

‘Frankly’, and the syntacticization of speech acts

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I. Introduction. Ross’s (1970) performative analysis attributed to sentences like (1)a. a more abstract syntactic representation, as in (1)b.:

(1)a. Prices slumped

b. [s [NP **I**] [VP **V_{declarative}** [NP **you**] [NP [s prices slumped]]]] (Ross 1970: 224)¹

This analysis has been revived in more recent times in different forms. See the essential proposals of Speas and Tenny (2003), Sigurðsson (2004), Hill (2007), Giorgi (2010, 2015, 2018), Haegeman (2014), Haegeman and Hill (2013), Wiltschko (2014, 2021), Wiltschko and Heim (2016), Krifka (2009, 2021), Miyagawa (2022), among others. What all of these works have in common is the postulation of syntactic functional layers (given in boldface in (2)) representing the speech act, and/or the protagonists of the speech act (the speaker and the addressee):

(2)a. [_{SAP} **SPEAKER SA** [_{sa*} **UTTERANCE CONTENT** [_{sa*} **sa*** **HEARER**]].. (Speas and Tenny 2003: 320)

b. [_{CP}Force..**Λ_A**, **Λ_P**..**St**..**SL** [_{IP}..Pers_S..Num_S..M..**T**.._{VP}..]] (Sigurðsson 2004: 13)
speech event features

c. [_{SAP} **RoleP_{speaker} SA** [_{SAP} **RoleP_{hearer} SA** [_{Utterance} (ForceP)]]] (Hill 2007: 2099)

d. [_{CP}-Σ(speaker’s Temporal Coordinate) .. [_{TP} .. **T** .. [_{VP} ..]]] (Giorgi 2010: 49)

e. [_{PartP1} [_{Part} **né**] [_{FP1} **voc** [**F1**] [_{PartP2} [_{Part} **wè**] [_{FP2} **voc** [**F2**] [_{ForceP}]]]]] (Haegeman 2014: §4.2)

f. [_{ActP} **offen gesagt** [_{Act’} [_{Act°} **schnarchto**] [_{ComP} Max₁ [_{Com’} wirklich [_{Com’} [_{JP} t₁ [_{J’} ganz sicher [_{J’} [_{TP} t₁ sehr laut to] [_{J–} to]]][_– to]]]]] (Krifka 2021: §3.4)

g. [_{GroundAdrP} **Ground_{Adr}** [_{GroundSpkrP} **Ground_{Spkr}** [p-structure]]] (Wiltschko 2021: 82)

h. [_{SpeakerP} **speaker** [_{AddresseeP} **addressee** [_{CommitP} ..[CP..]..] **add°**] **spk°**] (Miyagawa 2022: 108ff)

¹ Followed by what Ross (1970: §3.1) refers to as “Performative Deletion”, i.e. deletion of [_S [NP **I**] [VP **V_{declarative}** [NP **you**]]. Also see McCawley (1968: 157) for evidence that the abstract performative verb of declaratives is arguably *tell*, in English.

All of these proposals, including mine (in Cinque 1999: §4.4 I had also postulated a speech act functional projection hosting such speech act adverbs as *frankly*, *honestly*, etc., and declarative and interrogative mood affixes, as the highest IP projection below C: ...[SpeechActP *frankly*.. [EvaluativeMoodP *fortunately*.. [EvidentialMoodP *allegedly*.. [EpistemicModalP *probably*.., with the further optional possibility of their raising to the split CP area), all of them fall short of permitting a unified analysis of the **three usages** of an adverb like ‘frankly’: 1) as a manner adverb (of verbs of saying); 2) as a speech act adverb; 3) as an IP adverb predicated of an attitude holder.

II. ‘frankly’ as a manner adverb (of verbs of saying).

The first usage of the adverb is that of a manner adverb **exclusively modifying verbs of saying** (‘say’, ‘speak’, ‘talk’, ‘discuss’, etc.):

- (3)a. Among friends, one can speak/*behave/*celebrate/*argue frankly
 b. Purtroppo, con lui non puoi parlare/*giocare/*metterti d’accordo/*bere francamente.
 ‘Unfortunately, with him you cannot talk/*play/*agree/*drink frankly.’

