

ADJECTIVE AND ITS CATEGORIES

1. Lexico-grammatical, Morphological and Syntactic Characteristics of the Adjective.
2. Subclasses of Adjectives.
3. The Category of Degrees of Comparison. The problem of Analytical Forms of Degrees of Comparison.
4. Substantivized Adjectives.

The general characteristics of the adjective as a part of speech

- **Meaning.**
- **Form.**
- **Function.**

- The categorial meaning of the adjective is “property of a substance”.

- Derivational features:

A number of suffixes and prefixes: *-ful* (hopeful), *-less* (flawless), *-ish* (bluish), *-ous* (famous), *-ive* (decorative), *-ic* (basic); *un-* (unprecedented), *in-* (inaccurate), *pre-* (premature).

- Syntactic characteristics:

- combinability with a noun (usu in pre-position: *a clever child*; and occasionally in post-position: “times immemorial”);

- combinability with link-verbs (*is wonderful*);

- combinability with modifying adverbs (*insanely dangerous*).

Subclasses of Adjectives:

*All the adjectives are traditionally divided into two large subclasses: **relative and qualitative***

Relative adjectives express properties of a substance determined by the direct relation of the substance to some other substance.

- *colour – coloured pictures;*
- *wood – wooden house;*
- *literature – literary mastery, etc.*

Qualitative adjectives denote various qualities of substances which admit of a quantitative estimation.

- an *awkward* situation - a *very awkward* situation;
- a *difficult* question - *too difficult* a question, etc.

Formal feature: the ability to build the forms of degrees of comparison.

Exception

Relative **S:** adjectives can occasionally form the degrees of comparison (evaluative function):

- *a grammatical topic - a purely grammatical topic - the most grammatical of the suggested topics;*
- *a mediaeval approach – rather a mediaeval approach – a far more mediaeval approach;*
- *of a military design – of a less/more military design*

Qualitative adjectives incompatible with the idea of comparison (specificative function):

- *deaf, blind, extinct, immobile, final etc.*

All the adjective functions may be grammatically divided into 'evaluative' and 'specificative'. One and the same adjective can be used either in the evaluative function or in the specificative function:

- *wooden hut – wooden face ('expressionless');*
- *good behaviour – good mark;*

The problem of statives:

Statives are words built up by the prefix a- and denoting different states: afraid, agog, adrift, ablaze, etc.

