is always in construction with a co-constituent K it c-commands, (ii) K is a maximal projection, (iii) K contains the focus, or, alternatively, (iii') the FP c-commands the focus. (iii)/(iii') reflect the usual bias towards unstressed occurrences of the respective particles leaving stressed particle occurrences such as (4) uncovered.

- (4) weil Peter AUCH kooperierte
because Peter also cooperated

But since this bias does not distinguish between m- and a-theory, I will accept it in what follows,¹ and I will also retain the label 'focus (sensitive) particle' (FP) motivated by (iii)/(iii'). This granted, assumptions (i)-(iii)/(iii') are more or less uncontroversial.²

What remains controversial are mainly two things. First, how is 'in construction with' in (i) to be specified, as an adjunct or a head relation between FP and the XP? Second, must 'XP' in (ii) be further restricted, and if so how?

The answer to the first question is not entirely independent of the answer to the second: While m-theorists may give either answer, and have done so, an 'adverb-only' view of FPs seems to commit its proponents to viewing them as adjuncts only. So the syntactic status of FPs is an issue in the debate which I will take up in section 3.5.³ Meanwhile, I will just assume the FP adjunct hypothesis that is compatible with both theories.

The second question leads to the decisive difference between the theories at issue: in the m-theory FPs are category insensitive adjuncts, i.e. they adjoin to all kinds of XPs. In the a-theory they adjoin to a subset of XPs that, in all versions, definitely includes (extended) V-projections, and definitely excludes (argumental) DPs/PPs/CPs.

At first glance, the adjunction sites admitted by m- vs. a-theory are in a mere subset relation. On closer inspection, however, it turns out that proponents of the m-theory tacitly confine FP adjunction sites to clause-internal XPs, thus excluding root clauses, whereas the a-theory admits, ex hypothesi, adjunction to all sentential XPs (=EVPs), including root clauses.⁴ Thus, the standard version of the m-theory looks like (5):

¹ This against my conviction, see Reis and Rosengren (1997), and perhaps not irrelevant for the issue at hand, for *AUCH*-data like (45) (*ibid.*:2.3.2) seem compatible with the m-theory (minus (5c) of course) only.

² In earlier works (Altmann 1976, Jacobs 1983, König 1991: 17) heads (in particular finite V^0) were not excluded as co-constituents. But on closer inspection, all cases in question are better analyzed as FP-XP structures, hence (ii) (see Reis and Rosengren 1997: 254-256). The same point is independently made again by B/H (pp. 240-244).

³ Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for raising this point.

⁴ This might be related to allowing (a-theory) vs. disallowing (m-theory) functional projections as adjunction sites (embedded CPs being treated as DP/PP constituents). At the moment, the issue is impossible to decide (obvious problems being IP, perhaps a licit adjunction site, and NP, as opposed to DP, always an illicit adjunction site).

(5) 'm-theory':

- a. FPs must be adjoined to a maximal projection.
- b. FPs can be adjoined to maximal projections of all kinds.
- c. FPs must c-command the focus.
- d. FPs must be adjoined to a clause-internal maximal projection.

The m-theory has a very strong argument in its favor, which accounts for its longstanding popularity:⁵ the V2-constraint (3). (3) entails that preverbal FP-XP sequences are [FP[XP]] structures; since these are by and large topicalized, clause-internal FP-XP sequences must likewise be [FP[XP]] structures. And since preverbal [FP[XP]]s contain XPs of all kinds, cf. (1), (2), and (6), it follows that FPs adjoin to XPs of all kinds, hence (5b).

- (6) a. Nur [HEute_{AdvP}] will Peter kooperieren.
only today wants Peter cooperate-*INF*
Only toDAY does Peter want to cooperate.
- b. Sogar [kooperIERen_{VP}] will Peter heute.
even cooperate-*INF* wants Peter today
Peter wants even to coOperate today.
- c. Auch [beTRUNken_{AP}] kooperiert er effizient.
also drunk cooperates he efficiently
Even when DRUNK he cooperates efficiently.
- d. Nur [daß er kooperIERT_{CP}] ist wichtig.
only that he cooperates is important
What's important is only that he coOperates.

At first glance, a few FPs, in particular *nur*, seem to also allow root clause adjunction; cf. (7), "(−)" indicating an optional prosodic break.⁶

- (7) [Sue ist hübsch, keine Frage.] Nur (−) sie TRINKT zuviel.
[Sue is pretty, no question.] Only (−) she drinks too-much
It's just that But the thing is she DRINKS too much.

⁵ Proponents range from Clément and Thümmel (1975), the first grammar to sketch the salient properties of German FPs, and Altmann (1976), the most comprehensive study of them, to Bayer (1996) and Reis and Rosengren (1997).

⁶ The pre-field counterparts of cases like (7) will be taken up in the context of section 3.5; cf. ex. (45).

But the meaning is concessive in these cases, and impossible to reconcile synchronically with the FP meaning of *nur*, which would require exclusion of all salient alternatives but the one expressed in the *nur*-clause. This justifies setting these cases apart as non-FP-uses of *nur* (alias 'conjunctive' or 'conjunction-adverbial' *nur*), thus lending credence to (5d) as well.

2.2. The 'Adverb-Only' Theory: Buring & Hartmann's (2001) Account

The standard version of the a-theory as originally proposed by Jacobs (1983) and taken over in updated form by B/H as their 'preliminary version' is given in (8).