Like all manner adverbs it is merged quite low in the structure of the clause, and is found post-verbally in English and Italian active constructions, due to the raising of the verb (see the ungrammatical variants of (4)a.-b.):

- (4)a. Among friends, one can <*frankly> speak <frankly>.
 b. Purtroppo, con lui non puoi <*francamente> parlare <francamente>.
 ‘Unfortunately, you cannot <frankly> talk <frankly> to him.’

Its merge position is possibly related to the passive voice in light of Chomsky’s observation (Chomsky 1965: 104, after Lees) that passivization is only found with verbs that take manner adverbs freely (Manner → *by* passive), thus excluding *resemble*, *have*, *fit*, *cost*, *weigh*, etc., which neither accept manner adverbs nor can be passivized; the relation with Passive Voice is reinforced by the fact that a manner adverb cannot precede an active past participle ((5)a.), but can a passive one ((5)b.):

- (5)a. *They have **well studied** this topic. (ok: They have **studied this topic well**.) vs.
b. This topic has been **well studied** in adults.

This is suggestive of the movement of the participle phrase to the Spec of Asp_{perfect} (or a subjacent projection) in the former case and to the Spec of a projection subjacent to Voice in the latter case (cf. Cinque 1999: 102).

Like *well*, *frankly*, as a manner adverb, can be found to the left of a passivized verb. See the contrast between (4)a. and (6):

- (6) [A] pudding, which, **it was frankly said**, broke the boys' appetites.

<https://www.fadedpage.com/showbook.php?pid=20190234>

As with all manner adverbs 'frankly' is predicated of the **underlying** subject of the clause that contains it:

- (7)a. **They** told him frankly what his heart condition was.
b. He was told **[by them]** frankly what his heart condition was.

In addition to this usage as a manner adverb modifying a lexical verb of saying, 'frankly' has two more usages, which correspond to two different positions of Merge (different from the manner position and from each other):

one **as a speech act adverb predicated of the speaker or of the addressee** and the other as an **adverb predicated of an attitude holder**.

III. 'frankly' as a speech act adverb.²

The usage of 'frankly' as a speech act adverb is characterized by three main properties.

² Other 'speech act' adverbs (*honestly*, *sincerely*, *truthfully*, ..) behave somewhat differently (as they are not confined to verbs of saying).

“[I]n declarative sentences the adverb relates to the speaker, but in interrogative sentences it relates to the addressee” (Schreiber 1972: 331). Also see Ross (1970: note 19). See:³

(8)a. Frankly, I didn’t like the book.

b. Frankly, did you like the book? (Schreiber 1972: 330)

The second property, pointed out in Giorgi (2010: 72) is that in initial position “the presence of these adverbs requires a long pause before the rest of the sentence”.

The third property of ‘frankly’ (and speech act adverbs in general) is that when related to the speaker they cannot occur embedded (Greenbaum 1969: §5.2.1; Giorgi 2010: §3.2.2). See (9):⁴

(9)a. *He asked whether frankly they would leave early (Greenbaum 1969: 112)

b. *It was said that frankly Harry is a fool. (Schreiber 1972: 328)

c. *He requested that, frankly, the papers be turned in next Monday (Miyagawa 2022: 50)

³ Giorgi (2010: 94) gives an interrogative case in which the adverb relates ambiguously to either speaker or addressee:

(i) Francamente, chi si è sbagliato?

‘Frankly, who was wrong?’

And so does Greenbaum (1969: 83) (also see Woods 2014: 215):

(ii) Frankly, isn’t she very stupid?

Gärtner and Steinbach (2006: §3) give instead an example of an imperative where the speech act adverb has a speaker orientation:

(ii) Seriously, don’t waste your time with polemics!

Greenbaum (1969: 85) report that many style disjuncts [speech act adverbs] may occur freely in imperatives, but other native speakers reject categorically (almost all) such sentences. As a matter of fact some native speakers of English find it hard to relate *frankly* to the speaker in questions and imperatives (I’ll come back to that).

⁴ Apparent exceptions, like those in (i), are possibly to be understood as an instance of IP adverb predicated of an attitude holder, as in section IV:

(i)a. Mario disse a tutti che francamente era stanco di ascoltare sciocchezze (Giorgi 2010: 73)

‘Mario told everybody that frankly he was tired of hearing silly things.’

b. Max teilte uns mit, dass er offen/ehrlich gesagt keinen Rotwein trinkt. (Krifka 2021: 33)

‘Max said that he frankly/honestly does not drink red wine.’

