

# **Parenthetical adverbs: from syntax to dialogue**

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# Overview

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- Parenthetical adverbs: *heureusement* ‘fortunately’, *honnêtement* ‘honestly’, etc.
- Intuitively: they are not part of “what is said”, “the main semantic content”, “the asserted proposition”, etc.
- Four issues:
  - Relation between parentheticality and intonation
  - Pragmatic status of parentheticals
  - Semantic types for parentheticals
  - Parentheticals at the syntax-semantics interface

# 1.1 Parentheticals vs. incidentals

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Incidentality and parentheticality are independent properties :

(1) a. **Malheureusement**, Paul s' est comporté comme un  
unfortunately Paul SE is behaved like an  
idiot.

idiot

'Unfortunately, Paul behaved like an idiot.'

b. Paul s' est malheureusement comporté comme un idiot.

(2) a. **Lentement**, la rivière amorçait sa décrue.  
slowly the river started its decrease

'Slowly, the river was dropping in level.'

b. La rivière amorçait lentement sa décrue.

# 1.2 Varieties of parentheticals

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- Speech act adverbs: *honnêtement* ‘honestly’, etc.
  - Provide a comment on the manner in which the main speech act was executed.
- Connectives: *donc* ‘therefore, so’, etc.
  - Specify how the current speech act (and/or its content) relates with the current discourse.
- Agentives (a.k.a. ‘subject-oriented’): *gentiment* ‘kindly’, etc.
  - Comment on an agent’s attitude in bringing about a certain state of affairs.
- Evaluatives: *heureusement* ‘fortunately’, etc.
  - Provide a comment on the speaker’s appreciation of the semantic content.

## 2 The pragmatic status of evaluative adverbs

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- Evaluative adverbs...
  - are not part of the 'main content' (2.1)
  - are not presupposed (2.2)
  - differ from evaluative adjectives (2.3)
  - have a special status in dialogue (2.4)
  - can be assumed by the speaker or another agent (2.5)

## 2.1 Not part of the main content

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- (8) Si Paul va, malheureusement, voir Marie, elle sera furieuse.  
'If, unfortunately, Paul goes and sees Marie, she will be furious.'



Si Paul va voir Marie, elle sera furieuse.  
'If Paul goes and sees Marie, she will be furious.'

- (9) Qui est bizarrement arrivé à l'heure ?  
*asks: who arrived on time?*  
*commits the speaker to: if somebody arrived on time, that's weird.*

## 2.2 Not presupposed

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- Not contested in the same way as presuppositions

(15) *A*: Paul a malheureusement perdu l'élection.

'Paul unfortunately lost the election.'

*B*: # C'est faux, je trouve que c'est une très bonne nouvelle.

'That's not true, I think it is very good news.'

*B*: C'est vrai, mais moi, je trouve que c'est une très bonne nouvelle !

'Yes, but I personally think it is great news!'

(16) *A*: Paul regrette d'être venu.

'Paul regrets that he came.'

*B*: # Oui, mais Paul n'est pas venu !

'Yes (he would have regretted that), but Paul did not come!'

## 2.3 Evaluative adverbs vs. adjectives

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- Adjectives, but not adverbs, presuppose their arg.

(18) a. S'il est malheureux que Paul ait vu Marie, il est tragique qu'il l'ait insultée.

'If, it is unfortunate that Paul met Marie, it is tragic that he insulted her.'

⇒ 'Paul met Marie.'

(13) a. Si Paul va, malheureusement, voir Marie, elle sera furieuse.

'If, unfortunately, Paul meets Marie, she will be furious.'

≠ 'Paul meets Marie.'

Proposed relationship between adverb and adjective:

(20) **unfortunately**  $\equiv \lambda p.[p \rightarrow \mathbf{unfortunate}(p)]$



## 2.4 Status in dialogue

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- Evaluatives are “solitary commitments” of the speaker

(21) Participant’s gameboard update when asserting  $p$

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{SPKR-CMT} & \boxed{S} \\ \text{ADDR-CMT} & \boxed{A} \\ \text{QUD} & \boxed{Q} \end{bmatrix} \rightsquigarrow \begin{bmatrix} \text{SPKR-CMT} & \{p\} \cup \boxed{S} \\ \text{ADDR-CMT} & \boxed{A} \\ \text{QUD} & \langle p? \rangle \oplus \boxed{Q} \end{bmatrix}$$

(24) Participant’s gameboard update when uttering *malheureuse-ment*  $p$

$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{SPKR-CMT} & \boxed{S} \\ \text{ADDR-CMT} & \boxed{A} \\ \text{QUD} & \boxed{Q} \end{bmatrix} \rightsquigarrow \begin{bmatrix} \text{SPKR-CMT} & \{p, \mathbf{unfortunately}(p)\} \cup \boxed{S} \\ \text{ADDR-CMT} & \boxed{A} \\ \text{QUD} & \langle p? \rangle \oplus \boxed{Q} \end{bmatrix}$$

## 2.5 Who is responsible for the evaluation?

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- By default, the evaluator is the speaker.
- In reported speech contexts, it *can* be another agent.

