Towards an adverbial-only analysis of Bulgarian focus-sensitive particles

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The syntactic and semantic properties of focus-sensitive particles (FSPs), adverbials such as English *only* or *even*, have received varying degrees of attention so far depending on the language studied. FSPs are small, invariable particles that tend to associate with focus (Sudhoff 2010: 1). Up to today, a lot remains unknown about the distribution of FSPs in Slavic languages, and work on information-structural aspects of Slavic is often centered around Russian data, with other Slavic languages being understudied in this respect (Jasinskaja 2016: 731-2).

There are only few in-depth studies of Bulgarian FSPs, such as Tomaszewicz (2013), and Tisheva & Dzhonova (2003), a corpus study of the distribution of the FSP *samo* 'only' at the level of surface structure. Tisheva & Dzhonova (2003: 65) argue that *samo* "can have scope over NP, PP, AdvP, VP, or part of XP". Additionally, Bulgarian FSPs can left-adjoin to the focused constituent or can follow the focus. An example is given in (1).

(1) (Tisheva & Dzhonova 2003: 66)
   a. Čet-a   samo [ROMAN-I]$_F$
      read-1SG only   novel-PL
      'I read only novels'
   b. Čet-a   [ROMAN-I]$_F$ samo.
      read-1SG novel-PL   only
      'I read only novels'

Samo 'only' marks narrow focus, adjoins to the focused constituent as closely as possible, and assigns focal stress to the constituent it has scope over (Tisheva & Dzhonova 2003: 60). On the surface level, *samo* and other Bulgarian FSPs seem to be able to adjoin to various types of phrases, as Tisheva & Dzhonova (2003) argue. This is hardly surprising as it is well-known that Bulgarian word order is extremely flexible. Although SVO is taken to be the basic, unmarked word order in Bulgarian, different word order patterns can be exploited for information-structural reasons (see Rudin (1986), for example, for an overview).

When it comes to analyzing the distribution of FSPs in a language, there are two possible main analyses available: the adnominal and the adverbial-only analysis. The adnominal analysis assumes that FSPs can attach to all possible types of phrases, including VPs, DPs, and PPs. The adverbial-only analysis proposes that FSPs only adjoin to projections belonging to the Extended Verbal Projection (EVP) (Büring & Hartmann 2001). Büring & Hartmann (2001) provide an adverbial-only account of German FSPs, arguing that this type of analysis accounts for distributional facts of German FSPs that are surprising and unaccounted for under an adnominal analysis, such as the impossibility of FSPs adjoining to DPs within PPs. (2) shows that this prohibition extends to Bulgarian.

(2) a. samo s   [ANNA]$_F$
     only   with Anna
     'only with Anna'
   b.*s   samo [ANNA]$_F$
      with only   Anna

intended: 'only with Anna'

At first sight, it seems as if FSPs like *samo* in fact adjoin to DPs such as in (1). However, an adnominal analysis of Bulgarian FSPs that only considers surface structure falls short of explaining the data in (2).

In this talk, I provide an adverbial-only account of Bulgarian FSPs such as *samo* 'only', showing that the analysis of Büring & Hartmann (2001) can be extended to languages with extremely flexible word order. I present new data demonstrating how an adverbial-only analysis captures the distributional facts of Bulgarian FSPs, including the prohibition in (2). The fact that FSPs like *samo* can be stranded when the phrase in focus is moved to FocP in the left periphery provides a further argument that *samo* does not adjoin to the DP in question:

(3) [ROMAN-I]$_F$ čet-a   samo
      novel-PL   read-1SG only
      'I read only novels.'

Additionally, I provide an account of post-focal *samo* (as shown in (1b)), arguing that the fact that the focused constituent moves above the FSP in the left periphery as well as in the VP could point towards the fact that Bulgarian has a focus projection (and possibly further information-structural projections) within VP that the focused constituent can move to, similar to the proposal that Belletti (2004) makes for Italian.

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