IV. ‘frankly’ as an IP adverb predicated of an attitude holder.

Consider the following examples:

(10)a. **Gianni** riteneva che tutto questo fosse francamente inutile.

‘Gianni used to think that all this was frankly useless.’

b. A/Per **lei** i Rossi erano francamente odiosi.

‘According to her the Rossis were frankly obnoxious.’

c. ..quello di banchiere-mecenate, un attributo da **lui** francamente detestato. (p.12 of https://www.jstor.org/stable/26150373#metadata_info_tab_contents)

‘..that of banker-philanthropist, an attribute by him frankly loathed.’

d. **He** frankly admitted that he would not like to be headmaster [...] (Greenbaum 1969: 86)

That this usage of the adverb is **internal to IP** is clearly shown by its occurrence within participial reduced relative clauses like (10)c., and within adjectival phrases which are predicative (like *unacceptable* and *increscioso* in (11)), and which can thus enter a reduced, IP, relative clause, vs. non-predicative, direct modification, adjectives (like *heavy* in (12)a., or *principale* ‘main’ in (12)b.), which cannot (cf. Cinque 2010: Chapter 5):

(11)a. For him these were [[frankly unacceptable] conditions]. (cf. Cinque 2010: 57)

b. Questa era per Gianni [una situazione [[francamente [incresciosa]]].

‘This was for Gianni a frankly unfortunate situation.’

(12)a. *Everybody considered them [[frankly heavy] drinkers]. (cf. Cinque 2010: 57)

b. *Lui riteneva questa [la causa [francamente principale]] dei suoi guai.

‘He reckoned this the frankly main cause of his problems.’

For evidence concerning the lack of CP left peripheral layers in reduced participial and adjectival relative clauses, and for their IP nature, I refer to Cinque (2020: §3.4.2). Here I limit myself to recall the principal evidence for the lack of a CP layer, thus excluding the possibility that this usage of ‘frankly’ belongs to a speech act layer higher than IP.

As noted in Jacobson (1995: 460), ‘Headless’ participial RCs appear not to be possible. See (13):

(13)a. *What(ever) displayed in this window will be sold by midnight.

b. *Whoever invited to the party is supposed to bring a bottle.

The same seems to be true of Italian:

(14)a. *Chi invitato alla festa dovrà portare una bottiglia.

who invited to.the party will.must bring a bottle

‘He who [is] invited to the party will have to bring a bottle.’

b. *Quanti intervistati hanno negato di conoscerlo.

how many interviewed have denied to know.him

‘Those who.pl [were] interviewed denied knowing him.’

The ungrammaticality of (13) and (14) could be blamed on the fact that the *wh*-phrase receives no Case within the ‘Headless’ RC due to the absence of finite Tense (see Kayne 1994: §8.4). Nonetheless, the fact that ‘Headless’ participial RCs appear not to be possible even where no Case licensing is plausibly at issue (see (15), where adverbial *wh*-phrases are involved), appears to suggest that the cause of the ungrammaticality is due to the fact that they contain no CP capable of hosting a *wh*-phrase:

(15)a. *L’articolo sarà recensito dove pubblicato

‘The article will be reviewed where published.’

b. *Quando addormentata, Gianna si mise a russare.⁵

‘When fallen asleep, Gianna started snoring’

The absence of a CP in participial RCs should also account for the impossibility of (16)

⁵ Vs. *Una volta/appena addormentata, Gianna si mise a russare* ‘Once fallen asleep, Gianna started snoring’, where *una volta/appena* are AdvPs plausibly in IP.

as opposed to (17), which involves pied-piping of the whole participle phrase to the Spec of the matrix CP:

(16)a. *That's the screen [behind which [sat t_i]] he won't be able to see her.

b. *Questo è il divano [sul quale_i [sdraiato t_i comodamente]] lui di sicuro si sentirà meglio.

'This is the sofa on which comfortably lain he will for sure feel better.'

(17)a. That's the screen [[sat behind which] he won't be able to see her].

b. Questo è il divano [[sdraiato comodamente sul quale] lui si sentirà di sicuro meglio].

'This is the sofa [[comfortably lain on which] he will for sure feel better].'