(26) Marie m'a annoncé que, malheureusement pour moi, je n'avais pas été élu. Je lui ai expliqué que cela m'arrangeait plutôt, vu que je n'avais jamais eu l'intention de prendre le poste.

“Marie announced that, unfortunately for me, I hadn't been elected. I explained that it was fine with me, since I never intended to accept the position.”

- Not surprising: a speech report can report all aspects of the illocutionary situation.
- We need a unified way to talk about evaluatives

## 2.5 Who is responsible for the evaluation?

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- Not convenient to model explicitly reported speech as gameboard updates.
- Proposed grammatical encoding: speech predicates are ternary relations.

(28) Grammatical encoding of gameboard update instructions

$$\left[ \begin{array}{l} \textit{assertive-utterance} \\ \text{CONTEXT} \quad \left[ \text{C-INDICES} \quad \left[ \text{SPEAKER} \quad \boxed{1} \right] \right] \\ \text{CONTENT} \quad \text{“assert} \left( \boxed{1}, p, \{ \text{unfortunately}(p) \} \right)\text{”} \end{array} \right]$$

- The **assert** relation will be interpreted as a gameboard update instruction.

## 3.1 The puzzle

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- The scope of the evaluative depends on its position

(29) a. Malheureusement, Paul a soumis son résumé le 20 janvier.

*asserts:* Paul submitted his abstract on January 20.

*commits the speaker to:* It is unfortunate that Paul submitted his abstract on January 20.

b. Le 20 janvier, Paul a malheureusement soumis son résumé.

*asserts:* Paul submitted his abstract on January 20.

*commits the speaker to:* It is unfortunate that Paul submitted his abstract (whatever the date).

## 3.1 The puzzle

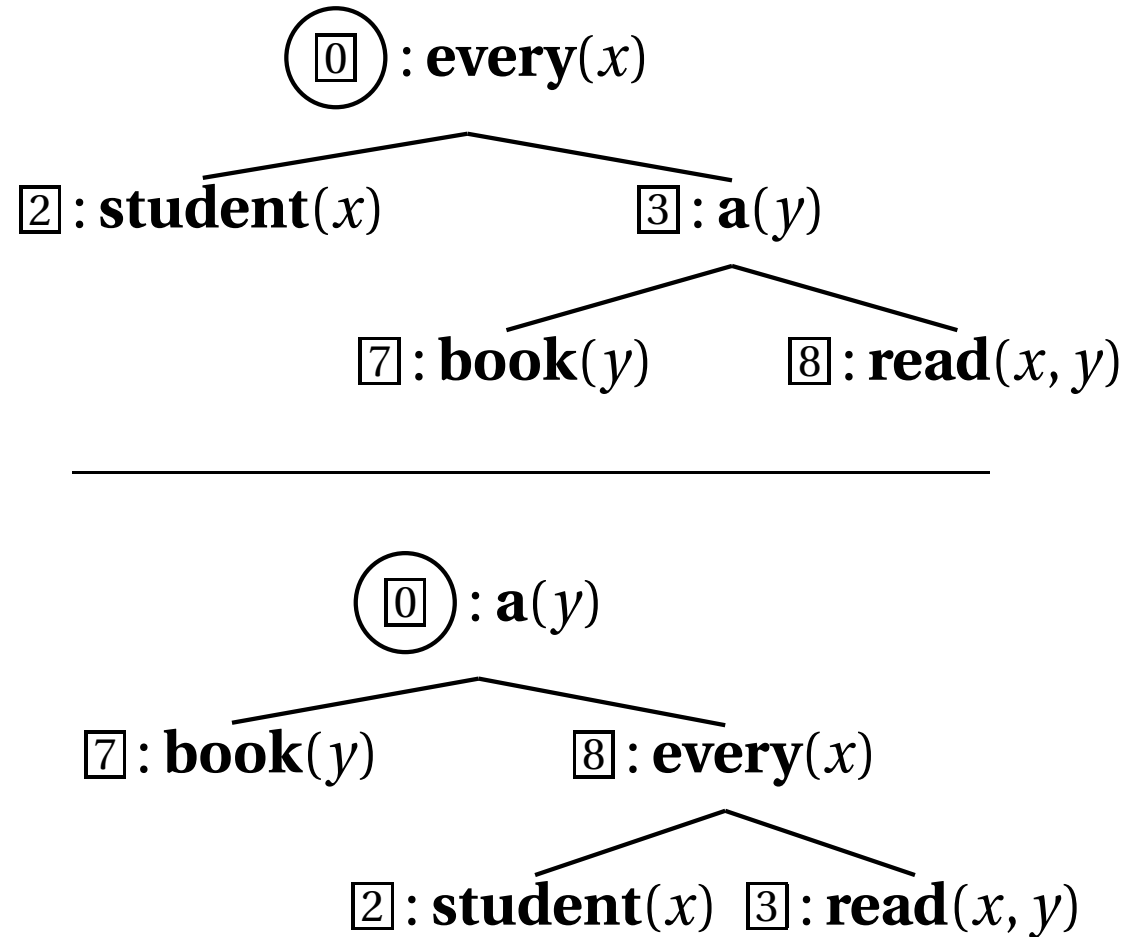
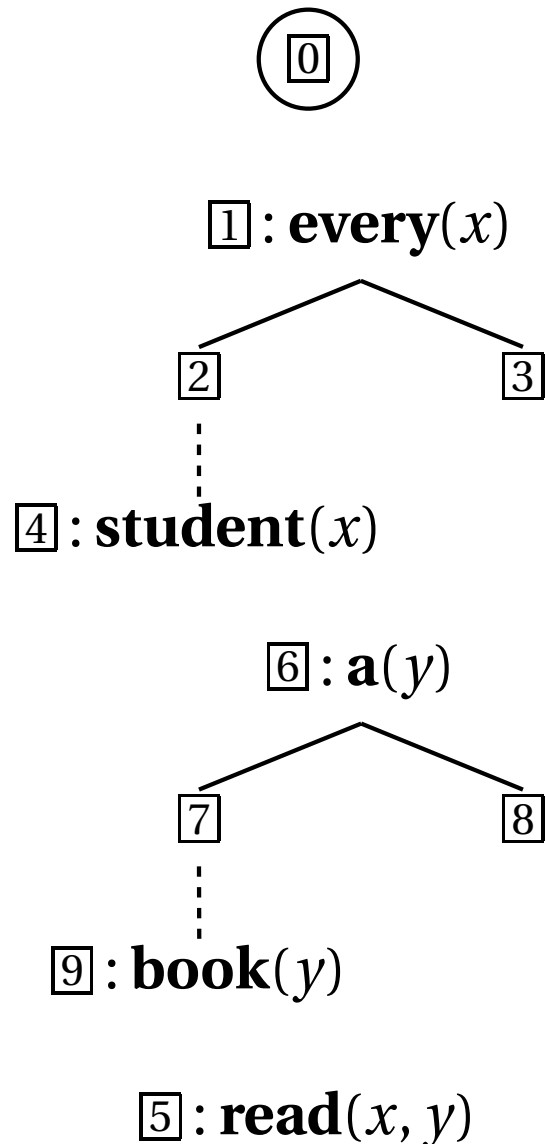
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- The scope of the evaluative depends on its position

