



Adverbial clauses and prosody

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Organizational matters

- Send us your slides for upload to <https://www.lukasz-jedrzejowski.eu/adverbial-clauses-2/>
- Please fill in a form for refunds, sign it, and hand it back to us (we expect some refund delays due to staff shortage).

DFG Deutsche
Forschungsgemeinschaft



1 Meal

1 Drink

1 Dessert/Fruit

VALID ON: March 12-13, 2026

REDEEMABLE AT: Mensa Griebnitzsee

Figure 1: Lunch at Mensa downstairs (2x)



Figure 2: Internet

Alternative: UP-conference (contact Liridona/Elisabeth/Jan)

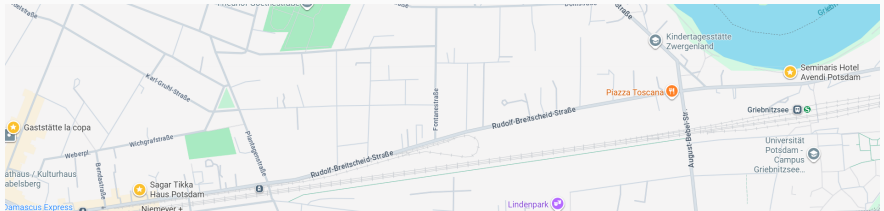


Figure 3: Dinner 1 Sagar Tikka Haus, Dinner 2 La Copa (S Babelsberg)

We cover the costs, **except alcohol** (and tips). Please sign your attendance.

DFG-Network: overview

- full title: *Adverbial clauses and subordinate dependency relationships*
- funding institution: German Science Foundation (DFG)
- project format: scientific network
- funding period: 11/2021 – 10/2024 (extension: 04/2026)
- network members: 19 regular network members, 27 associate network members, and 12 invited speakers
- number of conferences: 6

Cologne x1 (May 2022), Tübingen x1 (January 2023), Göttingen x1 (October 2023), Berlin x2 (April 2024 & March 2026), Hamburg x1 (October 2025)

- meeting #1: *Adverbial clauses between subordination and coordination*
(May 2022, Cologne)
- meeting #2: *Diachrony and development of adverbial clauses*
(January 2023, Tübingen)
- meeting #3: *Variation of adverbial clauses*
(October 2023, Göttingen)
- meeting #4: *Adverbial clauses as argument clauses*
(April 2024, Berlin)
- meeting #5: *Adverbial clauses as relative clauses*
(October 2025, Hamburg)
- meeting #6: *Adverbial clauses: New horizons*
[aka: *Tell us something new about adverbial clauses*]
(March 2026, Berlin)

- workshop #1: *On the Syntax of Adverbial Clauses in Insular Scandinavian and Övdalian* (Cologne, April 2022; together with Ásgrímur Angantýsson)
- workshop #2: *Adverbial Clauses in Creole and Pidgin Languages* (Göttingen, October 2023)
- workshop #3: *Mood Alternation in Adverbial Clauses* (Berlin, April 2024; together with Andreas Pankau)
- workshop #4: *Verb-first Adverbial Clauses. A Cross-linguistic Perspective* (Hamburg, October 2025; together with Werner Frey)
- **workshop #5: *Adverbial Clauses and Prosody* (Potsdam, March 2026; together with Jan Fließbach)**

- special issue in *Linguistics Vanguard: Causal clauses and their diachronic suitability for processes of language change* ed. by Łukasz Jędrzejowski & Constanze Fleczonek, open access (5 papers are downloadable, 3 papers are currently in typesetting)
- collection *On the syntax of adverbial clauses in Scandinavian. A comparative perspective* ed. by Łukasz Jędrzejowski & Ásgrímur Angantýsson, book series: *Open Germanic Linguistics*, Berlin: LSP (expected to appear in June/July 2026)
- collection *On the diachrony of adverbial clauses* ed. by Łukasz Jędrzejowski, book series: *Brill's Studies in Historical Linguistics*, Leiden/Berlin: Brill (expected to appear in October 2026)

Introduction: Adverbial clauses and prosody

Overview of the literature (syntax)

