

THE ADVERB *STILL* AS A ‘LOW’ ADVERB IN ENGLISH AND BULGARIAN

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The paper focuses on the adverb *still* as a *low* adverb in English and Bulgarian, referencing Cinque's (1999) proposal of a fixed universal inventory of adverbs. By analysing sentence examples from different corpora, the current work investigates whether the position of *still/все още* in English and Bulgarian corresponds to the position proposed by Cinque. Additionally, the paper explores the semantic complexity of *still* and whether its three senses—aspectual, adversative, and marginal—correspond to separate maximal projections. The results suggest that *still* is a low adverb in both languages. However, despite its complex semantics, it is not a specifier of three separate functional heads.

Key words: low adverbs, functional head, adverb hierarchy, aspectual *still*, adversative *still*, marginality *still*

1. Introduction

Adverbs pose a formidable challenge in linguistic analysis due to their complexity and ability to occupy diverse syntactic positions across languages. Extensive research has been devoted to this part of speech, with scholars endeavouring to classify them and ascertain their positions within sentences.

Nowadays, there are two main theories regarding adverb order: one supporting the traditional adjunction approach (Haider 2000, Ernst 2002) and another advocating for a more 'restrictive' interpretation (Rizzi 1997, Cinque 1999). The latter theory places adverbs in the position of specifiers of distinct functional heads and advocates the idea that there is a universal hierarchy of functional projections. In his work *Adverbs and Functional Heads*, Guglielmo Cinque suggests that the order of adverbial phrases remains fixed across languages, an assertion underpinned by empirical evidence gathered from a wide array of languages. The present work adopts Cinque's suggestions and

explores how his hierarchy aligns with the word order in Bulgarian and English, two Indo-European languages, which, however, fall into two different language families. The second section delineates Cinque's division of adverbs into low and high. The third section analyses the position of *still/ (bce) ouye* in English and Bulgarian with respect to other adverbs, examining examples taken from different corpora. The fourth section deals with the semantic complexity of the adverb *still* and its three distinct meanings: aspectual, adversative, and marginality sense.

This research has two specific goals – see whether the adverb *still/ (bce) ouye* is indeed a low adverb in Bulgarian, as Cinque argues for English, and analyse the different senses of *still*, theorising on whether multiple instances of this adverb should exist within the hierarchical framework.

2. Cinque's Adverb Hierarchy

Cinque's adverb classification challenges traditional adverb distinctions, proposing a more syntactic approach. He believes that adverbs carry grammatical features within themselves and claims that they should not be regarded as adjuncts but rather as specifiers of functional heads. His restrictive theory refers to the principle that adverbs are positioned in a fixed hierarchical order within the sentence structure rather than being randomly placed adjuncts. According to Cinque, adverbs 'enter into a transparent Spec/head relation with the different functional heads of the clause' (1999: 5). This cartographic approach, adopted by other scholars such as Laenzlinger (1996) and Alexiadou (1997) for example, posits the existence of numerous functional heads in all languages. Cinque's research culminated in his book *Adverbs and Functional Heads* (1999), where he proposes that functional structure is inherent to the human mind and that adverbs adhere to a strict hierarchical structure in all human languages. However, each language encodes this functional content into its own unique morphological forms. Cinque provides a comparative analysis of adverb relations in numerous languages, and his proposals have paved the way for subsequent crosslinguistic research. The current paper aims to evaluate how well Cinque's hierarchy applies to English and Bulgarian word order, focusing on the adverb *still* and its semantic and syntactic properties.

Cinque categorises *still* as part of the group of low adverbs. These are positioned within the syntactic space bordered on the left by the leftmost position an active past participle can occupy and on the right by a complement or the subject of the past participle (1999: 6). On the other hand, high adverbs express modality, tense, and mood. Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 illustrate all low adverbs

in the form of a syntactic tree, with the tree in Fig. 2 being the continuation of the tree in Fig. 1:

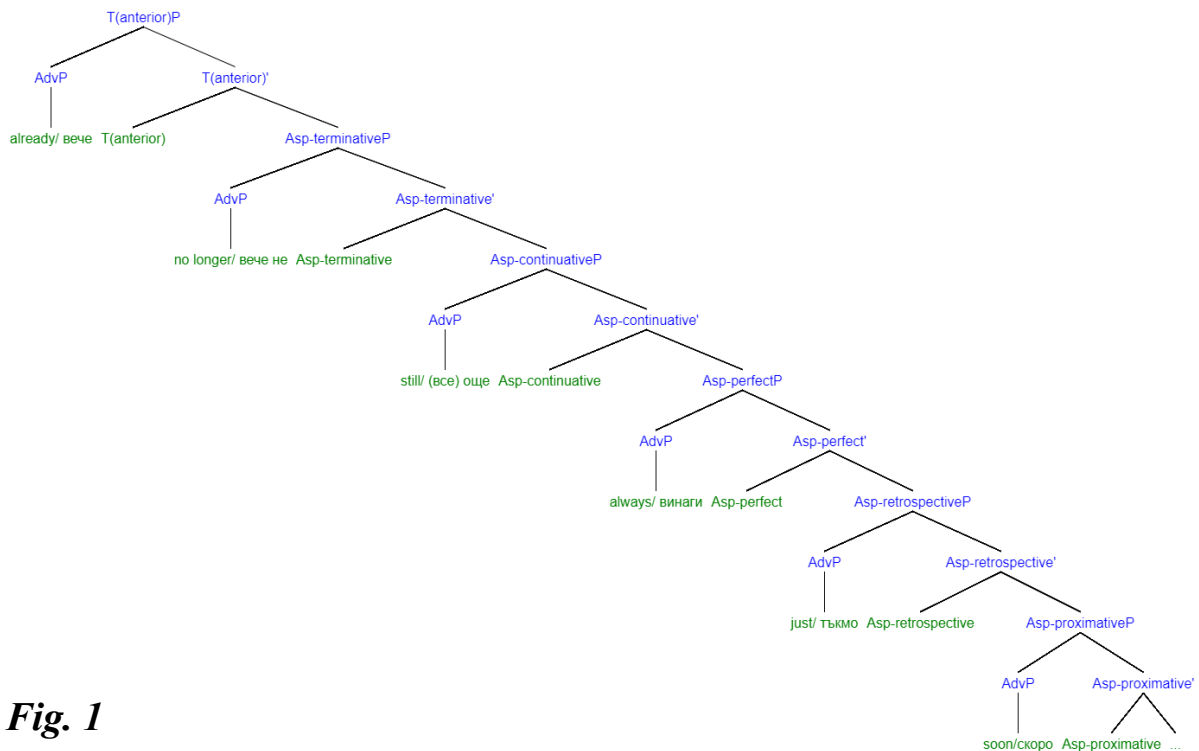


Fig. 1

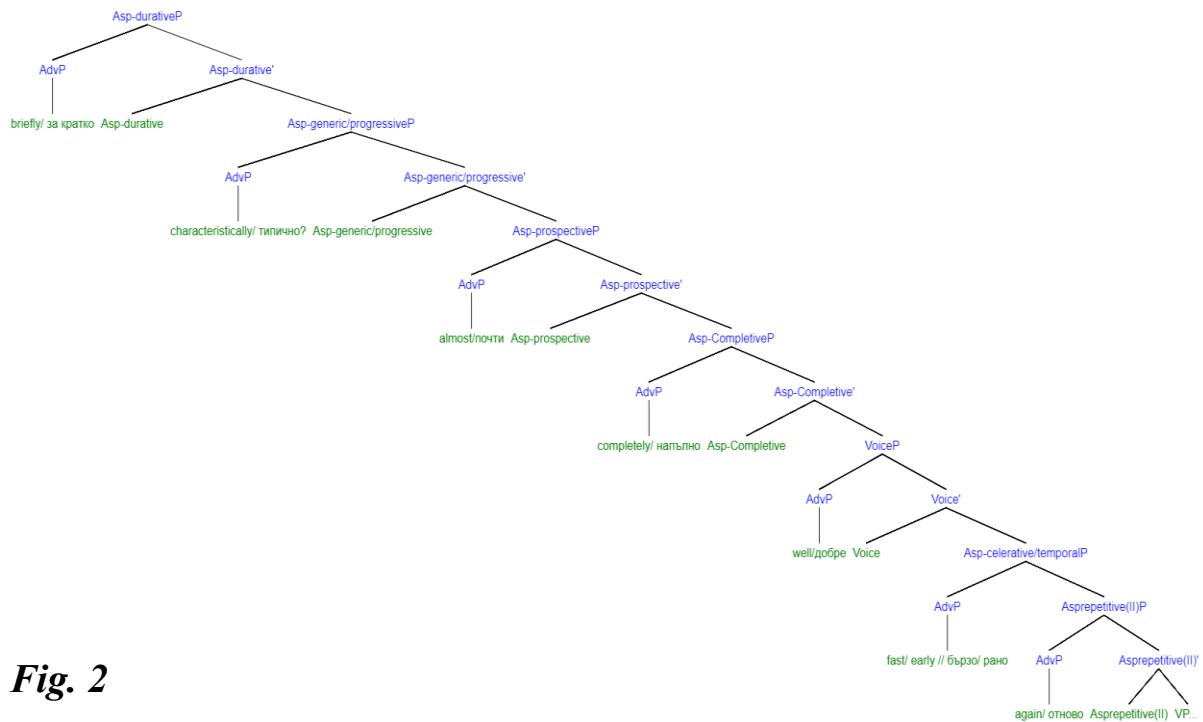


Fig. 2

Cinque posits that languages can morphologically realise either the head or the specifier of a functional projection. He argues that adverbs

originate in the specifier positions of maximal projections, with verbs ascending through functional positions according to the clause's functional structure, in accord with the Head Movement Constraint originally formulated by Travis, who states that 'An X^0 may only move into the Y^0 which properly governs it' (1984: 131). Hence, it is verbs that shift their initial positions, and each language demonstrates distinct patterns of obligatory and optional verb raising between lower and higher adverbs.

The following section explores whether the position of the adverb *still* in Bulgarian and English corresponds to the position suggested by Cinque in his adverb hierarchy. The choice of *still* is deliberate due to its semantic complexity, which might challenge the current theory. Nonetheless, the current paper aims to reaffirm the hierarchy's validity cross-linguistically and to address the challenges posed by the adverb's nuanced meaning.

3. The Position of *Still* (Continuative Aspect) in English and Bulgarian

Cinque (1999) locates *still* in the lower adverb space and considers it to be the specifier of a functional head called $Asp_{\text{continuative}}$. This aspect shows that the action is still being performed. Haspelmath explains that 'the Continuative, combined either with the Imperfective or with the Perfect, adds the semantic element 'still' (negative 'anymore')' (1993: 145). Continuation in English is not explicitly marked by prefixes, affixes, etc.; rather, adverbs like *still* are employed for this purpose. In Cinque's hierarchy, *still* is located right below *already* and *no longer*. Examples 1) and 2), sourced from the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) respectively, demonstrate that Cinque's hierarchy indeed applies to English word order, by comparing adverbial pairs in terms of relative height:

- 1) a) But he was *still always* telling me how good my singing was.
- b) But while he *no longer always* looks, he still sees.
- c) Now spectators will *no longer still* be allowed to drink in their seats.
- d) But oh, Bobecito, we are *already no longer* young.

From the examples in 1a) and 1b) we can conclude that *still* and *no longer* are both located above *always*. 1c) shows us that *no longer* is located to the left of *still*, which, by transitivity, gives the order *no longer* > *still* > *always*. Nevertheless, *no longer* is located to the right of *already* in 1d), meaning that it is lower than *already* in the hierarchy.

At first glance *no longer* and *still* seem to belong to the same aspectual head, showing only two different values – terminative and continuative. However, the two adverbs are members of two separate adverb classes¹, and, therefore, terminative aspect should be kept separate from continuative aspect – a suggestion supported by the example given in 1c), which illustrates that the two adverbs can be used together. What 1) shows is that *still* is indeed located under *already* and *no longer* and above *always*. On the other hand, the examples in 2) verify that all of the other low adverbs are indeed located under *still* in the hierarchy like Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 suggest:

- 2) a) He hadn't thought so, but his insides *still* ached *briefly*.
- b) But courts *still typically* insist on at least some factual basis to support the need for challenged restrictions.
- c) My mother was beside herself, and after that, although she *still almost* worshipped her, she was afraid even to hold her up or lift her, so I had all the care of her.
- d) I *still completely* believe in Montessori's philosophy.
- e) Those old vacuum tube receivers *still* work *well*.
- f) Will my phone *still* run *fast* after two years worth of usage, tweaks, and software upgrades?
- g) She will try her best and *still* try *again* and *again* when she thinks she still can handle it.