Statives are seen as a separate part of speech

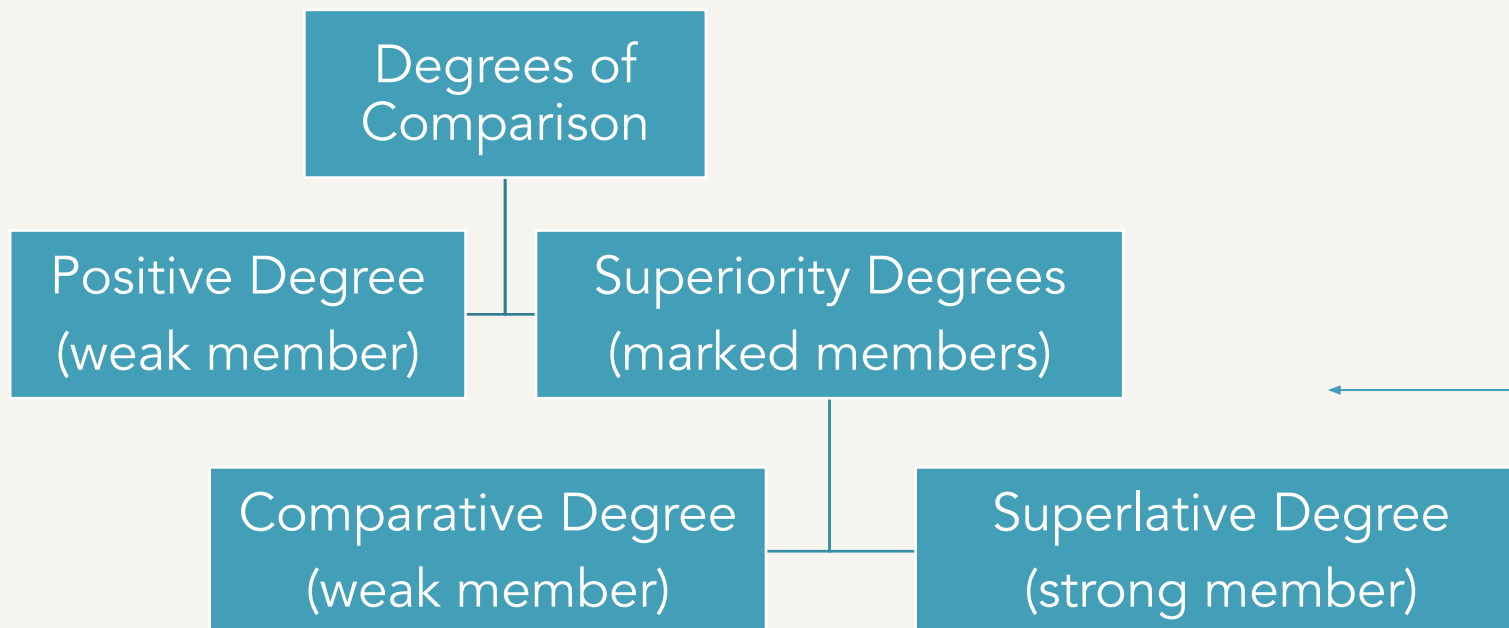
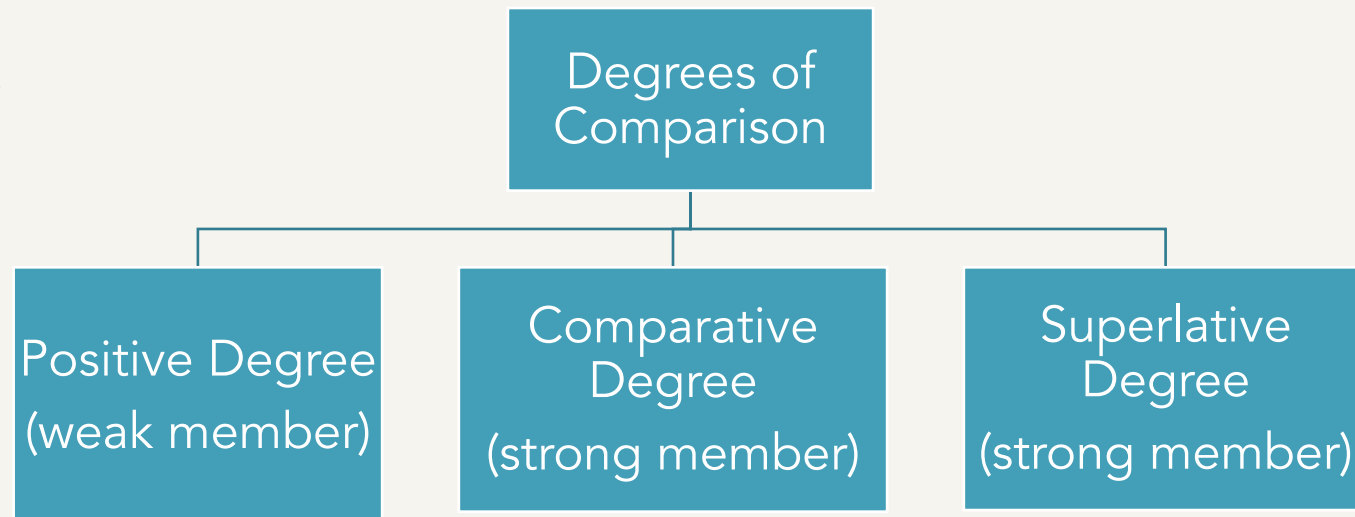
Statives are seen as one of the adjectival subclasses known as the "predicative adjectives" since their most typical position in the sentence is that of a predicative and they are but occasionally used as pre-positional attributes to nouns.

ARGUMENTS PRO	ARGUMENTS CONTRA
<p>This set of words is built up by adding the same morphological index: the prefix –a (<i>afraid, ablaze, asleep, alive, awake</i>)</p>	<p>It is not easy sometimes to subtract prefix from the root (<i>afraid, awry, aslant</i>)</p>
<p>Statives are to denote the states, not qualities as the adjectives do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the psychic state of a person (<i>afraid, ashamed, aware</i>); b) the physical state of a person (<i>astir, afoot</i>); c) the physical state of an object (<i>afire, ablaze, aglow</i>); d) the state of an object in space (<i>askew, awry, aslant</i>). 	<p>The common adjectives taken in the adjective-type functions can express the same, properties:</p> <p><i>Cf</i>: the <i>living</i> predecessor — the predecessor <i>alive</i>; <i>eager</i> curiosity — curiosity <i>agog</i>; the <i>burning</i> house — the house <i>afire</i>.</p>
<p>Statives are used in the function of the predicative, they are not used in the pre-positional attributive function, i.e. are characterised by the absence of the right-hand combinability with nouns.</p>	<p>The common adjectives may be also used as predicatives</p> <p><i>Cf</i>: <i>The household was all astir.</i> <i>The household was all excited.</i> <i>It was strange to see the household active at this hour of the day.</i></p>
<p>The statives don't have category of the degrees of comparison.</p>	<p>However the statives may express some relative meaning analytically:</p> <p><i>e.g. Of us all, Jack was the one most aware of the delicate situation in which we found ourselves.</i> <i>I saw that the adjusting lever stood far more askew than was allowed by the directions.</i></p>

Statives, though forming a unified set of words, do not constitute a separate lexemic class existing in language they should be looked upon as a subclass within the general class of adjectives.