- (8) a-theory (preliminary version; cf. B/H pp. 236–237):
 - a. FPs must be adjoined to a maximal projection.
 - b. FPs must be adjoined to an extended verbal projection (= EVP).
 - c. FPs must c-command the focus.
 - d. FPs are as close to the focus as possible. (= 'Closeness constraint')

This formulation differs from the m-theory in three respects: (i) FP adjunction is categorially restricted to EVPs (8b), i.e., the maximal projections marked in (9) below; (ii) there is no restriction against root-clause adjunction; (iii) there is an additional Closeness restriction (8d). As already mentioned, the crucial difference is (i); we will see that it also accounts for (ii) and (iii).

- (9) Adjunction sites licensed by the a-theory (8a+8b):

[CP XP [C' V [IP... [VP ... [VP ... [VP ...]]]]]

Why (8b) then? The classic motivation for it is Jacobs' 'no nominal adjunction' argument, which is based on the following observations (Jacobs 1983: 42ff.): FPs do not adjoin (i) to DPs inside PPs nor inside complex DPs (10)–(11), (ii) to extraposed constituents (12)–(13).

- (10) * Luise wurde von nur/ auch/ sogar ihrem ARZT vor dem Rauchen gewarnt.
Luise was by only/also/ even her doctor about the smoking warned

(√Luise wurde nur/auch/sogar von ihrem ARZT vor dem Rauchen gewarnt)

Luise was warned only/also/even by her DOCTOR that smoking was dangerous.

- (11) * Luise hat das Haus nur/ auch/ sogar des NACHbarn gekauft.
Luise has the house only/ also/ even the neighbour's bought

(√Luise hat nur/auch/sogar das Haus des NACHbarn gekauft)
Luise only/also/even bought the NEIGHbour's house.

- (12) * weil er bedauerte, nur/ auch/sogar daß GERda nicht da war.
since he regretted only/also/even that Gerda not there was
(√Nur/auch/sogar daß GERda nicht da war, bedauerte er)
Since he regretted only/also/even that GERda wasn't there

- (13) ?? Er ist zu Hause geblieben nur wegen des WETTERS.
He is at home stayed only because of the weather
(√Er ist zu Hause geblieben wegen des Wetters)
He stayed at home only because of the WEATHER.

Since DP-/PP-internal and extraposed positions unambiguously determine the category of the respective XPs as non-verbal, the a-theory but not the m-theory predicts that cases like (10)–(13) are unacceptable. (Note that for Jacobs, unlike B/H, subordinate CPs are considered to be nominal categories.) Moreover, (10)–(13) show that the XP adjoined to by the FP is not automatically identical to the focussed constituent as the m-theory would have it.

However, as is well-known, assumption (8b) also has less welcome consequences, which the m-theoretical counterpart (5b) does not have.⁷

First, as already mentioned, (8b) inevitably causes a violation of the V2-constraint: Since FP adjunction to all but maximal EVPs is disallowed, cf. (9), clause-initial FP-XP cases like (1), (2), and (6) *must* be assigned V3-structures like (14a) rather than V2-structures like (14b).

⁷ For objections one and two see König (1991) and Bayer (1996); the third one is from Reis and Rosengren (1997).

- (14) *Analysis of clause-initial FP-XP-structures:*
nur PETER kooperierte heute

only Peter cooperated today

- a. [CP nur [CP PETER [C kooperierte [... [heute ...]]] ...]] [a-theory/(8b)]
b. [CP [nur PETER] [C kooperierte [... [heute ...]]] ...] [m-theory/(5b)]

Jacobs acknowledged this consequence (1983:49f.), yet accepted it on the strength of the 'no nominal adjunction' argument. But since no independent evidence was provided for structures like (14a), this consequence has always been considered problematic if not fatal for the a-theory.

Second, (8b) predicts wrongly that non-adjacent constellations of FP and focus as in (15) are okay, since the focus condition (8c) = (5c) is fulfilled, cf. (15), whereas (5b) correctly rules it out, cf. (15b): the FP does not c-command the focus.

- (15) *Nur Peter kooperierte mit der POLIZEI.
only Peter cooperated with the police

- a. structure assigned by a-theory/(8b):
[nur [Peter [kooperierte, [mit der POLIZEI]]].
b. structure assigned by m-theory/(5b):
*[[nur [Peter]] [kooperierte mit der POLIZEI]].

Third, a standard condition on extraction is that only constituents, not constituent strings can be extracted. If so, (8b) but not (5b) predicts wrongly that (16) is out; cf. (16a) vs. (16b).

- (16) Nur mit der POLIZEI glaube ich, daß er t kooperierte.
only with the police believe I that he t cooperated
It was only with the POLICE that I believe he cooperated,
a. structure assigned by a-theory/(8b):
*[Nur]_i [mit der POLIZEI]_j glaube ich, daß er t_i t_j kooperierte.
b. structure assigned by m-theory/(5b):
[Nur mit der POLIZEI]_i glaube ich, daß er t_i kooperierte.

Jacobs did not directly address cases like (15)–(16). But he did establish a principle roughly equivalent to (8d) for semantic purposes that would have helped deal with them as well (see below, section 3.2). This, however, was never really appreciated, thus contributing to the general non-acceptance of Jacobs' theory.

As already said, B/H's FP-theory is essentially an updated version of Jacobs', and thus at first glance open to the same objections. But B/H make two decisive moves to counter them.

First, they stress the syntactic importance of the Closeness condition (8d), showing that it kills the argument against (8b) based on (15): Obviously, the FP is not as close to the focus in (15a) as it could be (there are closer EVPs), hence (8d) is violated, so (15a) is ruled out even if (8b) is maintained. But (8d) (in conjunction with the argument cited right below) also voids the argument based on (16): An extracted constituent is clause-initial, hence (8d) requires that the FP associated with it be clause-initial, for the root CP is the EVP closest to the focus.