- (30)
- a. Probablement, Marie est malheureusement venue.  
*asserts*: Marie probably came.  
*commits the speaker to*: If Marie came indeed, it is unfortunate that she did.
  - b. Malheureusement, Marie est probablement venue.  
*asserts*: Marie probably came.  
*commits the speaker to*: it is unfortunate that Marie probably came.

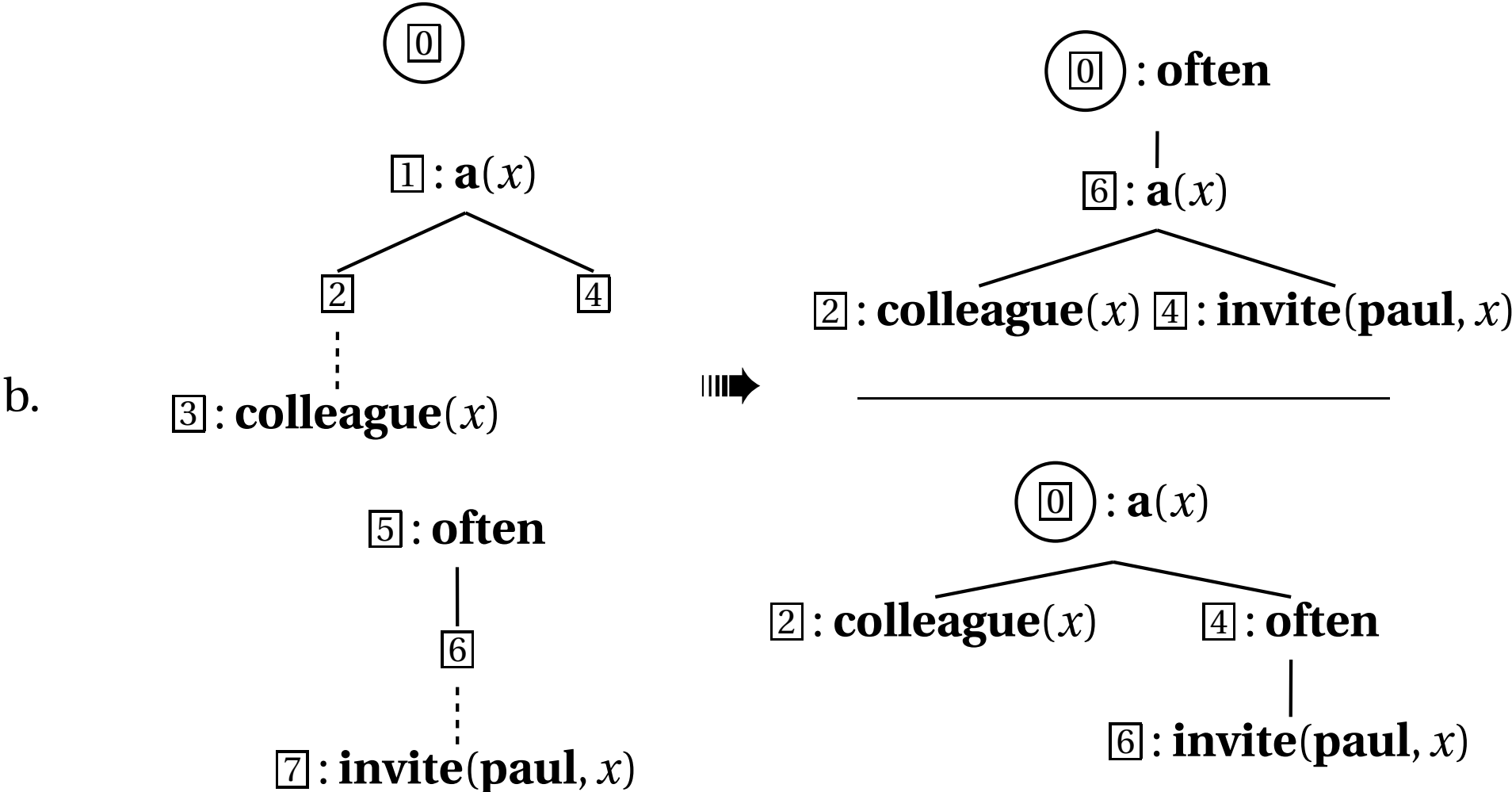
# 3.2.1 MRS

(32) Every student reads a book



# 3.2.2 MRS in the grammar

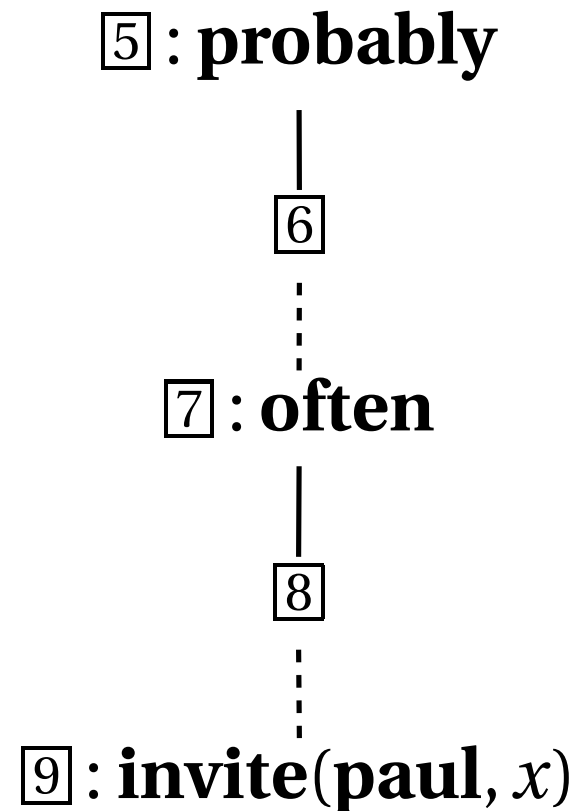
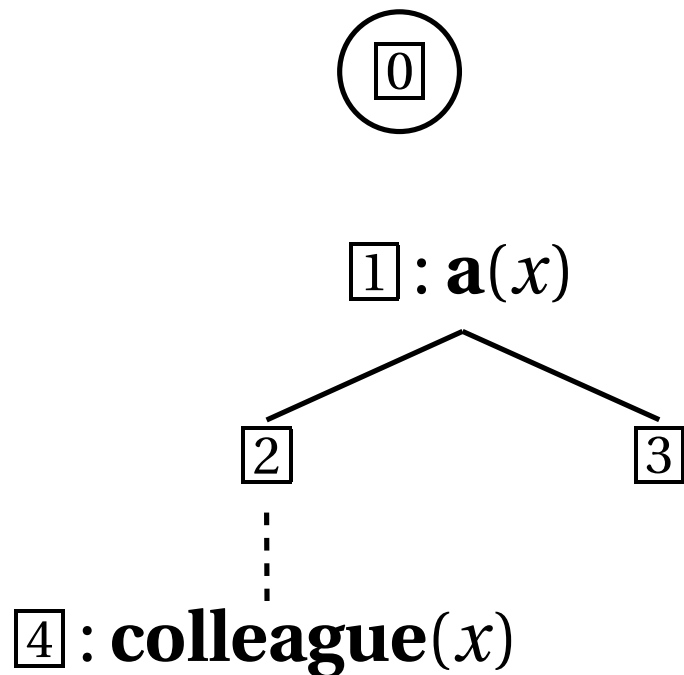
(38) a. Souvent, Paul invite un collègue.  
 'Paul often invites a colleague.'



