

SEMINAR 12B – ADJECTIVES and ADVERBS (3)

ADVERBS

Characteristics of the adverb

- there are two syntactic functions that characterize adverbs:
 - a) **clause element adverbial**
e.g. He *quite* forgot about it.
 - b) **premodifier of adjective and adverb**
e.g. They are *quite* happy.
They are *quite* happily married.

Morphologically, we can distinguish 3 main types of adverb (a+b are closed classes, c is an open class)

- a) **SIMPLE** adverbs – e.g. *just, only, well*
- many of these denote position and direction: *back, down, near, out, under*
- b) **COMPOUND** adverbs – e.g. *somehow, somewhere, therefore*
- c) **DERIVATIONAL** adverbs - the majority of these adverbs have the suffix *-ly*. Other common suffixes are:

<i>-wise (clockwise)</i>	<i>-ways (sideways)</i>
<i>-ward(s) (northward(s))</i>	<i>-style (cowboy-style)</i>
<i>-fashion (schoolboy-fashion)</i>	

Note:

Rules for forming open-class *-ly* adverbs from adjectives:

- 1) adj. ending in consonant + le → ly
e.g. *simple – simply*
whole – wholly
- 2) adj. ending in consonant + y → i
e.g. *happy – happily*
dry – drily / also: dryly
sly – sily / also: slyly
- 3) adj. ending in *-ic* and *-ical* → *-ically*
e.g. *economic / economical – economically*
tragic / tragical – tragically
- 4) *-ed* participles form adverbs in *-edly* (pronunciation is /idli/)
e.g. *marked – markedly*
assured – assuredly

The adverb and other word classes

Conjunct adverb (*so, yet*) and conjunction

- similarly to conjunctions, also adverbs can express semantic relationship between two utterances or two parts – therefore, they are called conjunct adverbs:

e.g. We paid him a very large sum. *So* he kept quiet about what he saw.

- these conjunct adverbs can also be preceded by a coordinator – *and so, and yet*

Adverb and preposition

- there are various combinations of verbs + particles
- a preposition is normally followed by its complement
- if the verb is intransitive, the particle is an adverb

Compare:

e.g. I ran *down* the road. (prep) v. Please sit *down*. (adverb)
He is *in* his office. (prep) v. You can go *in*. (adverb)
Something's climbing *up* my leg. (prep) v. She is not *up* yet. (adverb)

Phrasal verbs:

If they are separable, the particle is an adverb:

e.g. They turned *on* the light. / They turned the light *on*.

If they cannot be separated, the particle is a preposition:

e.g. They took *to* John.
She looked *after* her children well.

SYNTACTIC FUNCTIONS OF ADVERBS

I. Adverb as adverbial

- we distinguish 4 categories according to grammatical functions
 - a) *adjunct* – *Slowly* they walked back home.
 - b) *subjunct* – Would you *kindly* wait for me?
 - c) *disjunct* – *Frankly*, I'm tired.
 - d) *conjunct* – She has bought a big house, *so* she must have a lot of money.

II. Adverb as modifier

A) Modifier of adjective

- most commonly the adverb is an intensifier or emphasizer

e.g. *extremely* dangerous *really* beautiful
deeply concerned *very* good

C) Modifier of pronoun, determiner, numeral

- intensifying adverbs can premodify:

- i) indefinite pronouns – e.g. *Nearly everybody* came to our party.
- ii) predeterminers – e.g. They recovered *roughly half* their equipment.
Virtually all the students passed the test.
- iii) cardinal numerals – e.g. *Over / Under 200* deaths were reported.
As many as 500 candidates have applied for the post.
- iv) ordinals and superlatives – e.g. We counted *approximately the first* thousand votes.
She gave me *almost the largest* piece of cake.

D) Modifier of noun phrase

- a few intensifiers may premodify noun phrases and precede the determiner (*quite, rather*)

- e.g. She gave *quite* a party.
They were *quite* some players.
It was *rather* a mess.
It is *rather* a big / a *rather* big table.

- if the indefinite article is equivalent to 'one' - some intensifiers precede it:

- e.g. They will stay for *about* a week.
Nearly a thousand demonstrators attended the meeting.
I didn't have *more than* a dollar on me.