Second, and most importantly, B/H not only claim Jacobs' 'no nominal adjunction' data as support for the a-theory (pp. 233–234, 246) but also produce a powerful new argument in its favor showing that structures like (14a) resulting from clause-external FP adjunction are really needed: the 'no reconstruction' argument. It runs like this:

(17) B/H's 'no reconstruction' argument (2001: 259–263).⁸

"DPs can undergo reconstruction in German [17a], but FPs even in cases when associated with and adjacent to a DP that undergoes reconstruction, cannot [17b]. Thus it follows that the FP and the DP do not form a constituent." (p. 259).

a. [Einen Fehler]_i hat vermutlich jeder t_i gemacht.
[ambiguous]

a_{acc} mistake has presumably everyone_{nom} made
Presumably, everyone made a mistake.

R[reading] 1: einen > jeder

R[reading] 2: jeder > einen ('reconstruction reading')

b. Nur MARIA_i liebt jeder t_i. [unambiguous]

only Mary_{acc} loves everyone_{nom}

R1: nur > jeder (= 'only Mary is loved by everyone')

*R2: jeder > nur (= 'everyone loves only Mary')

Clearly, the absence of the reconstruction reading in (17b) is inexplicable under of the m-theory, for which *nur Maria* must have been topicalized together. But it is quite compatible with the a-theory, and

⁸ The argument works only with restrictive FPs, i.e., *nur* and its kin. But since the reasons for this are most likely semantic, the syntactic impact of the argument remains unimpaired.

given the standard assumption that only constituents move, not constituent strings, it even forces it: (17b) *must* be analyzed as containing a topicalized focussed simple DP, with the FP adjoining to the closest EVP, which is the entire clause.

The result of these two moves⁹ is that we now have two arguments that support the a-theory directly, the 'no nominal adjunction' and the 'no reconstruction' argument; and that the three major syntactic arguments against it are gone. In particular, due to the 'no reconstruction' argument, there is no way around admitting that prefinite FP + XP sequences (may) behave like a constituent string. B/H thus have a basis for claiming that the a-theory as presented in (8) is essentially correct, and that cases like (1), (2) and (6) simply have to be accepted as exceptions to the V2-constraint (see B/H, sections 2.3, 6.2).

However, as section 3 will show the issues in question are far from settled.

3. DISSECTING THE BÜRING & HARTMANN ACCOUNT

3.1. FP Adjunction to Root Clauses and V3

Let me start with the most important point made by B/H: Given standard assumptions, examples like (17b) show conclusively that FP adjunction to root clauses exists, contrary to what m-theoretical accounts take for granted, i.e., assumption (5d). The point is strengthened by looking at Left-Dislocation structures like (18) mimicking the diagnostic ±reconstruction constellation.

(18) Nur die MARIA_i, die_i liebt jeder t_i.
only the Mary, this-one loves everyone
Only MARY is loved by everyone.

a. structure assigned by m-theory:

[CP[DP nur [DP die Maria]]_i [CP die_i ...

b. structure assigned by a-theory:

[CP nur [CP [DP die Maria]]_i [CP die_i ...

If *nur die Maria* were just one dislocated constituent as implied by the m-theory (18a), the sentence should be out, for left dislocation does not

⁹ B/H also deal with two semantic arguments that have been frequently invoked in favor of an m-theory (cf. pp. 235–236, 253–257) arguing that they have no force. They are immaterial to the discussion here.

work with universally quantified DPs; cf. (19a,b). But (18) is okay, and is clearly interpreted analogously to (17b) implying that the anaphor *die* in the pre-field refers to the preceding DP without the FP.¹⁰

- (19) a. *alle Olympiasieger, die liebt jeder.
all olympic. champions, the(se)_{acc} loves everyone_{nom}
 (cf. *all olympic champions, they are loved by everyone)
- b. *niemanden außer Maria, die liebt jeder.
nobody but Mary, the_{fem,acc} loves everyone_{nom}
 (cf. *nobody but Mary, she is loved by everyone)

However, contrary to what B/H claim (p. 269f), the issue of FP adjunction to root alias V2 clauses is *not* identical to the the issue of V2- vs. V3-clause structure. First, there are well-known cases of optional adjunction at the leftmost clause periphery, among others Left Dislocation, leaving the basic V2-nature of the clause unaffected. Since FPs occur to the left of left-dislocated constituents as in (18), leftmost FPs seem to be just one of them. Second, and, given the first point, expectably so, the FP cases in question cannot be likened (as claimed by B/H p. 245/n. 13) to core cases of known V2-constraint violations such as (20a). If they were, cases like (20b–d) where FPs are added to the preverbal constituents in question would have to be interpreted as V4- and V5-structures, which is rather implausible.

- (20) a. Zum zweiten Mal die Weltmeisterschaft errang Clark 1965.¹¹
to.the second time the world.championship won Clark 1965
 'Clark won the world championship for the second time in 1965.'
- b. Zum zweiten Mal *nur* die Vizeweltmeisterschaft errang Clark 1965.
- c. *Sogar* zum zweiten Mal die Vizeweltmeisterschaft errang Clark 1965.

¹⁰ It is an intriguing question whether this use of *nur* can be identified with the so-called conjunctive *nur* in (7) (as suggested by one of the reviewers). Prima facie this seems unlikely (cf. the meanings of (6) vs. (7)) but there is a suggestive complementary distribution in that the concessive = conjunctive reading seems to require late focus, in other words is practically missing (or indistinguishable from the 'no reconstruction reading') when the pre-field constituent is focussed. I have to leave this question to further research.