### 3.2.3 MRS for adverbs in French

- French postverbal adverbs scope left to right.

(39) a. Paul invitera probablement souvent un collègue.  
'Paul will probably often invite a colleague.'

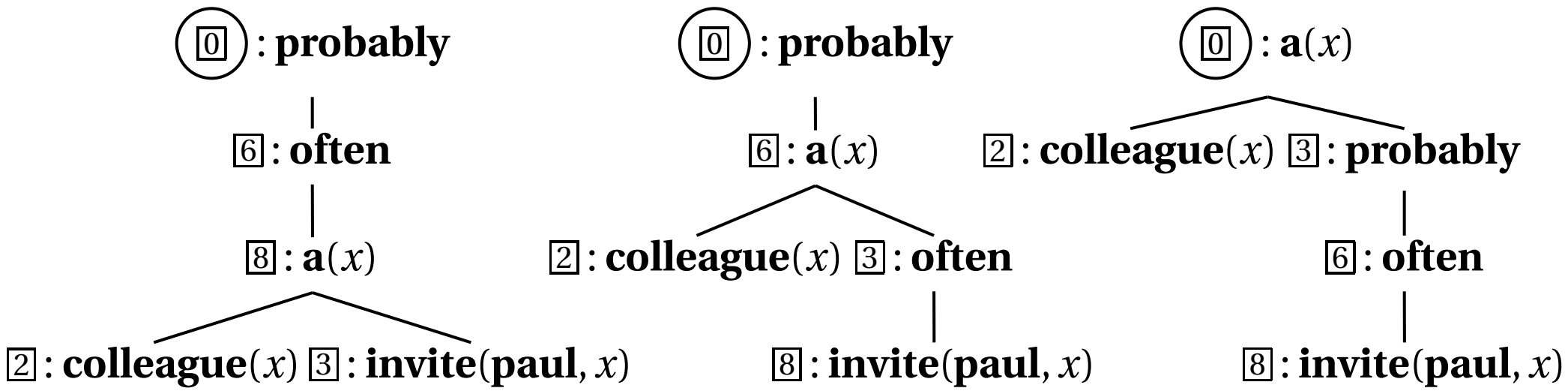




### 3.2.3 French adverbs in HPSG

- French postverbal adverbs scope left to right.

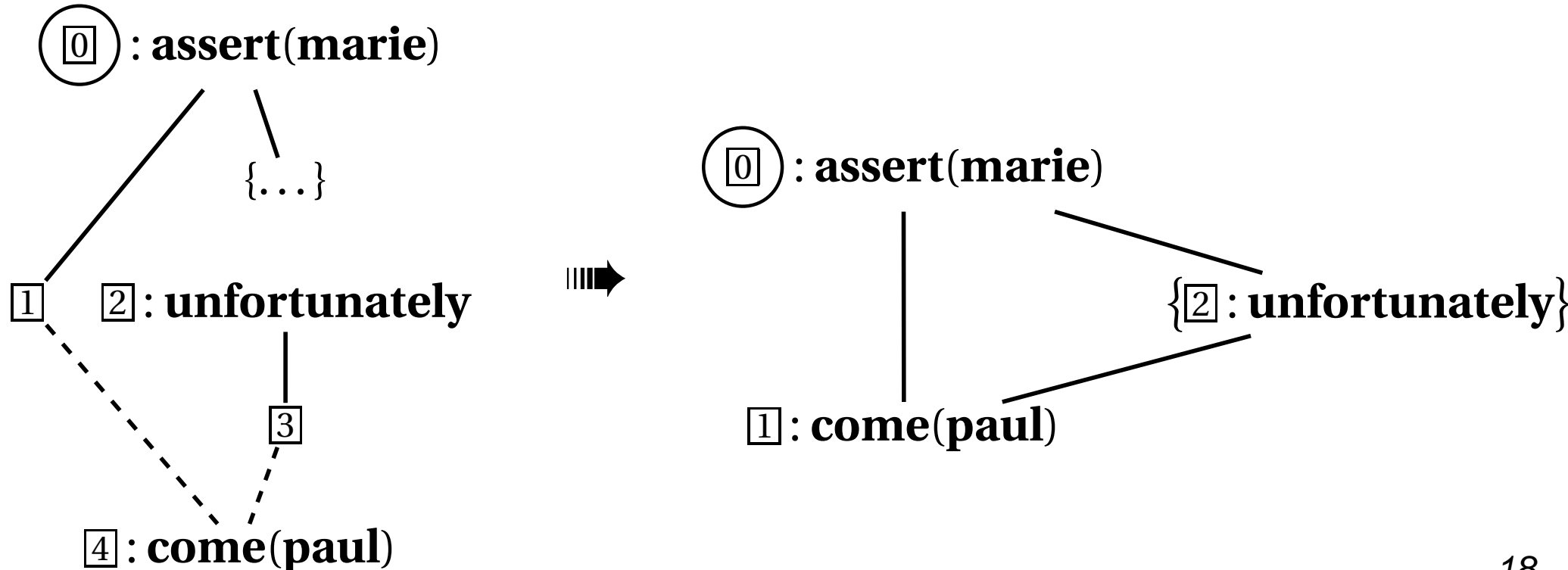
(39) a. Paul invitera probablement souvent un collègue.  
 ‘Paul will probably often invite a colleague.’