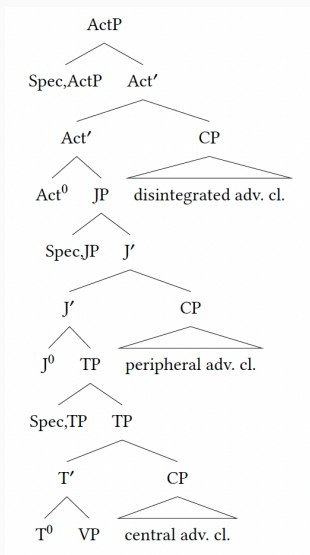


Figure 4: Possible attachment sites for adverbial clauses

Overview of the literature

Table 1: Selected tests for differentiating between the three types of adverbial clauses.

	CACs	PACs	NACs
variable binding	+	-	-
under the scope of matrix negation	+	-	-
movement to Spec-CP of the matrix clause	+	+	-
embedding together with its host clause	+	+	-
possible occurrence of weak root phenomena	-	+	+
possible occurrence of strong root phenomena	-	-	+

Overview of the literature

- variable binding

- (1) [Keiner]_i hat protestiert, als [er]_i unterbrochen wurde.
no:one have.3SG protest.PTCP when he interrupt.PTCP

PASS.AUX.3SG.PST

'No one protested when he was interrupted.'

(Frey 2011, 52, ex. 22b)

- (2) *[Fast jeder Anwesende]_i wurde bleich, da [er]_i erschrocken ist.
nearly every attendant become.3SG.PST pale since he

frighthen.PTCP be.3SG.PST

Intended: 'Almost everyone present turned pale since he was startled.' (Frey 2016, 157, ex. 6a)

Overview of the literature

- movement to the prefield position of the matrix clause

(3) [CP [Spec-CP [CP **Da** er ja nicht viel zu schleppen hat]], [C⁰ prescht] der
since he MP NEG much to haul.INFV have.3SG tear.3SG the
Micra kräftig nach vorne].
Micra forcefully to ahead

‘Since, as you know, it doesn’t have much to haul, the Micra accelerates briskly.’

- (4) Auch die Germanistik ist hiervon existenziell bedroht, **gilt**
also the German:studies be.3SG here:of existentially threatened be:regarded.3SG
sie **doch** trotz der großen wirtschaftlichen und kulturellen Bedeutung des
she MP despite the.GEN big economic and cultural meaning the.GEN
deutschsprachigen Raums für die Niederlande als unrentables Orchideenfach.
German-speaking room.GEN for the Netherlands as unprofitable Orchideenfach
‘German Studies is likewise under existential threat, as it is classified in the Netherlands as an
unprofitable niche discipline, despite the substantial economic and cultural relevance of the
German-speaking world.’
- (5) *[CP [Spec-CP [CP **Gilt** sie/die Germanistik **doch** trotz der großen wirtschaftlichen und
kulturellen Bedeutung des deutschsprachigen Raums für die Niederlande als unrentables
Orchideenfach]], [C⁰ ist] auch die Germanistik/sie hiervon existenziell bedroht].

Overview of the literature (syntax)

CACS		PACS	
<i>before/after/until</i>	(event time)	—	
<i>when</i>	(event time)	<i>when</i>	(contrast)
<i>since</i>	(event time)	<i>since</i>	(premise/cause)
<i>while</i>	(event time)	<i>while</i>	(concessive)
<i>if</i>	(event condition)	<i>if</i>	(conditional assertion)
—		<i>although</i>	(concessive)
—		<i>whereas</i>	(concessive)
<i>so that</i>	(purpose)	<i>so that</i>	(result)
<i>because</i>	(event cause/reason)	<i>because</i>	(rationale)

Figure 5: Adverbial clause types, based on Haegeman (2012, 163)

Overview of the literature

- Keep in mind, however, that not every adverbial clause should be analyzed as a central adverbial clause:

(6) central adverbial clause

Als er sein Glas in der Hand hielt, fing jeder Spieler an,
when he his glass in the.DAT hand hold.3SG.PST begin.3SG.PST every player VPTCL
die Nationalhymne mitzusingen.
the national:anthem with:to:sing.INFV
'When he was holding his glass, every player began to sing along to the national anthem.'