As is to be expected, no examples were found in the corpora containing the combinations *still* and *just* or *still* and *soon* due to their incompatibility in meaning.

It is intriguing to explore the application of a unified theory concerning the positions of adverbs to Bulgarian, a language marked by substantial divergence from English – one might anticipate that the adverb order in Bulgarian would differ entirely from English. The examples in 3) below show my Bulgarian translations of 1):

- 3) a) But he was *still always* telling me how good my singing was.
Но той *все още винаги* ми казваше колко добре пея.
- b) But while he *no longer always* looks, he still sees.
Но макар той *вече не винаги* да гледа, той все още вижда.
- c) Now spectators will *no longer still* be allowed to drink in their seats.

¹ For more information, see (Cinque 1999: 95).

?Сегга на зрителите *повече* няма да им бъде *все още* разрешено да пият, докато са седнали на местата си.?

d) But oh, Bobecito, we are *already no longer* young.

Ах, Бобесито, ние *вече повече* **не** сме млади.

An interesting observation is that in English, the adverb *no longer* contains the negative particle *no* within itself, and when it is used in a sentence, the verb must always be in a positive form due to the impossibility of standard English to have two negatives in the same clause. On the other hand, Bulgarian does not have such a rule. Since Bulgarian is a negative concord language and requires a negative adverb to be used with a negative verb form, as opposed to English, where negation is expressed just once, in Bulgarian we can easily form clauses containing combinations such as *никога не съм* / **(I) never haven't*. What's more, a thorough analysis shows that there are no Bulgarian adverbs containing a negative particle within their structure. Therefore, as I suggested in a previous work (see Mateva 2024), the adverb *no longer* does not have a Bulgarian equivalent. In 3b), the negative particle **не** is not part of *вече не*, but instead modifies the adverb *always*, rendering the sense of *not always*. The situation in 3c) is similar – the negation we see is not part of the intrinsic structure of the adverb but rather of the verb. That is why we have the negative *няма*, which is equivalent to *will not* in English. This leaves us with the adverb *вече*, which is ambiguous in meaning. It can be speculated that *вече* in Bulgarian serves both *Asp Anterior* and *Asp Terminative* functions. In the case of *Asp Terminative*, the adverb must always be used in conjunction with verb negation (3c) or negation of the following adverb (3b). In terms of 3d), the situation gets even more interesting. The original sentence contains the adverb *already* (*Asp Anterior*), which translates into *вече* in Bulgarian. But then how could we render the sense of *no longer* if, as we saw from 3b) and 3c), Bulgarian does not have an equivalent of *no longer* but rather uses *вече* + *negation*? All that, in theory, would mean that the Bulgarian translation of 3d) would have to be *вече вече не*. However, maybe due to reasons of repetition, that is not the case, and the language resorts to another adverb, namely *повече* + *verb negation*. In terms of meaning, there is a slight difference between *повече* + *не* and *вече* + *не*. *Вече* + *не* serves to directly show that an action or a state has come to an end. In other words, *вече* + *не* directly negates the continuation of an action or state. On the other hand, the

focus of *повече* + *не* is on the cancellation of a previous state or activity². In this sense, *повече* + *не* is closer to meaning to the English *anymore*.

In summary, the Bulgarian *вече* is a specifier of *Asp Anterior* and has the same meaning as *already* in English. However, its meaning changes when used with negation, serving as a specifier of *Asp Terminative*. When a Bulgarian clause contains both *Asp Anterior* and *Asp Terminative*, in theory, it should contain two *вече*, with the second *вече* scoping over the negated verb:

4) Ах, Бобесито, ние *вече вече* не сме млади.