# 3.3.1 Parentheticals: the issue

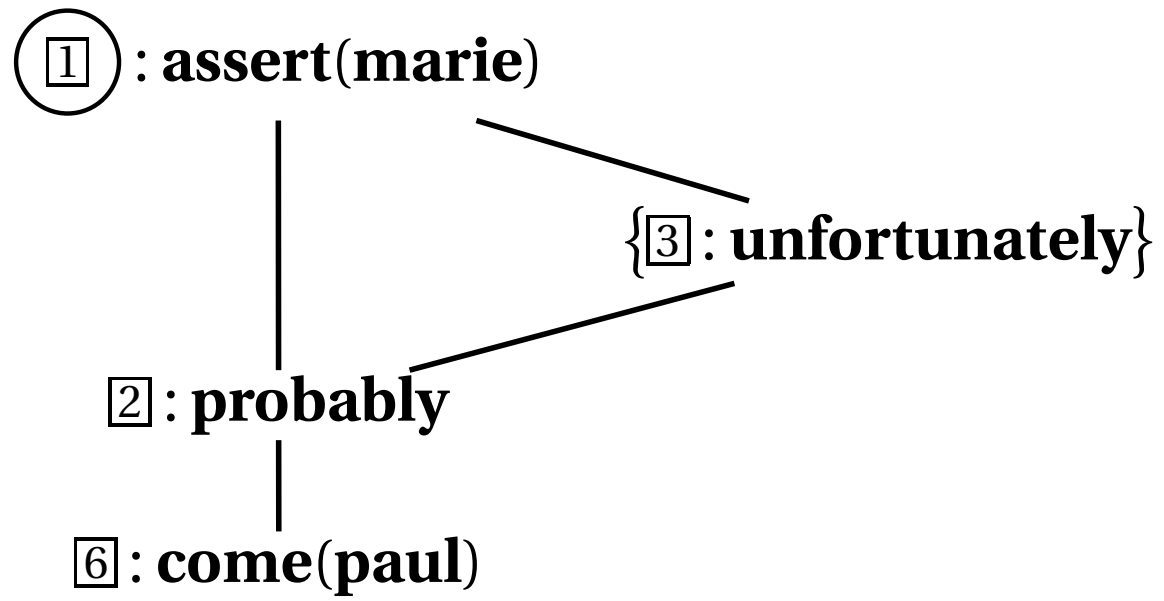
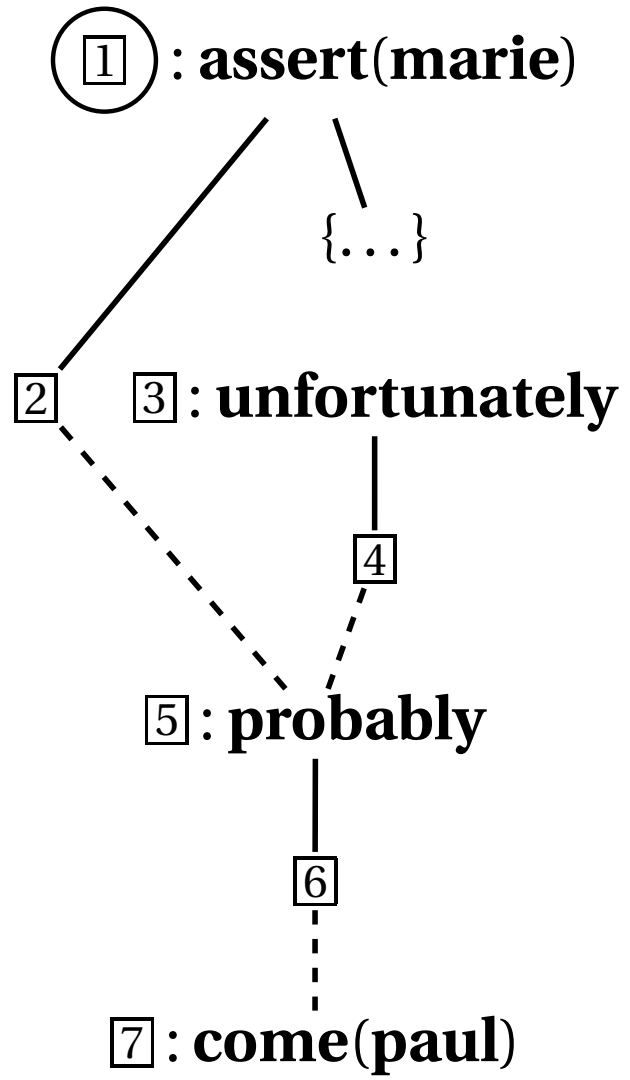
- The argument of the evaluative is also part of the main semantic content.
- This is a violation of “resource sensitivity”.
- Our solution: we take MRSs to be DAGs, not trees.