¹¹ (20a) is an authentic example cited in Beneš (1971: 162). For an extended corpus, cf. Müller (2004).

- d. *Sogar* zum zweiten Mal *nur* die Vizeweltmeisterschaft errang Clark 1965.

(even) to-the second time (only) the vice-championship won Clark_{nom} 1965.

'(Even) the second time, in 1965, Clark won (only) the vice-world championship.'

In other words, the controversy about preverbal FP-XP structures does *not* turn on V2 vs. V3 but exclusively on what kinds of XPs FPs may adjoin to in German. Whether cases like (20b–d) can be handled on the basis of multiple root clause adjunction or, contra a-theory, lead to admitting FP adjunction to genuine DPs after all, is a question I leave open here.

This settled, let us tackle the cornerstones of B/H's argumentation directly.

3.2. Closeness – a Grammatical Condition?

So far I have simply accepted that Closeness (= assumption 8d) holds. But this is more than doubtful.

First, there are systematic semantic exceptions to Closeness, caused by intervening scope-taking items. Jacobs acknowledged these by relativizing his 'principle of maximally late position' of FPs (1983:113) to mean "as late a position as syntactically *and* semantically possible." Thus, if the FP were as close to its focus in (21) as syntactically possible, it would alter the intended scope relations and lead to a different meaning (22), hence is semantically impossible.

- (21) a. Gerd wollte *nur* [mit jemandem [SPRECHen]].
Gerd wanted only with someone speak
 Gerd only wanted to SPEAK to somebody.
- b. Gerd hat *auch* [freiwillig [das GeSCHIRR gewaschen]].
Gerd has also voluntarily the dishes washed
 Gerd also volunteered to wash the DISHes.
- (22) a. Gerd wollte [mit jemandem *nur* [SPRECHen]]. [21a≠22a]
Gerd wanted with someone only speak
 Gerd wanted to only SPEAK with somebody.

- b. Gerd hat [freiwillig auch [das GeSCHIRR gewaschen]].
 [21b≠22b]
Gerd has voluntarily also the dishes washed
 Gerd volunteered to also wash the DIshes.

Clearly, B/H have to allow for semantic exceptions to Closeness as well. But there are also syntactic exceptions, cf. (23): If the related focussed XP is in the middle field, then non-adjacent FP placement (23a,b) is often possible although perhaps dispreferred vis-à-vis adjacent placement (23a'-b'); sometimes, however, non-adjacent placement is the only option – although a scope-taker intervenes (23c-c').¹² In all these cases the non-adjacent FP seems to target the leftmost edge of VPs.

- (23) a. Ich hab *nur* darin/in dem Buch [geLESeN] (nicht RUMgemalt).
 a'. Ich hab darin/in dem Buch *nur* [geLESeN] (nicht RUMgemalt).
I have (only) therein/in the book (only) read (not scribbled)
 I've only READ it/the book, not scribbled in it.
- b. Er hat *auch* dem Paul [ein BUCH] gekauft (nicht nur eine CD).
 b'. Er hat dem Paul *auch* [ein BUCH] gekauft (nicht nur eine CD).
he has (also) the Paul_{dat} (also) a book bought (not only a CD)
 He also bought a BOOK for Paul, not only a CD.
- c. Er wollte *nur* ein bißchen [in den GARTen] gehen (nicht auch ins DORF).
 c'. *Er wollte ein bißchen *nur* [in den GARTen] gehen (nicht auch ins DORF).
he wanted (only) a bit (only) into the garden go (not also into the village)
 He only wanted to go into the GARDen for a while (but not into the village as well).

But even more remarkable is that non-adjacency between FP and its related XP is licit *only* in the middle field; non-adjacency involving preverbal constellations like (15), repeated here as (24a-a'), is always bad, even if the intervener is a scope-taking item (24b-b').

¹² I owe this exciting example to an anonymous reviewer.

- (24) a. **Nur* Peter kooperierte [mit der PoliZEI].
 a'. Peter kooperierte *nur* [mit der PoliZEI].
(only) Peter cooperated (only) with the police
- b. **Nur* mit jemand sollte [geSPROCHen] werden.
 b'. Mit jemand sollte *nur* [geSPROCHen] werden. [24b≠24b']
(only) with someone should (only) spoken-to be
 The idea was to (just) speak (just) with someone.

From the point of view of B/H's a-theory this is a very strange picture. Particularly strange is the discrepancy between (23) and (24): If Closeness can be relaxed in favor of FP adjunction to (E)VPs in the middle field, why not in favor of FP adjunction to the next higher EVP, the root CP? With respect to intervening scope-taking items, this even leads to an outright contradiction; cf. (21)–(22) vs. (24b,b').

From the point of view of the m-theory, however, this picture is much less strange. In particular, the discrepancy between (23) and (24) follows from the shared focus condition (5c)/(8c) if coupled with assumption (25). Since, as a rule, XPs in the middle field are also under the roof of VPs, thus satisfying (25), the focus condition is satisfied no matter whether the FP immediately adjoins to its focussed XP or to a VP dominating it. C-command of a preverbal FP, however, is limited to just the adjacent XP, so the fact that this is not a possible non-adjacent FP position is a mere consequence of (5c)/(8c). Non-adjacent FP-adjunction to CP, which would also satisfy (5c)/(8c) for constellations like (24), is ruled out by (25).