Perhaps due to redundancy, such sentences are not natural for Bulgarian speakers. While *вече* + *не* and *повече* + *не* both indicate that a previous state or action has ceased, as already mentioned above, they differ in their semantic focus. This is not an unexpected phenomenon since Cinque's theory of adverbial hierarchies posits that while the positions of adverbs relative to each other are universally fixed, the specific adverbs and their semantic nuances can vary across languages. In other words, there is a universal order in which adverbial meanings are expressed, but the particular adverbs that languages use to convey these meanings are not necessarily the same. This distinction allows for crosslinguistic variation in the inventory of adverbs, even though the structural positions they occupy in sentences are consistent (Cinque 1999: 71). What we can conclude from 3) is that the functional heads proposed by Cinque follow the same order in Bulgarian:

5) T(Anterior) > Asp-terminative > Asp-continuative > Asp-perfect
вече > вече / повече + отрицание > (все) още > винаги

Nevertheless, more examples are needed to see whether the adverb *still* holds the same position in Bulgarian as it does in English regarding other low adverbs.

- 6) a) След шест години те **все още** живеели дълго и щастливо.
b) **Все още** почти го усецам.
c) Летните военни занятия през 1912 г. не са **все още** напълно приключили, когато се получава едно особено разпореждане,

² The difference between *вече* + *не* and *повече* + *не* is closely connected to the type of verb we have, namely perfective or imperfective and more thorough research must be done on this topic.

конните полкове да преминат Балкана и да се отправят към южната граница.

d) Беше малко глух, но **все още** изглеждаше *добре* на седлото за своите седемдесет и четири години.

e) По този начин течението ни носеше по диагонал, но **все още** *бързо* слизахме надолу по реката.

f) Някои хора **все още** *отново и отново* си задаваха вечния въпрос, на който нямаше отговор: А ПО-НАТАТЪК?

The word order illustrated in all of the examples in 6), taken from the Bulgarian National Corpus, follows the order suggested in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2. What we can conclude from examples 3) and 6) is that *Asp-continuative* in Bulgarian is indeed lower than *T(Anterior)* and *Asp-terminative*, and, by all accounts, higher than *Asp-perfect* and all the adverbs that follow *Asp-perfect* in the hierarchy.

This section aimed to demonstrate that the adverb *still* is positioned in the lower adverb space, as proposed by Cinque, and that its placement relative to other adverbs is consistent in both English and Bulgarian. Examples from the British National Corpus (BNC), the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), and the Bulgarian National Corpus support Cinque's notion of restrictiveness, reinforcing his argument that languages adhere to specific, narrowly defined rules. These regulations restrict how much languages can vary, suggesting that specific syntactic arrangements are universally organised and mirroring fundamental principles of Universal Grammar (UG).

4. *Asp_{continuative}* and its Semantic Complexity

Cinque's Feature theory has the recognisable characteristic that adverbs are licensed by a featural relationship to heads. The order of adverbs is directly connected to the UG order of functional heads and adverbs form groups on the basis of common features. As Ernst explains, 'This link is justified by a transparent semantic relationship between the head and the adjunct it licenses; for example, Modal heads license *probably*, *maybe*, and other modal adverbs, Aspect heads license *for an hour* or *frequently*, Tense licenses *yesterday*, and so on' (2002: 113). One problem, however, are adverbs that can occupy multiple positions relative to the predicate, as illustrated by the following examples sourced from COCA:

- 7) a) The images are vivid and *quickly* **will catch** the eyes of young children.
 b) Current **will** *quickly catch* your line and begin to belly it.
 c) He *still* **will be** around.
 d) He **will** *still be* the son you love.

The two occurrences of *quickly* in 7a) and 7b) and the two occurrences of *still* in 7c) and 7d) can indeed be explained in one of two ways: movement or licensing by non-identical heads. The latter option supports the idea that each adverb can occupy different positions, provided it demonstrates a meaningful difference in each one. However, in the examples given in 7), this assertion does not hold. According to Cinque's restrictive Functional theory, there is a 'one-to-one relation between position and interpretation (i.e., one specific, and distinct, interpretation for each position of 'base generation')' (Cinque 1999: 20). However, there are no interpretational differences between the two positions of *quickly* and *still*. In terms of movement, in theory, both adverb movement and verb movement are possible. Nevertheless, Cinque argues that adverbs have a rigid position and that it is verbs that move around them. Therefore, one possible explanation for the word order in 7) is that the auxiliary *will* has moved from its canonical base position just above VP and has subsequently moved to a higher (Tense-related) position. Since there is no difference between the meaning of 7a) and 7b), as well as between 7c) and 7d), it is evident that what we are witnessing there is Aux movement. The situation is different, though, when we analyse examples such as those in 8) taken from COCA. The adverb *still* can be a bit problematic in terms of semantics as its meaning can be interpreted in a few different ways:

- 8) a) 'You don't need to count it.'
 'I *still* will, if you don't mind.'
 b) Government is also what will *still* be making the rules for you after you get back on your feet.