In addition to the lack of a CP layer that hosts *wh*-relative phrases, there is evidence that past participle RCs also lack Topic and Focus layers (see (18)):

(18)a. *Il libro [a Carlo [regalato(gli)]] non era adatto alla sua età.

the book [to Carlo [given(to.him)]] was not suitable for his age

b. *Il libro [A MARIA [dato (non a Carlo)]] era molto costoso.

the book [to Maria (FOCUS) [given (not to Carlo)]] was very expensive

All of this suggests that the usage of 'frankly' where the adverb is predicated of an attitude holder rather than of the speaker or the addressee belongs to a layer within the IP space.

V. A unification: 'frankly' as a manner adverb modifying a verb of saying at different heights.

A unified analysis of all three usages of 'frankly' can be reached, I think, which is closer to Ross's (1970) and Schreiber's (1972) original proposals (with one crucial difference).

V.I For the first usage of 'frankly', that of a manner predicate-adverb (rather than of a sentence-adverb), I refer back to section II. As noted there, **it is predicated of the underlying subject of a lexical verb of saying.**

The other two usages can also be seen as manner predicate-adverbs modifying a verb of saying at different Merge positions.

V.II Concerning the speech act usage, Ross (1970: 224) posits for assertions, as noted, *I tell you (frankly)* IP and for questions (p.263note19) an underlying structure like *I request of you that you tell me (frankly)* IP (where *I tell you* and *I request of you that you tell me* eventually get deleted). And Schreiber (1972: 325fn7) interestingly states that “..my basic purpose [...] is to justify deriving style disjuncts [speech act adverbs, G.C.] from higher clause manner adverbs”, literally as adverbs predicated of the abstract declarative and interrogative verbs (also see Piñón 2013):

- (19)a. ~~‘I tell you~~ **frankly** [IP]’
 b. ~~‘I ask/request of you that you tell me~~ **frankly** [IP]’

However, this cannot be right as represented in (19). The (root) clause cannot be a literal complement of ‘I tell you frankly’ of (19)a. or of ‘I ask you that you tell me frankly’ of (19)b. English root questions involve subject-auxiliary inversion (cf. (20)), which is not possible in embedded contexts:

- (20)a. (*I ask you that you tell me) frankly, would you be ready to accept that?
 b. (*I ask you that you tell me) frankly, what would you be ready to accept?

What I suggest is that the sentences ‘I tell you frankly’ and ‘I ask/request of you that you tell me frankly’ are part of a separate discourse fragment (in the sense of Williams’ 1977 discourse vs. sentence grammar), where ‘frankly’ modifies as a manner adverb the speech act verb of saying ‘tell’, and is the only pronounced part of the discourse fragment, possibly connected to the pronounced root sentence by the special discourse head that connects two sentences in discourse, as proposed in Cinque 2008 for English-type non-restrictive relative clauses, and further elaborated in Giorgi (2015: 245ff; 2018: §5.3), in line with a strict interpretation of antisymmetry applying across discourse.

- (21)a. [_{HP} [_{CP} I TELL YOU frankly] H [_{CP} prices slumped]]
 b. [_{HP} [I ASK/REQUEST OF YOU THAT YOU TELL ME frankly] H [_{CP} would you be ready to accept that?]]

This then derives the ‘highest’, speech act, usage of ‘frankly’, which is in fact outside of the root clause modifying a silent verb of saying and is predicated of either the speaker or the addressee (whence the long pause noted by Giorgi 2010: 72).⁶

On the same non-integration of speech act particles in German, which do not count as first position occupants for V2, see Wiltschko and Heim (2016: §3.1.2) (and also the non-integrated peripheral adverbial clauses discussed in Haegeman and Schönenberger (2021), after Frey (2020)a. and b., and Badan and Haegeman (2022)):⁷

- (22)a. Gell, du hast einen Hund gehabt
 b. Du hast einen Hund gehabt, gell.
 ‘You had a dog, right?’

The non-ambiguity of the speaker’s orientation of the adverb in declaratives and its possible ambiguity in questions follows from the **subject orientation** of manner adverbs (which relate to ‘I’ in (21)a. and to either ‘you’ or (more marginally) ‘I’ in (21)b., repeated here as (23), with the double possibility of subject modification:

⁶ It remains to be seen how best to treat honorific and speaker and allocutive agreement on the verb in main clauses of certain languages, on which see Oyharçabal (1993), Miyagawa (2012,2022), Zu (2015,2018), and Portner, Pak and Zanuttini (2019). If clitic-like, these types of agreement could be refer back to discourse fragments.