(7) peripheral adverbial clause

Max ging vor das Haus, **als** er wohl ein Geräusch gehört
Max go.3SG.PST in:front:of the house when he MP a noise hear.PTCP
hatte.
have.3SG.PST
'Max went outside the house when he had apparently heard a noise.' (Frey 2023, 62)

(8) non-integrated adverbial clause

Als du mit deiner Rede anfangen wolltest, wer ist dir da
when you with your.DAT talk begin.INFV want.2SG.PST who be.3SG.PST you.DAT there
sofort ins Wort gefallen?
immediately into:the word fall.PTCP
'When you were about to start your speech: who immediately interrupted you?'

Overview of the literature

- Haegeman et al. (2026, v) that "[t]he contrast between the two types of adverbial clauses is reflected in their prosody: central adverbial clauses can be prosodically integrated into the host clause; peripheral adverbial clauses cannot."
- In our view, this speculation does not hold up.
- Peripheral adverbial clauses CAN be prosodically integrated into the host clause.

Overview of the literature

- Frey (2011, 50–51) observes for German that “[...], the sentences in (9)–(11) do not allow a pause after the PACs”.

(9) **Obwohl** Hans lange im Urlaub war, wirkt er nicht erholt.
although Hans long in:the holiday be.3SG.PST appear.3SG he NEG recovered
'Although Hans was on vacation for a long time, he doesn't seem refreshed.'

(10) **Während** Hans sonst bei schönem Wetter einen Ausflug macht,
while Hans otherwise at beautiful weather an excursion make.3SG
ist er gestern zu Hause geblieben.
be.3SG he yesterday to house remained
'While Hans usually goes on an outing in nice weather, he stayed at home yesterday.'

(11) **Da** seine Frau krank ist, bleibt Hans zu Hause.
since his wife ill be.3SG remain.3SG Hans to house
'Since his wife is sick, Hans stays at home.'

- Furthermore, he argues that “the sentences in (9)–(11) can be realised with a progradient intonation, i.e. with a rising contour at the end of the PAC ('continuation rise') and with a falling contour starting on the finite verb following the adverbial clauses.” (p. 51)

Overview of the literature

- The sentences below permit the same prosodic realizations: (12) contains a central adverbial clause, while (13) contains a peripheral adverbial clause.

- (12) **Sobald** die Sonne schien, hat er das Verdeck seines Porsches aufgemacht.
as:soon:as the son shine.3SG.PST have.3SG he the canopy-top of:his Porsche opened
'As soon as the sun came out, he opened the top of his Porsche.'
- (13) **Da** die Sonne schien, hat er das Verdeck seines Porsches aufgemacht.
since the son shine.3SG.PST have.3SG he the canopy-top of:his Porsche opened
'Since the sun was shining, he opened the roof of his Porsche.'

(Frey 2011, 51)

It seems that PACs are inherently root clauses and that they are parasitic on the speech act of their host clause. They connect to their host clause structurally but must stand in a very high position because of their connection to the speech act of the host clause. Their prosody and their information structure reflect this very high position insofar they can act either as disintegrated or, at least marginally, as integrated.

(Frey and Truckenbrodt 2015, 93)

Overview of the literature

- Frey (2011, 71): “[...] unintegrated dependent clauses necessarily are prosodically non-integrated.”
- Frey (2012, 424): “[...] NACs necessarily are prosodically non-integrated in the sense that they need to have their own focus-background structuring.”
- Frey (2012, 427): “NACs in contrast to PACs are necessarily prosodically non-integrated.”
- Jędrzejowski (2026: slide v): “If an adverbial clause must be prosodically separated from the matrix clause, then it is unlikely to be a central adverbial clause.”
- The generalizations needs to be tested empirically.