In the case of 8), the adverb *still* exhibits two very different senses – *concession* in 8a) and *continuation* in 8b). What this shows us is that the adverb *still* has both aspectual and nonaspectual senses. As Michaelis explains in her paper "‘Continuity’ within Three Scalar Models: The Polysemy of Adverbial Still", '*still* serves as a marker of a state's continuation to a temporal reference point, as a concessive particle, and as an indicator of marginal membership within a graded category' (1993: 193). In other words, the adverb *still* in

English has at least three different senses that have been analysed throughout the years: aspectual, adversative, and marginality sense. The examples in 9) below, taken from the BNC, illustrate each sense:

- 9) a) I am **still** paying off the sofa, which came from a catalogue. – *aspectual sense*
- b) Her face had lost its usual bloom, but she **still** gave a bright smile as she saw her. – *adversative (concessive) sense*
- c) An omission of truth is **still** a lie. – *marginality sense*

In the case of 9a), *still* ‘refers to the extension of a state of affairs through to a given reference time’ (Michaelis 1993: 193). On the other hand, the concessive sense in 9b) can be paraphrased as *nevertheless*, indicating that something happened even though certain conditions made it difficult. The adverb *still* in 9c) has an even more complex sense. Marginality *still* marks something as a borderline example of a given category; that is to say ‘such sentences presuppose that the subject-denotation of the still-bearing sentence represents a “borderline case” of the category defined by the descriptor’ (Michaelis 1993: 224). The three distinct senses of *still* have been analysed thoroughly by many scholars, including but not limited to Horn (1970), Hirtle (1977), and König (1977). Horn’s analysis, for example, delves into the nuanced ways in which *still* operates within the English language, particularly in relation to negation and temporal expressions, and how it serves to convey expectations and persistence. He and Hirtle both note that *still* can be used for emphasis, particularly to underscore the persistence of a state or action despite potential reasons for it to change. For space reasons, we cannot go into further detail about each one of these senses.³ Nonetheless, what this paper seeks to analyse is whether all of these senses are specifiers of different functional heads, as is to be expected since they all hold different meanings.

As already mentioned, Cinque believes that position and interpretation have a one-to-one relation. Therefore, one might easily imagine the existence of three different positions in the adverb hierarchy for each distinct meaning of *still*. Evidence for this supposition would be a sentence containing the adverb *still* used more than once but with a different meaning.

³ For an in-depth analysis of the semantics of *still*, see Laura A. Michaelis and her “‘Continuity’ within Three Scalar Models: The Polysemy of Adverbial Still’.

- 10) a) He *still still* waits for her to call. = And *yet*, he *still (aspectual)* waits for her to call.⁴
 b) He *still still* feels unsure about his decision to move. = *Nevertheless*, he *still (aspectual)* feels unsure about his decision to move.
 c) *Still*, the car is *still* parked in the driveway. = *However*, the car is *still (aspectual)* parked in the driveway.
 d) *Still*, an omission of truth is *still* a lie. = *Nevertheless*, an omission of truth is *still (marginality)* a lie.