(43) Marie says: *Malheureusement, Paul est venu.*



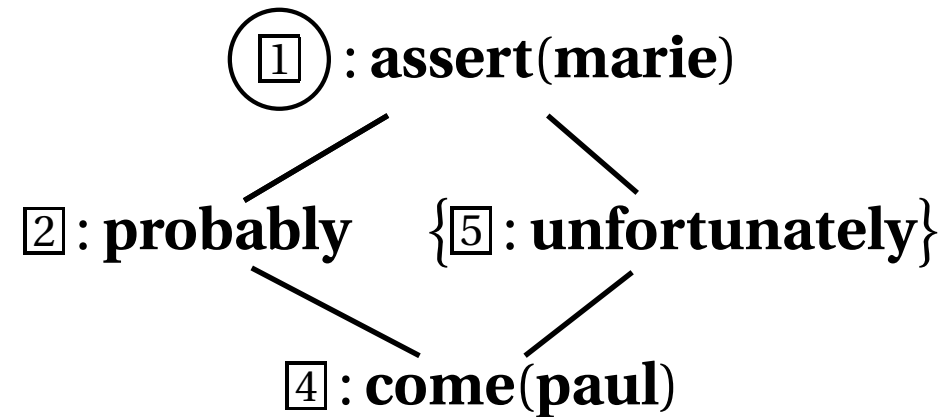
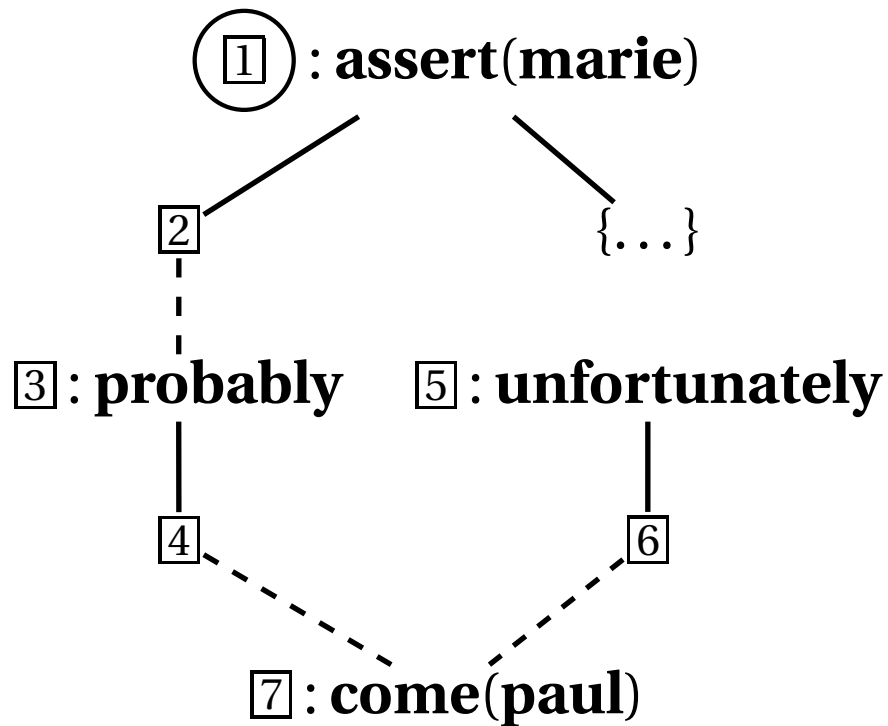
# 3.3.2 Scoping evaluatives