⁷ This requires a different analysis for the German speech act participial phrase *offen gesagt* of (2)f. above ([_{ActP} *offen gesagt* [_{Act'} [_{Act°} *schnarchto*] [_{Comp} *Max*_i [_{Com'} *wirklich* [_{Com'} [_{JP} *t*₁ [_{J'} *ganz sicher* [_{J'} [_{TP} *t*₁ *sehr laut to*] [_{J-} *to*]] [_{J-} *to*]]]] - Krifka 2021: §3.4), and the comparable Bulgarian one (*čestno kazano* ‘honestly/frankly said’ - *Čestno kazano me mrazi* ‘Honestly/frankly said, me he.hates’), which count as first position occupants for German V2 and for the Tobler-Mussafia Law holding of Bulgarian clitics, respectively. These participial phrases are possibly like the gerund adverbial phrase of Italian and English discussed below (e.g. *Gianni riteneva che tutto questo fosse francamente parlando inutile*. ‘Gianni used to think that all this was **frankly speaking** useless.’).

(23) [_{HP} [**I ASK/REQUEST OF YOU** <(??)**frankly**> **THAT YOU TELL ME** <**frankly**>] H
[_{CP} would you be ready to accept that?]]

The marginality of the subject orientation in (23) (see footnote 3 above) may perhaps be related to the non-prototypical status of ‘ask/request’ as verbs of saying (some native speakers of English do not accept the speaker orientation of *frankly* in questions).

The **non-integration** of the speech act adverb ‘frankly’ in the root clause (CP) is plausibly confirmed by its incompatibility with the complementizer *que* in French (see (24)a.), in sharp contrast to all the other high adverbs, evaluative, (*heureusement*), evidential (*évidemment*), epistemic (*probablement*), irrealis (*peut-être*):⁸

(24)a. Franchement (*que) je ne comprends pas pourquoi. (Isabelle Charnavel and Dominique Sportiche, pers. comm.)

b. Heureusement qu'il n'a pas été blessé.

‘Fortunately he wasn't hurt.’

c. Evidemment que l'aspect financier joue un rôle.

‘Evidently the financial aspect plays a role.’

d. Probablement que vous ne l'êtes pas, mais vous devez quand-même le penser.

‘Probably you are not, but you have any way to think about it.’

e. Peut-être que je me trompe.

‘Perhaps I am wrong’

⁸ Some of these adverbs can be followed by *que* or by subject-auxiliary inversion (but not both), while others only by *que* (see Cinque 1999:177note 53). “Complex inversion, unlike simple inversion, is compatible with ‘Adv-*que*’ structures in some registers of French” (Laenzlinger 1998: 120). See:

(i) Peut-être que Jean nous fera-t-il l'honneur de se joindre à nous.

‘Maybe Jean will do us the honor of joining us.’

On the root character of the ‘Adv-*que*’ option, see Laenzlinger (1998: 118), and his example (i):

(I) *Je crois que peut-être que Jean viendra.

‘I think that Jean maybe will come.’

The same appears to be true of Romanian adverbs corresponding to (24)b.-e., except that the adverb + *că* constructon (*evident/poate/etc. că..* ‘evidently/perhaps/etc. that..’) can also appear embedded (Lupşa 2019: 94).

This seems to suggest that *franchement* is not in the root left periphery (moved there from inside IP), unlike the high adverbs of (24)b.-e.

These high adverbs can come to precede topicalized and focused phrases (see (25), from Italian):⁹

(25)a. Fortunatamente/Evidentemente/Probabilmente/Forse **a Gianni** non **gli** ha detto nulla.

‘Lit. Luckily/Evidently/Probably/Perhaps to Gianni not to-him ((s)he).said anything’

b. Fortunatamente/Evidentemente/Probabilmente/Forse **QUESTO** ha fatto.

‘Luckily/Evidently/Probably/Perhaps this (focus) (s)he did.’

Thus they appear able to move to a high position in the left periphery, possibly distinct from Rizzi’s (2004) Modifier Phrase¹⁰, although they share with movements to his Modifier Phrase two crucial properties that distinguish both from the movement of (lower) adverbs to FocusP and TopicP.