(25) Non-adjacent adjunction sites for FPs must be VPs.¹³

From the perspective of the m-theory, then, German FP syntax is much closer to English where the occurrence of FPs in adnominal as well as adverbial positions is undisputed; cf. (26) (=B/H, p. 29: (1)). Note that non-adjacent positions of FPs in English are likewise

¹³ (25) excludes extended V-projections from non-adjacent FP adjunction. For CP this is obviously true; regarding IP, note in support of (25) that non-adjacent FPs may not appear to the left of subjects that have arguably moved into SpecI (the modal particle marking the VP boundary), cf. the respective variant of (23b): **weil auch Peter ja dem Paul [ein BUCH] gekauft hat*. – Note also that cases like *Nicht nur hat Gerd abgewaschen, sondern ...* ('not only has G. washed-the-dishes but...') which look like adjunctions to some EVP, have a special status, possibly related to so-called conjunctive *nur*. This is confirmed by the fact that the behavior of the English equivalents is also exceptional in forcing inversion, cf. *Not only did Gerd do the dishes but ...*

restricted by (25). The main difference would be then that German has a strong *stylistic* preference for closeness between FP and its XP if there is a choice.

- (26) a. I only read [a NOVe]_F.
 = [IP I [VP only [VP read [a NOVe]]]]. 'adverbial FP position'
 b. I read only [a NOVe]_F.
 = [IP I [VP read [DP only [DP a NOVe]]]]. 'adnominal FP position'

This, I think, is a much more plausible picture of FP placement in German. But what it amounts to is clear: (i) Closeness has to be given up, so the two objections to the a-theory that could only be rebutted with its help (see section 2.2) regain their force; (ii) the distribution of (im)possible non-adjacent FP positions fits much better with the m-theory.

3.3. Should the a-Theory Pertain to EVPs or Non-Arguments or (N)Either?

B/H's a-theory makes an important prediction I have not stressed so far. Since FPs are said by (8b) to combine with EVPs of all kinds, the corresponding FP + EVP-topicalizations should all have two readings, the surface reading *and* the reconstruction reading. However, as B/H themselves point out, argumental CP-constituents, which are EVPs in their theory, do not live up to this prediction, cf. (27) (= B/H, p. 264: (62)).

- (27) Nur [daß er_j MarijuAna raucht]_i, versucht jeder_j t_i zu verheimlichen.
only that he marijuana smokes tries everybody to hide
 √Reading 1: nur > jeder (the only thing everybody tries to hide is
 that he smokes marijuana)
 *Reading 2: jeder > nur (everybody tries to hide only one thing:
 that he smokes marijuana)

This leads them to change their theory to (28), restricting FP adjunction to non-arguments.

- (28) *B/H's Particle Theory, final version (2001: 266):*
 a. FPs must be adjoined to a maximal projection.
 b. FPs must be adjoined to a *non-argument*.
 c. FPs must c-command the focus.
 d. FPs are as close to the focus as possible.

As support for (28b) they enlist primarily (i) the fact, well-known since Bayer (1996), that adverbial but not argumental CPs allow FP

adjunction when extraposed, cf. (29) (=B/H 268: (68a)), (ii) that FPs abhor adjunction to (CP) complements in general, cf. the N-, A-, P-complement cases (30) (= B/H 267: (66)).

- (29) a. *Man hat gesagt, nur daß der Kanzler zu dick sei.
one has said only that the chancellor too fat be
 (cf. ? It was said only that the chancellor was too fat)
 b. Karl hat die Fenster mit Styropor verklebt,
Karl has the windows with styrofoam glued
 nur damit er seine Ruhe hat.
only that he his peace has
 Karl glued the windows with styrofoam just in order to have peace.
 (30) a. *die Behauptung nur daß Martha gekommen ist ...
the claim only that Martha come is
 (cf. *the claim only that Martha has come)
 b. *Ich bin froh nur daß Martha gekommen ist
I am glad only that Martha come is
 (cf. *I am glad only that Martha has come)
 c. *Sie ging, ohne nur daß ich wußte warum.
she went without only that I knew why

In addition, B/H cite AP cases which are ambiguous in the diagnostic reconstruction constellation; cf. (31) (=B/H p. 274-275: (80)). Since an AP is *prima facie* not an EVP, and in the case of (31) also clearly a non-argument, this also seems to support (28b) over (8b).

- (31) Nur [AP mit EIern belegt]_i schmeckt es nicht t_i so gut.
only with eggs topped tastes it not so good
 √R1 ([CP nur [CP AP C⁰ ...]]) nur > nicht
 'the only way it doesn't taste as good is with eggs on it'
 √R2 ([CP [AP nur AP] C⁰ ...]) nicht > nur
 'if there are only eggs on it it doesn't taste as good'

On closer inspection, however, revision (28b) turns out to cause many more problems than it solves. The reason this does not become immediately obvious is that B/H focus on selected cases, cf. their explication of 'non-argument' in the abstract (p. 229): "in recent terms this means ... VPs, IPs, APs and root CPs, but never ... argument DPs or argument CPs." But this explication is neither exhaustive (it does not deal with PPs) nor consistent. Not only CPs but also DPs and PPs can figure as non-arguments, as adverbials or as DP/PP/AP internal

modifiers. Moreover, a case could be made for the occasional argument status of VPs (modal verbs), IPs (raising verbs), and APs (selected by verbs like *sich verhalten* 'behave', *zumute sein* 'feel') in German.

This neglect proves fatal for (28b). Concentrating on \pm argumental NPs/DPs, PPs, CPs as the crucial cases, its predictions fail in many instances. Some of these failures are noted by B/H themselves (pp. 266–68: notes 26–29); cf. (32).