(44) Marie says: *Malheureusement, Paul est probablement venu.*



## 3.3.2 Scoping evaluatives

(45) Marie says: *Probablement, Paul est malheureusement venu.*



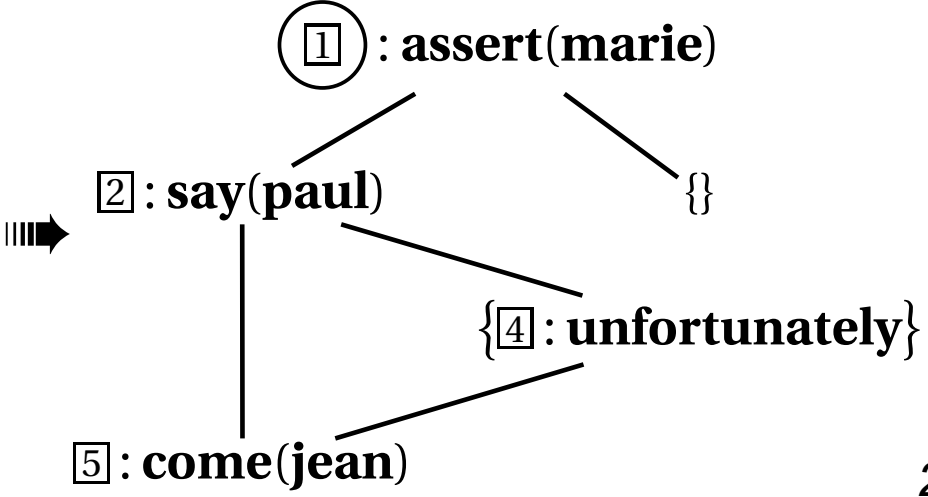
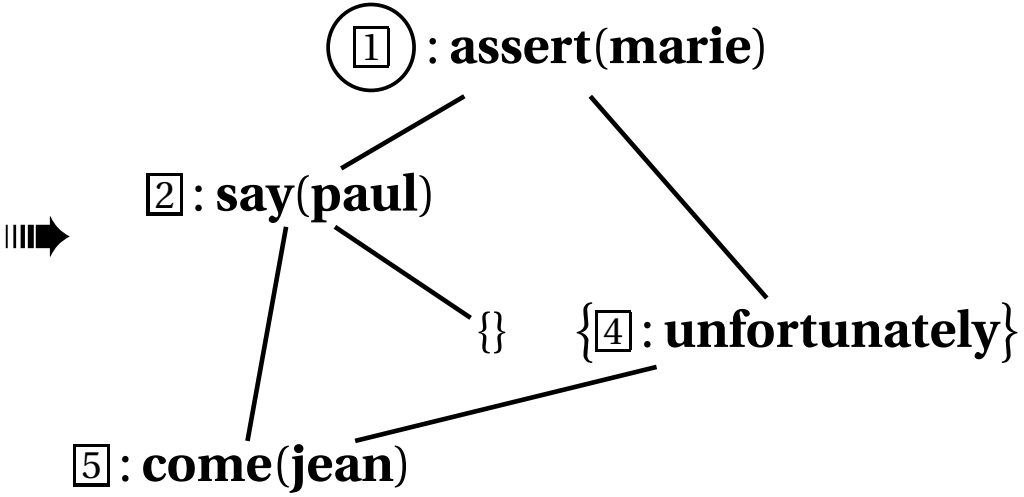
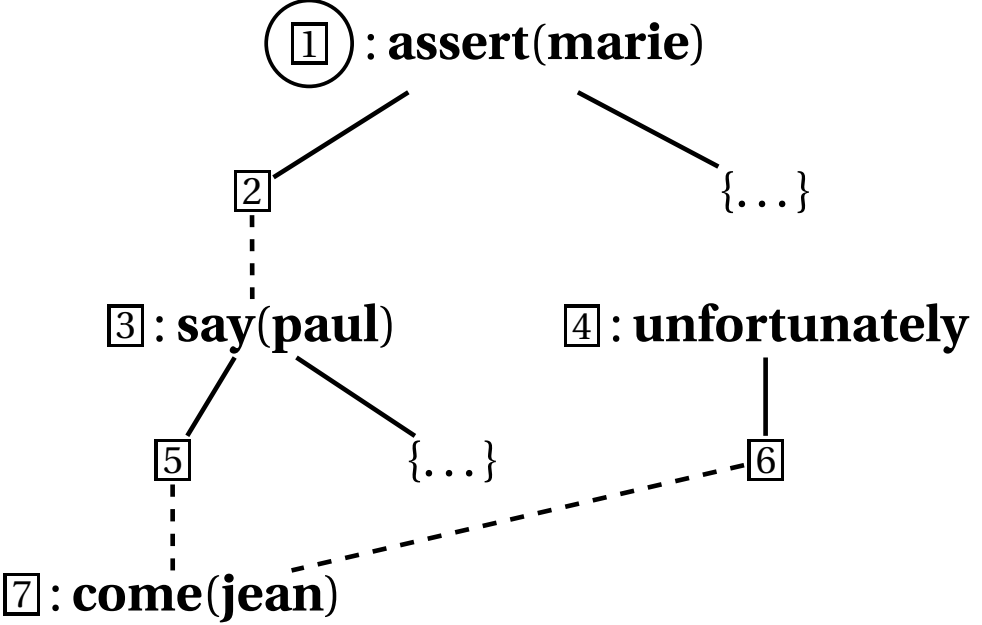
## 3.3.2 Scoping evaluatives

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- Other things that work:
  - Other kinds of parenthetical adverbs (at least agentives)
  - Sentences with multiple parentheticals
  - Parentheticals embedded within parentheticals
  - Quantifiers inside parentheticals
  - Quantifiers scoping below parentheticals

# 3.3.2 Scoping evaluatives

(52) Paul a dit que, malheureusement, Jean viendrait.  
 'Paul said that, unfortunately, Jean would come.'



# Conclusions

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- Evaluatives
  - are just like other adverbs as far as their argument is concerned
  - get scoped in an unusual place
- Another argument for representing explicitly illocutionary relations in the semantics
- (As usual) logical form turns out to be quite useful when we take the syntax-semantics interface seriously