As Rizzi (2004: §6 and note 10) observes, while the topicalization and focalization of (lower) adverbs such as *rapidamente*, *improvvisamente*, etc. (also see Cinque 2004: §6) is **unbounded** (cf. (26)a.), and **does not trigger Relativized Minimality violations** (cf. (26)b.))

(26)a. [*Rapidamente*_i, Gianni dice [che hanno risolto _{t_i} il primo problema, ma non gli altri]].

(Rizzi 2004: 249nota 10)

‘Rapidly (topic), Gianni says that that they solved the first problem, but not the others.’

b. **RAPIDAMENTE**_i i tecnici hanno **probabilmente** risolto il problema _{t_i} (NON LENTAMENTE). (Rizzi 2004: 235)

⁹ And possibly follow “domain adverbs” (‘politically’, ‘musically’, etc.), and “scene setting” adverbs (Cinque 1999: 28,87; Benincà and Poletto 2004: §3.2; Munaro 2023), which are also in the left periphery (*Politically, what are the implications of that speech?* - Ernst 1985: 171; *Ieri, a che ora pensi che sia tornato?* ‘Yesterday, at what time do you think that he came back?’). Also see Cinque (1990: 89-94) on the fronting of “scene setting” adverbs only from an IP initial position of merge.

¹⁰ Although, to my ear, (i), with a lower adverb preceding a topic phrase, is not unacceptable:

(i) *Improvvisamente/Rapidamente, su questo, cambiò opinione.*

‘Suddenly/Rapidly, on this, (s)he changed opinion.’

‘Rapidly (focus) the technicians have probably solved the problem (not slowly).’

movement of these adverbs to his Modifier Phrase is instead bounded (cf. (27)a.) and triggers Relativized Minimality violations (cf. (27)b.):

(27)a. Rapidamente, (*Gianni dice che) hanno risolto il problema (Rizzi 2004: 249note10)

‘Rapidly, (Gianni says that) they solved the problem.’

b. *Rapidamente_i, i tecnici hanno **probabilmente** risolto t_i il problema (Rizzi 2004: 234)¹¹

‘Rapidly, the technicians have probably solved the problem.’

The same is true of the fronting to the left periphery of the higher adverbs seen above (*fortunatamente* ‘luckily’, *evidentemente* ‘evidently’, *probabilmente* ‘probably’, *forse* ‘perhaps’):

(28)a. * [Probabilmente_i, Gianni crede [che t_i riusciranno a risolvere il primo problema, ma non gli altri]].

‘Probably, Gianni thinks that they will manage to solve the first problem, but not the others.’

b. Probabilmente_i, QUESTO ha (*fortunatamente) t_i fatto.¹²

‘Probably, this (focus) (s)he luckily did.’

¹¹ Also see the parallel case of (i) in French:

(i)a. Heureusement, sans doute que Pierre viendra (Sueur 1978: 238)

‘Lit. Luckily, surely that Pierre will come.’

b. *Sans doute, heureusement que Pierre viendra (Sueur 1978: 238)

‘Lit. Surely, luckily that Pierre will come.’

¹² This recalls Koster’s (1978: 205ff) observations that movement of a high adverb like *waarschijnlijk* ‘probably’ to the Vorfeld in Dutch is not unbounded (see (i)a.) and is subject to minimality (in that it cannot cross a higher adverb like *helaas* ‘unfortunately’) (see (i)b., and the discussion in Cinque 1999: 18; Rizzi 2004: 234):

(i)a. * [Waarschijnlijk_i zegt Jan [_{CP} dat hij t_i ziek is]]

Probably says Jan that he sick is

b. *Waarschijnlijk_i is hij helaas t_i ziek.

‘Probably is he unfortunately sick.’

These higher adverbs, as opposed to the ‘lower’ ones, cannot be topicalized (see (28)a.), nor focalized, nor clefted (see (29)), suggesting, as Koster (1978) noted for the corresponding Dutch adverbs, that they cannot enter an operator chain:

- (29)a. *PURTROPPO/PROBABILMENTE/FORSE è ritornato, non per fortuna/per certo.
 ‘Unfortunately/Probably/Perhaps (focus) he returned, not fortunately/certainly.’
 b. *E’ purtroppo/probabilmente/forse che è ritornato, non per fortuna/per certo.
 ‘It’s unfortunately/probably/perhaps that he returned, not fortunately/certainly.’