Overview of the literature

- Types of non-integrated adverbial clauses (selection):

(14) irrelevance conditionals

Ob es regnet oder nicht – wir gehen spazieren.

whether it rain.3SG or NEG – we go.1PL walk.INFV

'Whether it is raining or not – we will go for a walk.' (d'Avis 2004, 141, ex. 2a)

(15) relevance conditionals

Wenn Sie sich erinnern, das Buch erschien erstmals im Jahr
if you REFL recall.3PL the book appear.3SG.PST first:time in:the year
1982.

1982

'If you remember, the book was first published in 1982.' (Thim-Mabrey 1988, 56)

(16) speech act related adverbials

Um ehrlich zu sein, ich habe nie viel von Kriminalromanen
in:order honestly to be.INFV I have.1SG never much of crime:novels
gehalten.

hold.PTCP

'To be honest, I've never thought much of crime novels.' (Pittner 1999, 357, ex. 71)

Overview of the literature on prosody & (adverbial) clauses

- Early observations on prosody and adverbial clauses: Downing (1970), Rutherford (1970)
- Prosodic structure and the prosodic hierarchy: Selkirk (1984), Nespor and Vogel (1986)
- Prosody and clause combining in discourse: Couper-Kuhlen (1996)
- Syntax–prosody interface approaches (Align / Match vs. direct reference): Selkirk (2005), Wagner (2010), Hamlaoui and Szendrői (2015) Elfner (2018)

Downing (1970): Early observations

- (17) a. We can talk after we eat.
b. After we eat, / we can talk.
- (18) a. If you go to that meeting, / you may be arrested.
b. I wonder if you are aware of the fact that if you go to that meeting you may be arrested.
- Left-peripheral clauses often show a prosodic break.
 - Embedded adverbials may be prosodically integrated.

(Downing 1970, 49–53)

Downing (1970): Early observations

“Nevertheless the parenthetical use of ordinary adverbials of time, place, manner, etc., is unexplained by my hypothesis as it stands. The direction in which an explanation may be found seems to lie in a possible broader generalization, namely that any element inserted into a predicative sentence from outside is bounded by PB’s whether it is a sentence or not.”
(Downing 1970, 135)

- (19)
- a. The others, in the meantime, continued to act as though nothing had happened.
 - b. I learned, to my dismay, that the rain had washed out the only bridge.
 - c. Bill’s shortcut, in short, was rather long.
- Parentheticals are set off by pauses (as clauses would be).
 - Downing (1970, 135) raises the possibility that such elements originate from clauses, too.

Rutherford (1970): “Comma intonation” and restrictive vs. non-restrictive interpretation

“Comma intonation” may distinguish two interpretations of adverbial clauses.

- (20) a. He’s not coming to class because he’s sick.
b. He’s not coming to class, because he just called from San Diego.
- (21) a. Mary won’t marry John if I have anything to say about it.
b. Mary won’t marry John, if I have anything to say about it.
- (22) a. He’ll take his umbrella in case it rains.
b. He’ll take his umbrella, in case you’re wondering.
- Rutherford (1970) relates comma intonation to restrictive vs. non-restrictive interpretations.

Selkirk (1984); Nespor and Vogel (1986): beyond “comma intonation”

Nespor and Vogel (1986), Selkirk (1984) develop the prosodic hierarchy.

ι	Intonational Phrase
φ	Phonological Phrase
ω	Prosodic Word
<hr/>	
F	Foot
σ	Syllable

- Prosodic domains above the word can be influenced by syntactic structure.
- Domains below the word reflect rhythmic and lexical properties.

- (23) a. You do it again because you can't believe you did it the first time.
b. It's the second largest, because they have like twelve thousand applicants and they only take eight thousand.

(adapted from Couper-Kuhlen 1996, 403–404)

- Because-clauses may be prosodically integrated or separated.
- The interpretations differ:
 - event-level causal relation
 - epistemic justification
 - speech-act justification

Couper-Kuhlen (1996, 407) describes two recurring prosodic configurations.

Schema I // Clause₁ // because Clause₂ //

Schema II // Clause₁ // <_{p.r.} because Clause₂ > // <partial reset>

- CSI: clauses integrated in a single prosodic unit
- CSII: prosodic reset before the because-clause

(24) She saw him once, | in 1939, | outside the Albert Hall, | after a concert.