- '*kind of*' and '*sort of*' (both infml) usually follow the determiner

- e.g. This must be *a sort of* joke. / *sort of a* joke (infml)

- other of-phrases precede the determiner

- e.g. I had *a bit of* a shock.

- some time / place adverbs postmodify nouns:

- e.g. the meeting *yesterday* the hall *downstairs*
the meal *afterwards* the quotation *above / below*
the day *before* that man *there*

- others may either pre- or postmodify nouns:

- e.g. the *downstairs* hall or the hall *downstairs*
the *above* quotation or the quotation *above*
the *upstairs* neighbour or the neighbour *upstairs*

- '*else*' can postmodify:

- i) indefinite compound pronouns – e.g. *somebody else, nothing else*
- ii) interrogative pronouns and wh- adverbs – e.g. *who else, what else, how else*
- iii) singular all (=everything), much, a great / good deal, a lot, little – e.g. *much else, all else*

E) Adverb as complement of preposition

- some place and time adverbs function as complement of a preposition

- e.g. *over here near there from behind for ever till then*

Note:

Certain verbs are followed by adjectives, not adverbs: *look, feel, seem, smell, sound, taste*
 e.g. This tea tastes a bit *strange*. The idea sound quite *interesting*.
 The dinner smells *good*. The cloth feels *smooth*.

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS

- with gradable adjectives and adverbs there are 3 types of comparison:
 - a) **to a higher degree** – inflectional comp. (-er, -est) or periphrastic (more, most)
 - e.g. Anna is *cleverer* / *more clever* than Susan.
 She arrived *sooner* than you.
 - b) **to the same degree** – as ... as (not as... as / not so ... as)
 - e.g. Ann is *as tall as* Bill. Ann is *not as / so tall as* Bill.
 - c) **to a lower degree** – *less* and *least*
 - e.g. This problem is *less* difficult than the previous one.
 This is *the least* difficult problem of all.

Note:

- comparatives of adj. and adv. can be modified by intensifiers:

e.g. <i>much</i> easier / <i>far</i> easier	<i>somewhat</i> shorter
<i>much</i> more difficult	<i>a lot</i> more convenient
<i>very much</i> better	<i>a good deal</i> sooner

- also superlatives can be modified by intensifiers:

e.g. the youngest candidate *ever*
by far the best solution
 the most absurd answer *by far*

- inflected superlatives (-est) can be modified by 'very': e.g. the *very* youngest

- 'more' and 'most' have other uses:

e.g. He is *more than happy* about it. He is *more keen* than wise.
 He is *more good* than bad. She is *more lazy* than stupid.

- 'most' can have an intensifying meaning:

e.g. Della is *a most efficient* publisher. (= *very, extremely*)

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES**I. Regular forms****1) One-syllable adjectives - er, -est**

e.g. old, tall, long, young, cheap, late, nice

2) Two-syllable adjectives

- a) **-er, est** - adj. ending in -y: e.g. *happy, easy, lucky, noisy, busy*, etc.
+ adj. ending in an unstressed vowel - /l/: *feeble, gentle, noble, simple*
+ adj. ending in -ow: *mellow, narrow, shallow*
Also: *unhappy, untidy*

- b) **more** and **most** - other two-syllable adj. ending in *-ing, -ed, -ful, -less*

!! With some two-syllable adjectives both ways are possible:
e.g. *polite, common, clever, narrow, simple, quiet, shallow*

3) Three-syllable and longer adj. – more and most

e.g. *intelligent, practical, beautiful, interesting, expensive, comfortable*, etc.

Note:

- Some **compound adjectives**, like *good-looking* or *well-known* have two possible forms:

e.g. *good-looking* *better-looking* / *more good-looking* *best-looking* / *most good-looking*
well-known *better-known* / *more well-known* *best-known* / *most well-known*

- **more** and **most** with **short adjectives** instead of -er, -est - when a comparative is not followed immediately by than, forms with -er are also possible

e.g. The road is getting *more* and *more steep*. (also: *steeper and steeper*)
also: John is *more mad* than Bob is.

But not with: *bad, great, old, thin, big, hard, young, wide*, etc.