V.III Concerning the third usage of ‘frankly’ as an IP adverb predicated of an attitude holder, exemplified in section IV above, **I would like to suggest that it is internal to an adverbial gerund IP (whose PRO is controlled by the attitude holder)**¹³, where the adverb locally modifies a verb of saying ([_{IP} PRO *frankly speaking*]). So the examples in (10) and (11) seen above, repeated here as (30), would be:¹⁴

- (30)a. **Gianni_i** riteneva che tutto questo fosse [_{IP} PRO_i francamente ~~parlando~~] inutile.
 ‘Gianni used to think that all this was [frankly ~~speaking~~] useless.’
 b. A/Per **lei_i** i Rossi risultavano [_{IP} PRO_i francamente ~~parlando~~] odiosi.
 ‘To her the Rossi’s were [frankly ~~speaking~~] obnoxious.’
 c. ..quello di banchiere-mecenate, un attributo da **lui_i** [_{IP} PRO_i francamente ~~parlando~~] detestato. (p.12 of https://www.jstor.org/stable/26150373#metadata_info_tab_contents)
 ‘..that of banker-philanthropist, an attribute by him [frankly ~~speaking~~] loathed.’
 d. **He_i** [_{IP} PRO_i frankly ~~speaking~~] admitted that he would not like to be headmaster [..]
 e. These are [FOR [_{pro_{arb}}]_i] [[[_{IP} PRO_i frankly ~~speaking~~] unacceptable] conditions].

¹³ As is normally the case with adverbial gerunds:

- (i)a. A **lei_i** i Rossi_k [**PRO_{i/*k}** avendo visto alla scena] risultarono veramente odiosi.
 ‘To her the Rossis [having seen the scene] appeared really obnoxious.’
 b. Il quadro, **da lui_i** attribuito erroneamente a Sironi_k [**PRO_{i/*k}** essendo sempre poco attento ai particolari],..
 ‘The painting, by him wrongly attributed to Sironi [always being little attentive to details],..’

¹⁴ Note that the gerund (*parlando/speaking*) can be silent in Italian and English, but the participles *gesagt* and *kazano* ‘said’, of German and Bulgarian, *offen gesagt* and *čestno kazano* ‘honestly/frankly said’(see fn.7), cannot.

VI. Thus, in all three usages ‘FRANKLY’ IS A MANNER ADVERB MODIFYING A VERB OF SAYING, PREDICATED OF THE SUBJECT OF THAT VERB. The only difference among the three usages is the different merge position of the verb of saying ((i) in the VP of a clause containing a lexical verb of saying, (ii) in the VP of an abstract clause containing a speech act verb of saying preceding the root clause and (iii) in the VP of a verb of saying within an adverbial adjunct, whose PRO subject is controlled by an attitude holder).

Appendix. Some (apparent) problems.

Speech act adverbs like ‘frankly’ cannot appear embedded (see (9), repeated here as (31)):

- (31)a. *He asked whether frankly they would leave early (Greenbaum 1969: 112)
 b. *It was said that frankly Harry is a fool. (Schreiber 1972: 328)
 c. *Luisa credeva che francamente si fosse comportato male. (Giorgi 2010: 72)
 ‘Luisa believed that frankly he had misbehaved.’
 d. *He requested that, frankly, the papers be turned in next Monday (Miyagawa 2022: 50)

Two exceptions are non-restrictive relative clauses ((32)), and peripheral ‘because’-clauses (in the sense of Haegeman 1984, 1991, 2012, and especially Baldan and Haegeman 2020) ((33)):

- (32)a. Ramona, who frankly is a doll, is leaving. (Schreiber 1972: 328, after J.P.Thorne)¹⁵
 b. The students, who, frankly, had worked hard, passed the exam. (Hengeveld and Mackenzie 2008: 58)
 c. John, who I frankly don’t like, wants to visit me tomorrow. (Krifka 2009: §3.11)

¹⁵ As opposed to restrictive relatives (Schreiber 1972: 329fn18):

(i) *The girl who frankly is a doll is leaving.

But see (ii), which for me is acceptable possibly under the usage of *francamente* ‘frankly’ as an adverb predicated of an attitude holder (here the subject ‘I’ of the restrictive relative clause):

(ii) La sola persona a cui non vorrei francamente affidare i miei figli è lui.

‘The only person to whom I frankly would not want to entrust my children is him.’

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