Cinque calls the phenomenon illustrated in 10) a *deceptive co-occurrence* and describes it as the instance when a word is 'base-generated' in two separate locations but with different semantics and scope properties (1999: 4). According to Cinque, the two instances of *still* in the examples in 10) will have to be of different adverb classes and belong to separate functional projections. One immediate observation that can be discerned is that the first occurrence of *still*, corresponding to its adversative (concessive) usage, is necessarily focussed. More specifically, just like *nevertheless*, *yet*, and *however*, *still* is used to show contrastive focus, also labelled identificational focus by Kiss (1998: 245). According to Kiss, the 'apparent asymmetry between topicalization and focusing has been generally derived from the assumptions that topic movement is adjunction, hence iterable; focus movement, on the other hand, is substitution into a specifier' (1998b: 4). This statement aligns with Cinque's theory that adverbs serve as specifiers. In syntax, contrastive or identificational focus refers to the use of specific syntactic structures or intonational patterns to highlight or emphasise a particular element of a sentence, contrasting it with other potential alternatives or previously mentioned information. This type of focus helps to convey distinctions, corrections, or clarifications in discourse. Contrastive focus 'takes a case marker in case-marking languages and a focus stress in other languages' (Lee 2006: 6). Since the only words that are formally case-marked in English are pronouns, intonation is normally what shows that a word or a phrase is focused. Lee further clarifies this by adding that the 'rising or high tone (L+) H* both in Korean and English signals that something unresolved (i.e., a contrastively negated proposition) is to follow. In this sense, intonation is compositional and correlated with information structure' (Lee 2006: 6). Cinque's hierarchy deals only with unfocused adverbs, and perhaps that is the reason why *still* is included only in its aspectual sense. Since adversative *still* licences separate focus phrases,

⁴ These judgements have been discussed with native speakers.

called FocP in the generative framework, it is expectedly not included in the hierarchy. Identificational/contrastive focus takes scope and, unlike typical information focus, is moved to the specifier of a functional projection (Kiss 1998a: 248). This functional projection is outside the clause, in its left periphery, and is therefore excluded from the hierarchy.

Another interesting observation, though, is made by König (1977: 184), who remarks that marginality *still* does not ‘establish a relation between various points in time... but between various entities comparable’ to one another. He notes that when used in this sense, *still* cannot function as a sentence adverb and cannot be placed at the beginning or at the end of the sentence:

11) a) * *Still*, an omission of truth is a lie.

The example in 11) is ungrammatical if it contains marginality *still*, just like König states, but what is interesting is that it becomes grammatical under the adversative *still*. The sentence can be interpreted in only one way, which features an adversative (concessive) sense. What this could mean is that while adversative *still* is indeed the specifier of FocP, marginality *still* is not. Looking at the examples in 10) once more, one can notice that the only two combinations that we have are *adversative* + *aspectual* and *adversative* + *marginality*. What did not render any results in the corpora, however, was the *aspectual* + *marginality* combination (or vice-versa). This raises the question whether marginality *still* is actually an adverb different from aspectual *still*. At first glance, aspectual *still* and marginality *still* fall under the same lexical item but offer a slightly different interpretation in meaning depending on the meaning of the verb they are used with. This is further supported by the fact that aspectual *still* and marginality *still* cannot co-occur in a sentence, unlike aspectual *still* and adversative *still* or marginality *still* and adversative *still*. What’s more, a look into the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary shows us that only two of these three senses, namely aspectual and adversative *still*, are included as a separate meaning of the adverb:

still /stil/ *adv., adj., noun, verb*

adv. **1** continuing until a particular point in time and not finishing:
I wrote to them last month, and I'm still waiting for a reply. ♦ *Mum, I'm still hungry* ♦ *Do you still live at the same address?* ♦ *There's still time to change your mind.* ♦ *It was, and still is, my favourite movie.*
2 in spite of what has just been said: *Although he promised faithfully to*

come, I still didn't think he would. ♦ We searched everywhere but we still couldn't find it. ♦ The weather was cold and wet. Still, we had a great time.

(Hornby 2000: 1275)

The suggestions above can be reaffirmed if we take a closer look at the situation in Bulgarian. A reference to the online PONS dictionary shows that the adverb *still* is equivalent to two separate adverbs in Bulgarian - *(все) още* and *(все) пак*. What is interesting is the fact that Bulgarian *(все) още* can be used in both aspectual and marginality sense, just like in English, but not in the adversative sense, as the translations of 9) shown here in 12) illustrate:

- 12) а) Аз *(все) още* изплащам дивана, който дойде от каталог. – aspectual sense
б) *Лицето ѝ беше изгубило типичната си свежест, но тя *(все) още* се усмихна ведро, когато я видя. – adversative (concessive) sense
в) Премълчаването на истината *(все) още* е лъжа. – marginality sense

To render the adversative (concessive) sense, Bulgarian makes use of another adverb (oftentimes used in a complex form consisting of two adverbs), namely *(все) пак*:

- 13) Лицето ѝ беше изгубило типичната си свежест, но тя *(все) пак* се усмихна ведро, когато я видя.