- (32) a. *Der Mann, sogar der einen HUT hatte, ging weg. (n.29)
the man even who a hat had went away
 b. *als ich den Mann sah, sogar der einen HUT hatte (n.29)
when I the man saw even who a hat had

But there are many more. Consider first (33), where the DP- and AP-internal hosts of FPs are of like category (PP or DP) but differ in argument (33a–c) vs. non-argument status (33a'–c'). (28b) predicts a sharp contrast in grammaticality: (33a–c) should be bad and (33a'–c') good. But there is none – either pair is about equally (un)acceptable.

- (33) a. ? das Warten nur auf Godot
the waiting only for Godot
 a'. ? das Warten nur auf dem Bahnhof
the waiting only at the station
 b. ?*der Autor sogar des Erfolgsbuchs
the author even (of) the bestseller_{gen}
 b'. ?*der Autor sogar des Springerverlags
the author even (of) the Springer.Publishing.house_{gen}
 c. stolz nur auf sich selber (wollte er sein)
proud only of himself self (wanted he be)
 He wanted to be proud of himself only.
 c'. stolz nur im Unglück (will niemand sein)
proud only in unhappiness (wants nobody ~be)
 Nobody wants to be proud only in unhappiness.

Nor do extraposed argumental vs. adverbial PPs behave as predicted; cf. (34a,b) vs. (34a',b') – both are again about equally (un)acceptable.

- (34) a. ?* Maria ist so stolz gewesen auch auf ihren GARTen.
Maria is so proud been also of her garden
 (cf. ?? Mary has been so proud also of her GARDen)
 a'. ?* Er ist so unglücklich gewesen auch auf ZYPern.
he is so unhappy been also in Cyprus
 (cf. ?? He has been so unhappy also in CYprus)

- b. ? Eigentlich sind wir so richtig glücklich gewesen
actually_[modal Pt] are we so rightly happy been
 nur über POLen.
only about Poland
 b'. ? Eigentlich sind wir so richtig glücklich gewesen
actually_[modal Pt] are we so rightly happy been
 nur in POLen.
only in Poland
 In actual fact, we've been really happy only about/in Poland.

The worst surprise, however, is the behavior of certain DP/PP- and even CP-adverbials – as far as I have checked it out, usually time and place adverbials – when subjected to the '(no) reconstruction' diagnostics; cf. (35)–(36). According to (28b), (35)–(36) should have the reconstruction reading (R2) besides the surface reading (R1), but they do not.

- (35) Nur in POLen/ nur während des SOMmers war jeder glücklich.
only in Poland/ only during the summer was everybody happy
 $\sqrt{R1}$: nur > jeder (it was only in Poland/during the summer
 that everybody was happy)
 $*R2$: jeder > nur (everybody was happy only in Poland/during
 the summer)
 (36) Nur wenn es WINter ist, liest jeder viel.
only when it winter is reads everybody much
 $\sqrt{R1}$: nur > jeder (it is only in winter that everybody reads a lot)
 $*R2$: jeder > nur (everybody reads a lot only in winter)

The conclusion is obvious: According to B/H's own criteria, cf. (33)–(36), (28b) is untenable. Since by the same criteria (8b) is also untenable, cf. (27) and (29)–(30), both versions of the a-theory presented by B/H are incorrect, and this in mutually incompatible ways.

Before going on, let me briefly address the 'no nominal adjunction' argument that is directly involved here. Jacobs himself had conceded (1983: 64–72) 'adarticle' and 'adpredicative' FP uses as exceptions to it, cf. (37); but these could be handled by the switch from (8b) to (28b).

- (37) a. in nur EINer Minute
in only one minute
 b. als nur MÄßig begabter Mensch
as only slightly gifted person
 as a person of only Limited talents

Crucially, however, there are also FP placements violating (8b) and (28b) at the same time, cf. the FP adjunctions to argument DPs/PPs in XP-internal or extraposed position in (33)–(34) above, and the examples in (38), which involve core as well as less prominent FP items.¹⁴

- (38) a. Die Teilnahme *auch* [ältererStuDENTen] ist ausdrücklich erwünscht.
the participation also of older students is explicitly desired
- b. Mit *nur* [StuDIeren] schafft man das nie.
with only studying accomplishes one this never
 This won't get done by merely STUDYing
- c. Gefordert wird die Anwesenheit *wenigstens* [vor allem [der ELtern].
required is the presence of at least [above all the parents
- d. die Nominierung *ausgerechnet/gerade* [eines Kandidaten aus TEXas]
the nomination of.all.things/especially (of) a candidate from Texas

(38) taken together with Jacobs' original data (10)–(13) and the other data cited in this section show that (un)acceptability of nominal FP-adjunction is mixed in a way that neither version of the a-theory nor the m-theory can handle by itself¹⁵ – additional factors, most likely (also) nonsyntactic ones, must be brought into play to complement or replace those figuring in (8b)/(28b). Neither should one assume that in search of the correct theory of FP placement (8b)/(28b) is a better starting point than (5b) – if the best theory is one in which placement restrictions are effected by interacting general syntactic and semantic principles, it is at least as likely the other way around.

In any case, it is clear that the 'no nominal adjunction' argument has no force either way.

3.4. Really No Reconstruction Readings with (Argumental) DPs/PPs?

So far I have accepted at face value the 'no reconstruction' argument by which XPs divide into those that allow FP adjunction and those

¹⁴ For further counterexamples see Hoeksema and Zwarts (1991), Bayer (1996), Reis and Rosengren (1997). Concerning the special positional behavior of FPs like *gerade/eben/genau* etc. cf. Altmann (1978: 36–39).

