

Chap 6: Adjectives

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what are they

- Adjectives: 'describing words' since they provide information about the qualities of something described in a noun
- modification vs. predication
 - (1)
 - a. He is a happy man.
 - b. He is happy.
 - (2)
 - a. He was late.
 - b. The late president
 - (3)
 - a. She cannot save on her present wages.
 - b. All the directions are present at today's meeting.

meaning difference between mod v. pred

- more data
 - (4) The ecstatic children jumped into the pool.
The children were ecstatic.
 - (5) Spray the green wall.
Spray the wall green
- the ecstatic children: the set of children who are ecstatic; the adjective is a modifier of the noun, part of the description of the noun
- was ecstatic: the NP denotes a set of children and "ecstatic" is information that is contributed by the rest of the sentence; being ecstatic is a property assigned to the set of the children

morphology

- derivational affix: ish, ary, al, ic, able, al, ate, ant, ent, ive...
(fiendish, dangerous, disciplinary, legal, artistic)
- related nouns and verbs: beautiful/beauty, dangerous/danger, drinkable/drink, talkative, talk
- participle forms
 - (6) a. Am I boring you?
b. I haven't bored you, have I?

more on morphology

- functional and semantic shift: bogus (fake/ridiculous)
- compounding: well-liked, well-intentioned, self-centered, people-oriented, two-green books
- semantic shift: sweet, bad, cool
- no affix: full, fun, cool, happy, slick
- participial adj: exciting, bored, interesting, faught

more on morphology

- ly adjective: friendly, lively, queenly (cf. adverb -ly: quickly, slowly, quietly...)
 - (7) a. the friendly/lively/queenly woman
 - b. *the quickly/slowly/quietly woman
- inflectional: friendlier/friendliest, collar/collest
- more/most: more/less interesting, enthusiastic/boring, fun, extraordinary
 - (8) two syllables: *boringer, *graciouser
 - one syllable: *fuller *fullest
- suppletive: good/better/best, bad/worse/worst

modification: attributive

- general adjectives
 - (9) some enchanted evening
a very old story
- attributive only: wooden, drunken, golden, main, mere, only
 - (10) *This objection is main.

predicative

- alive, asleep, aware, afraid, ...

(11) He is cold.

He made the fish alive.

(12) a. *We found an asleep child in a basket on our doorstep.

b. *He is an afraid man.

ordering

- general before specific
(13) large French car/*a French large car
- opinion before description:
(14) a wonderful high ceiling/*a high wonderful ceiling
- interchangeable if they are semantically the same class
(15) a. the intelligent, content woman
b. the content, intelligent woman

more on the ordering

- not interchangeable with different semantic classes
 - (16) a. the content, intelligent, Japanese woman
 - b. *the Japanese, content, intelligent woman

- size vs. age
 - (17) a. a new German car
 - b. *a German new car
 - (18) a. the great oaken table
 - b. *the oaken great table

- Complements:
 - (19) unaware of speaking/happy to learn/eager that you should go
 - (20) I am fond of him/*I am fond.

degree adj

- types
 1. more/most, less/least,
rather/quite/extremely/barely/entirely/scarcely
 - (21) the more/most/less/least popular idea
 2. degree
 - (22) Lion is very/so/too/quite tall
- degree words: similar to determiners and grammatically introducing adjectives
 - (23) very: very happy
 - too: too much/too willing to be of service

ungradable

- ungradeable
 - (24) a. extreme qualities: terrified, furious, starving
b. absolute qualities: alive, correct, dead, male, dead, human
 - (25) He is utterly/*very terrified.
He is completely/*fairly dead.

position

- prenominal
 - (26) these ferocious dinosaurs
these very ferocious dinosaurs
 - (27) * very ferocious six/all/these dinosaurs

position 2

- After linking verbs:
 - (28) The problem appeared complicated
The boys grew taller over the summer
The car was bright red
- AP tests after linking verbs with degree adv
 - (29) a. *They remained very friends
b. *They couple seemed very in good health
 - (30) a. The problem appeared very complicated.
b. The boys grew much taller over the summer

postnominal

- data
- (31) All things possible have been done
You should always give something useful/interesting/expensive as a gift.
- (32) Idiomatic:
poet laureate, heir apparent, sum total, the authorities concerned
- (33) You should wear something warm.
Take me somewhere nice.
- (34) It has all the grip, technical and intellectual, that you would expect.

restriction

- Restrictions:

- (35) a. the impressive/smart/well-dressed woman walked in
b. *the woman impressive/smart/well-dressed walked in
- (36) a. proud of her son
b. proud woman
c. *a proud of her son woman

prenominal adjectives

- Only Prenominal adjectives
 - (37) a. Lion is an utter/mere fool
b. *Lion is a fool utter/mere
 - (38) a. comparative/superative: elder sister, latter half, upper lip, utmost limit
b. participial: the drunken man, golden hair, wooden desk
c. Mis: main street, my only son, this very morning, a mere fancy.
- Only predicative adj
 - (39) a. with prefix 'a': alive, asleep, alone, awake, afraid, ashamed, aware
b. others: well, ill, glad, content, worth

notes

- comparative
 - (40) a. *She is more old than me.
 - b. *That was the reasonablest I've ever seen her.
- unnecessary conjunctions
 - (41) They were playing with a big and red ball.
- ungradeable
 - (42) *She was very furious when she heard the news.