König's remark that marginality *still* cannot function as a sentence adverb (1977: 184) turns out to be true for Bulgarian sentences as well, as the ungrammatical examples in 14) show:

- 14) а) * *Still*, an omission of truth is a lie.
б) **(Все) още*, премълчаването на истината е лъжа.

This can be taken as evidence that aspectual *still* and marginality *still* are not two adverbs offering different meanings and that marginality *still* is not a focused adverb. When interpreted as containing marginality *still*, 14a) is ungrammatical in English, as marginality *still* cannot be focused. However, when interpreted as containing concessive *still*, 14a) is grammatical in English since it is used in FocP, and it should be considered an entirely different adverb from aspectual *still* and marginality *still*. This

suggestion is supported by the fact that, in Bulgarian, 14b) is always ungrammatical as (*bce*) *ouje* does not have an adversative sense, and the adverb that is used instead in Bulgarian is (*bce*) *nak*.

The results obtained in this section allow us to conclude that while *still* can indeed be interpreted in three different ways (aspectual *still*, adversative *still*, and marginality *still*), only aspectual and adversative *still* are, in reality, two homonymous adverbs. Adversative *still* is always used in FocP in English, and that is why it is not included in Cinque's hierarchy, which deals only with unfocused positions. On the other hand, both aspectual and marginality *still* are specifiers of the *Asp-continuative* functional projection, each one offering a slight difference in interpretation.⁵

5. Implications and Conclusions

Scholars have grappled with adverbs for years, primarily because of the absence of precise structural and semantic criteria for identifying adverbial categories and syntactic constraints on their usage. Therefore, comprehending the positions and functions of adverbs in different languages, in particular Bulgarian and English, is vital to a clearer understanding of the structural disparities between languages.

The first section of this work was an introduction to the topic. The second section discussed Cinque's adverb hierarchy, which differentiates between higher and lower adverbs. The third section of the paper dealt with adverb positions, focusing on the adverb *still* and analysing whether its position in English and Bulgarian regarding other adverbs is the same as the one proposed in Cinque's adverb hierarchy (Cinque 1997). The excerpted examples, taken from the British National Corpus, the Corpus of Contemporary American English, and the Bulgarian National Corpus, show that the hierarchy can be applied to both English and Bulgarian. The results obtained prove that *still* is a low adverb in Bulgarian, just like it is in English.

The fourth section had to do with the semantic perplexity of the adverb *still* and its three different senses: aspectual, adversative, and marginality sense (Michaelis 1993), trying to answer the question of whether each one of these senses is the specifier of a separate functional head. The results suggest that adversative *still* is actually part of a FocP, exhibiting signs of contrastive focus, which aligns with the fact that the adverb is not included in Cinque's hierarchy which consists of unfocused adverbs only. On the

⁵ This difference is closely connected to the form of the verb used. Marginality *still* normally requires a perfective aspect, while aspectual *still* requires an imperfective aspect. This difference deserves further research.

other hand, aspectual *still* and marginality *still* are one and the same. However, they offer a slightly different interpretation in meaning depending on the verb they are used with – with aspectual *still* person/object A **continues** to do something, while with marginality *still* person/ object A **continues** to be a part of something. This theory is bolstered by the Bulgarian examples taken from the Bulgarian National Corpus. In Bulgarian, the adverb *still* can be translated as (*bce*) *ouye* only in aspectual and marginality sense. When interpreted as adversative, *still* corresponds to the Bulgarian (*bce*) *nak*. What's more, just like in English, in Bulgarian, marginality *still* cannot function as a sentence adverb. Overall, this current paper elucidates the similarities between the position of *Asp continuative* and the usage of *still* in English and Bulgarian.

Crosslinguistic analysis of adverbs assists in specifying clear-cut structural and semantic criteria for discerning adverbial categories and understanding their syntactic constraints. The suggestions in the present research undoubtedly deserve a more thorough analysis, which I am not able to provide due to space limitations. Further research could include a broader range of examples and an experimental study with native speakers.

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