¹⁵ This is underlined by the fact (already pointed out in Hoeksema and Zwarts 1991) that English, a recognized 'mixed' language (see above 3.2), does not always tolerate FPs within PPs or before argumental CPs either; cf. *I argued with (*only) Bill, if I had told you yesterday (*only) that Bill will come.*

that don't, the distinctive feature being the 'reconstruction' reading. Let me now examine this purported split using examples for which both versions of B/H's a-theory make the same predictions: non-argumental EVPs on the one hand ($\sqrt{\text{reconstruction}}$ reading), argumental DPs/PPs on the other ($\sqrt{\text{*reconstruction}}$ reading).

The only cases for which B/H acknowledge and discuss at length both readings are the AP cases (31) and (39a), but they could just as well have cited the bona fide EVP cases (39b–c) which have exactly parallel readings.

- (39) a. Nur [AP mit Eiern belegt]_i ist es nicht t_i.
only with eggs topped is it not
 $\sqrt{R1}$ ([CP nur [CP AP C⁰ ...]]) nur > nicht
 'the only thing missing are eggs on it'
 $\sqrt{R2}$ ([CP [AP nur AP] C⁰ ...]) nicht > nur
 'it doesn't have only eggs on it'
- b. Nur [VP mit Eiern belegt]_i wird es nicht t_i.
only with eggs topped becomes it not
- c. Nur [VP mit Eiern belegen]_i will ich es nicht t_i.
only with eggs topped want I it not

What is of interest here is B/H's comment on these examples (p. 274): 'Single (nuclear) stress on *Eiern* promotes the [CP FP CP] reading, while nuclear stress within the IP (say on *nicht*, with a secondary stress on *Eiern*) favors the [AP FP AP] reading.' However, "promotes" and "favors" is an understatement; as far as I can see, the intonational distinction is practically obligatory for getting both readings (rise accent on the FP being particularly effective). And on closer inspection it is quite clear that the intonational help required by the reconstruction reading is the famous I-contour, which, with assertional V2-clauses, indicates something like topic status for the rise-accented first constituent.

This gets us to the decisive question: What happens with argumental FP-XP structures in the pre-field under the same intonational conditions? Consider first the minimal pair in (40): B/H's theory predicts in both versions that only (40a) has the reconstruction reading. But is there really a difference between (40a) and (40b) with respect to this reading when tested under the same intonational variation? For me there is not; perhaps I would prefer using (40a) with the I-contour but it's a matter of degree, no more.

- (40) a. Nur [_{VP} mit EIern belegt]_i wird es nicht t_i. (= (38b);
with both readings R1,R2)
b. Nur [_{PP} mit EIern]_i wird es nicht t_i belegt. (PP = argument of *belegen*)

Let us now reconsider example (17b), on the basis of which the 'no reconstruction' argument was introduced. Interestingly, it involves the quantifier *jeder*. Now, reconstruction readings involving FPs and *jeder* are generally hard if not impossible to get, cf. (41):

- (41) a. Nur [mit EIern belegt]_i ist jedes Brot t_i.?? Reconstruction reading??
only with eggs topped is every bread
b. Nur [mit EIern]_i ist jedes Brot t_i belegt. " "
only with eggs is every bread topped

So a fair test of the split predicted by B/H's theory with respect to the reconstruction reading should always involve the same favorable quantifiers, i.e., negative quantifiers.

Now, a reviewer of B/H's ms. had already suggested that their argument does not go through if negative quantifiers are involved, his examples being versions of (17b) like (42). B/H deny this; see their comment cited below (42) (= p. 260f./n. 21).

- (42) a. Nur MaRIA\liebt keiner. a'. /NUR MaRIA liebt KEIner\
only Maria loves no.one_{nom}
Only Mary was loved by nobody.
b. Nur FLEISCH\ aß niemand. b'. /NUR FLEISCH aß NIEmand\
only meat_{acc} ate no.one_{nom}
Nobody ate only meat.
Readings for a/b: for a' / b':
√R1 nur > neg *R1 nur > neg
*R2 neg > nur √R2 neg > nur

'An anonymous reviewer reports consistent judgments of inverted scope on these [=42a] and similar examples [=42b], especially if *Fleisch* 'meat' receives a secondary accent, and *niemand* 'nobody' bears the main accent. We believe that the oddity of such an example on the FP wide scope reading can be explained if the secondary accent is taken to indicate an s-topic along the lines of Büring (1997) (the effect is even more striking with an accent on *nur* itself). But even with this intonational pattern we still fail to get an inverted reading'.

But as far as I have tested it their denial is unjustified – given the requisite intonation speakers without theoretical prejudices seem to get the inverted reading without problems.

The consequence is clear and poses a dilemma for B/H's account: By virtue of the surface readings, the '(no) reconstruction' argument supports the a-theory; by virtue of the reconstruction readings that show up under certain prosodic conditions, it supports likewise the m-theory. So retaining the argument is self-defeating, but so is giving it up, because then the only positive evidence for the preverbal FP-XP structures assigned by the a-theory would be gone.

In any case, the result is that the a-theory is back to square one: None of B/H's arguments in its favor, nor their rebuttals of the respective counterarguments, have survived.

3.5. Postposed FPs, or: Are FPs Really Adjuncts?

Let me finally turn to FPs following their co-constituent. B/H state explicitly that they are incompatible with the a-theory but argue on the basis of cases like (43a) (= B/H p. 240: (18a)) that they are marginal and do not belong to the standard register of German usage their analysis aims to cover (p. 240).

- (43) (*) Seine SCHWESTer nur überlebte den Unfall.
his sister only survived the accident
Only his SISTER survived the accident.