- VP-final adverbials show flat prosodic phrasing.
- Standard analyses assume successive attachment:

((((VP once) in 1939) outside the Albert Hall) after a concert)

- The prosody of such structures is assumed to resemble a list rather than a nested structure.

(Wagner 2010, 212–213)

Selkirk (2005): adjunct attachment

Selkirk (2005, 23) discusses contrasts in the prosodic phrasing of *because*-clauses and relates them to their syntactic attachment.

(25) *VP adjunct*

- a. Cindy isn't planting a garden because she loves tomatoes.

[You know very well that she does it for the flowers, and that tomatoes are only a sideline, i.e. it's not because she loves tomatoes that she's planting a garden.]

- b. ((Cindy isn't planting a garden^{L-})_{MaP} (because she loves tomatoes^{L-L%})_{MaP})_{IP}

(26) *Sentence adjunct*

- a. Cindy isn't planting a garden, because she loves tomatoes.

[She planted tomatoes last year, and thinks that the ground has to lie fallow for a year before she can plant them again.]

- b. (Cindy isn't planting a garden^{L-H%})_{IP} // (because she loves tomatoes^{L-L%})_{IP}

Match theory

MATCH-CLAUSE	Syntactic clause	→ Intonational phrase (ι)
MATCH-PHRASE	Syntactic phrase (XP)	→ Phonological phrase (φ)
MATCH-WORD	Syntactic word	→ Prosodic word (ω)

MATCH-PHRASE (MATCH(XP, φ)): The left and right edges of a constituent of type XP in the input syntactic representation **must correspond** to the left and right edges of a constituent of type φ in the output phonological representation.

(Selkirk 2011, 450–451)

MATCH-PHRASE_T: Suppose there is a syntactic phrase (XP) in the syntactic representation that exhaustively dominates a set of one or more terminal nodes α . **Assign one violation mark** if there is no phonological phrase (φ) that exhaustively dominates **all and only** the phonological exponents of the terminal nodes in α .

(Elfner 2012, 24–28)

“We propose that for the syntax–prosody mapping of clauses and intonational phrases, the notion of ‘clause’ should be determined in a flexible manner, making reference to the highest position to which the verbal material (i.e. the verb itself, the inflection, an auxiliary or a question particle) is overtly moved or inserted, together with the material in its specifier. This contrasts with rigid approaches, which assume that mapping is based on particular functional heads.”

(Hamlaoui and Szendrői 2015)

Our questions

1. What is the relation between adverbial clauses and phonological structure?
2. How to best account for the relationship between adverbial subordination and phonological structure within and across languages?
3. (When) do adverbial clauses map onto their own intonational phrase?
4. What are cross-linguistic valid generalizations regarding the prosodic phrasing of different types of adverbial clauses?
5. Does prosodic phrasing reflect attachment height?

A program



- 09:00–10:00
Jan Fließbach & Łukasz Jędrzejowski
Adverbial clauses and prosody: Setting the scene
- 10:00–11:00
Fatima Hamlaoui
The prosody and flexible syntax–phonology mapping of adverbial clauses in Basaá
- 11:00–11:30 Refreshment break
- 11:30–12:30
Matthias Mittendorfer & Elnora Ten Wolde
The intonation of clause combining: ‘so (that)’ purpose and result adverbials
- 12:30–14:30 Lunch
- 14:30–15:30
Edward Göbbel
The prosodic realization of temporal clauses in English
- 18:30 Dinner: Sagar Tikka Haus

- 09:00–10:00
Emily Elfner
What can Match Theory tell us about the prosody of adverbial clauses?
- 10:00–11:00
Jakob Maché
Intonational phrasing of topicalized adverbial clauses in German
- 11:00–11:30 Refreshment break
- 11:30–12:30
Timo Buchholz
Anaphor resolution effects of high boundary tones in adverbial and factive embedded clauses
- 12:30–13:00
Jan Fließbach & Łukasz Jędrzejowski
Concluding remarks
- 13:00–15:00 Lunch
- 18:30 Dinner: La Copa

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