II. Irregular forms

- some adjectives have irregular comparative and superlative forms:

e.g. *good* *better* *best*
bad *worse* *worst*
ill *worse* *worst*
far *farther* *farthest* (usually about physical distance, further is also possible)
 further *furtherst* (in all senses)
old *elder* *eldest*

- the determiners little and much / many have irregular forms:

e.g. *little* *less* *least*
much / many *more* *most*

Note:

- '*old*' - is regularly inflected as '*older*' and '*oldest*'
- in attributive position, particularly when referring to the order of birth of members of a family – the irregular forms *elder* / *eldest* are normally used:
e.g. My *elder* / *older* sister is an artist.
 My *eldest* / *oldest* sister is an artist.

- but!! *elder* is not used with '*than*'
e.g. My sister is three years *older* than me. (not: ~~elder~~)
- *elder* / *eldest* require personal reference, they are not used to talk about things
e.g. This viola is the *older*. (not: ~~elder~~)
- '*further*' has one more meaning, it is not comparative - '*more*', '*additional*', '*later*'
e.g. Any *further* questions?
We intend to stay for a *further* two months.

Changes in spelling and pronunciation

- with regular inflections there are certain changes in spelling or pronunciation
 - a) a single consonant at the end is doubled if the preceding vowel is stressed and spelled with a single letter
e.g. *big bigger biggest / fat fatter fattest*
but not with: *neat, thick, etc.*
 - b) a consonant is followed by -y → ier, iest
e.g. *angry angrier angriest*
 - c) if the base ends in mute (=unpronounced) -e, this -e is dropped before -er, -est
e.g. *brave braver bravest*
pure purer purest
free freer freest
 - d) if -r is not pronounced in base, we pronounce it before the inflection
e.g. *poor poorer poorest*
clear clearer clearest
 - e) final ng /ŋ / is pronounced /ŋg/ before the inflection
e.g. *long longer longest*
young younger youngest

Note:

- repeated and coordinated comparatives indicate gradual increase:
e.g. She is getting *better and better*.
They are becoming *more and more difficult*.
- comparatives with *the ... the* – to say that things change or vary together
e.g. *The warmer* the weather, *the better* I feel.
The sooner we leave, *the sooner* we will arrive.
The younger you are, *the easier* it is to learn.
The more I study, *the less* I learn.
The more I thought about it, *the less* I liked it.
The more expensive the hotel, *the better* the service.
How do you like your coffee? – *The stronger the better*

COMPARISON OF ADVERBS

- 1) most adverbs take more and most (esp. those ending in -ly cannot take another inflection – er, est)
e.g. Could you talk *more quietly / slowly / clearly*?
- 2) the adverbs that have the same form as adjectives (*fast, hard, late, long, early*) – take –er, -est
e.g. Can you drive a bit *faster*?
- 3) the irregular forms- the same as with adjectives
e.g. *badly worse worst*
well better best
little less least (*lesser* – in a rather formal style – *the lesser of two evils*)
far farther farthest
further furthest
much more most

Note: *often* can have both forms – *oftener / more often*; *oftenest / most often* – the forms with more and most are more common!

ARTICLE USAGE WITH COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES

- 1) there is no article in a 'than construction':
e.g. Jane is *cleverer* than all the other girls in the class.
- 2) 'the' with the superlative +of-construction:
e.g. Jane is *the cleverest* of all the students in the class.
- 3) 'the' with comparative – we compare two persons, items, etc.
e.g. He is *the younger* (of the two brothers)
John is *the more polite* (of the two boys) v. ... *the most polite* (of the three boys)
- 4) if the superlative is used attributively, 'the' is required:
e.g. Ann is *the youngest child*. (or: *their youngest child*)
- 5) if the adjective is not attributive - 'the' is optional!
e.g. Ann is *(the) youngest* (of all).
Della is *(the) most efficient* (of all).

!!! Without a definite determiner, the construction with most is ambiguous:

e.g. Della is *most efficient*. = *the most efficient of all* or *extremely efficient*

With the indefinite article (or zero), 'most' is always interpreted as an *intensifier*

e.g. She is *a most efficient* publisher. = very, extremely
They are *most efficient* publishers. = very, extremely.