But is their exclusion justified? To be sure, FP postposition is as a rule stylistically marked vis-à-vis pre-position, and not all FPs or related XPs allow it (see Altmann 1976, still the best source on the issue). But this does not automatically make it 'nonstandard'; cf. the many authentic examples from newspapers (see *i.e.* Müller 2004) that seem neither marked nor degraded. Particularly frequent is FP postposition with adverbials, especially pure adverbs, as in (44a,b) (see Altmann 1976: 233), but there are also argumental cases; cf. (44c,d).

- (44) a. *Ein einziges Mal nur* haben /sie/ ihr Haus /.../
a one time only have| they| their home|.../
unbewacht zurückgelassen.
unguarded behind-left
Only once did they leave their house behind unguarded.
b. *Ungenügend nur* hat sich die Bundeswehrführung der Tatsache gestellt, daß /.../
unsatisfactorily only has the Bundeswehr leadership the fact confronted that |.../
The Bundeswehr command confronted the fact that /.../ in a rather unsatisfactory way.

c. *Eine Sekunde nur* hat den /.../ Kampf /.../ zunichte gemacht.
a second only has the fight to-nothing made
 Just one second reduced the fight to nothing.

d. *Wir nur* haben ein Oben und Unten, ...
we only have an above and a below

We are the only ones to have an above and a below.
 (examples 15h, j, e, a in Müller 2004)

If so, a theory of German FPs must include postposed FPs. Since the a-theory doesn't, this is yet another argument against it unless postposed FPs could be excluded in some other way.

What comes to mind is to derive FP postposing from legitimate preposing by assuming movement of the adjacent XP around the FP. But, as argued by an anonymous reviewer, this movement would require a specifier as a landing site, which is only available if FPs are heads. Since this is incompatible with the a-theory (see above 2.1), the a-theory is again in a dilemma.

The situation becomes worse when checking the arguments in favor of FP adjunct status. Since only the movement analysis for postposed FPs seems viable,¹⁶ the argument just cited is strong support for the head analysis of FPs offsetting earlier arguments to the contrary.¹⁷ This leaves just the preverbal = XP occurrences of *nur*, *auch* as in (45a), also considered by B/H (p. 241), as a possible argument: If they are instances of FPs, FPs must be XPs, hence adjuncts rather than heads. Since at least preverbal *nur* clearly lacks the FP meaning, the argument might not go through, anyway. But

¹⁶ The only alternative would be to assume that FPs are free to left- as well as right-adjoin to (certain) XPs. (Note that this would not help the a-theory, postposition being basic.) But so far there is next to no evidence for it: All the parallels I checked out (*die Burg dort* 'the castle there' / *dort die Burg, der Hut von Ute* 'the hat of Ute' / *von Ute der Hut, hinein ins Bad* 'in into-the bath' / *ins Bad hinein, gestern kurz vor 10 Uhr* 'yesterday shortly before 10 o'clock' / *kurz vor 10 Uhr gestern*) could just as well, or better, be handled by a movement-to-Spec analysis.

¹⁷ Reis and Rosengren (1997) rejected this analysis (proposed by Bayer 1996) among other reasons because FPs lack essential head properties (no projection of category features, no categorial selection of complements), and no real syntactic argument in favor of head status was then available. As for their argument from preverbal *auch*, see below.

even if it did, its use by the a-theory would be self-defeating, for these "FPs" violate not only (8a) but also Closeness (=8d); cf. (45a) vs. (45b), which have the same meaning but different "FP" positions.

(45) a. [_{CP} Auch/ Nur [_C trinken manche immer [zuVIEL] Bier.]]
also/ only drink some always too-much beer
 It's also/only that some people always drink TOO much beer.

b. [_{CP}Es [_C trinken auch/(nur) manche immer [zuVIEL] Bier.]]

In sum, postposed FPs deal a final blow to the a-theory (i) by their very existence, and (ii) by lending credence to the assumption that FPs are heads.

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In reviewing B/H's 'adverb-only' theory of German FPs, I have concentrated on the syntactic aspects, concerning which considerable problems have come to light:

- Both versions of the central restriction on possible FP adjunction sites are untenable. Since there are counterexamples with respect to their common core as well as the areas where they diverge, there is no hope of repairing either.
- The Closeness condition, which is crucial for fending off relevant arguments against a-theories, is spurious. Accounting for the facts of German FP placement on the basis of the m-theory yields a more plausible English-like picture.
- The '(no) reconstruction' argument does support the a-theory over the m-theory by showing that FPs adjoin to root clauses. But when properly reconstructed it also shows that FPs adjoin to *all* kinds of XPs, thus supporting the m-theory as well.
- The a-theory cannot handle postposed FPs. Moreover, a proper analysis of these cases seems to force a head analysis for FPs which is against the spirit of the a-theory.

These findings force two conclusions upon us. First, the 'adverb-only' theory advanced by B/H is seriously defective; given the kind of defects noted, it cannot be cured but only given up. Second, and more importantly, we cannot just return to the traditional 'mixed' theory. On the one hand, given the 'no reconstruction'

data, FP adjunction to root clauses must be in principle allowed. On the other hand, there must be complementary devices to account for the restrictions on FP placement regarding, in the first place, FP-XP co-constituency, but also nonadjacent placement or postposition of FPs. In view of the incongruous findings above, these will probably not be simple syntactic stipulations like (8b) or (28b) but more general principles interacting with particle syntax (as already proposed by Bayer 1996). However, finding the correct solution will not only require theoretical but also considerable descriptive efforts. What we know about the crucial regularities that FP theories turn on is extremely fragmentary, often no more than anecdotal.

In sum, a new comprehensive attempt at German FP syntax is needed. If this paper can inspire such an attempt, its largely negative insights might after all have a positive effect.

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