It is essentially an adjectival subclass, because, due to their peculiar features, statives are not directly opposed to the notional parts of speech taken together, but are quite particularly opposed to the rest of adjectives. It means that the general subcategorization of the class of adjectives should be effected on the two levels: on the upper level the class will be divided into the subclass of stative adjectives and common adjectives; on the lower level the common adjectives fall into qualitative and relative

Structure of the Grammatical Opposition of the Category of Comparison: **ternary gradual opposition**



binary privative opposition



Semantics of Degrees of Comparison:

- Positive degree: no semantics of comparison. However, the positive degree does express the categorial idea of comparison in certain contexts:

Cf.: The remark was as bitter as could be = That was the bitterest remark I've ever heard.

The Rockies are not so high as the Caucasus = The Caucasus is higher than the Rockies.

- Comparative degree: expresses restricted superiority (comparison of two members).
 - Superlative Degree: semantics of unrestricted superiority.
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Analytical Degrees of Comparison

more / most + adjective;

categoryal complementary distribution with the synthetic comparison forms:

*two-syllable words with the stress on the first syllable not ending in -er, -y, -le, -ow;
words of more than two-syllable composition.*

On the status of the combinations of more/most with the basic form of adjective:

Arguments in favour of exclusion of these forms from the category of comparison:

- 1) the *more/most*-combinations are semantically analogous to *less/least* + adjective (syntactic combinations of notional words);
- 2) the *most*-combination, unlike the synthetic superlative, can take the indefinite article, expressing the elative meaning (a high, not the highest degree of the respective quality).

Objections (M.Y. Blokh):

- 1) Two different functions: the elative superlative (defined as syntactic combinations of intensely high estimation) and the regular superlative.
- 2) Synthetic superlative can also take the indefinite article: *He made a last lame effort to delay the experiment.* Or no article at all: *Suddenly I was seized with a sensation of deepest regret.*

Combinations of less/least – negative degrees of comparison?

There is no reason for treating the two sets of phrases in different ways, saying that ‘more difficult’ is an analytical form and ‘less difficult’ – is not.

Thus, the less/least-combinations, similar to the more/most combinations, constitute specific forms of ‘reverse comparison’ = ‘the reverse superiority degrees’ = ‘inferiority degrees’.

The whole category includes not three, but five different forms, making up the two series - direct and reverse.

*beautiful – more beautiful – the most beautiful
– less beautiful – the least beautiful.*

Non-comparable qualitative adjectives:

1) Adjectives that deny the very idea of comparison: deaf, blind, dead, etc.

2) Adjectives of indefinitely moderated quality: whitish, tepid, half-eaten, etc.

3) Adjectives of extreme quality: final, ultimate, etc.

Substantivized Adjectives

Adjectives display the ability to be substantivized by conversion, i.e. by zero-derivation.

Substantivized adjectives:

- are determined by articles;
- have the category of number;
- convey the mixed adjectival-nounal semantics of property.

Ex.: Be a dear and close the door, please.

He wrote about sensitives who live away from the places where things happen.

The weather report promises a new high in heat and humidity.

Specific adjectival-nounal words (**adjectivids**) which are rather nounal forms of adjectives than nouns as such:

Pluralia Tantum SA (express sets of people): *the rich, the poor, etc.*

Singularia Tantum SA (express abstract ideas of various types): *the invisible, the abstract, etc.*

*Adjective
order in
English*



OXFORD
online english

Royal Order of Adjectives

Determiner	Observation	Physical Description				Origin	Material	Qualifier	Noun
		Size	Shape	Age	Color				
a	beautiful			old		Italian		touring	car
an	expensive			antique			silver		mirror
four	gorgeous		long-stemmed		red		silk		roses
her			short		black				hair
our		big		old		English			sheepdog
those			square				wooden	hat	boxes

Adverbs:

Adverbs are words that modify:

- a verb (*He drove slowly.* — How did he drive?)
- an adjective (*He drove a very fast car.* — How fast was his car?)
- another adverb (*She moved quite slowly down the aisle.* — How slowly did she move?)

As we will see, adverbs often tell when, where, why, or under what conditions something happens or happened.

Adverbs frequently end in -ly; however, many words and phrases not ending in -ly serve an adverbial function and an -ly ending is not a guarantee that a word is an adverb.

The words lovely, lonely, motherly, friendly, neighborly, for instance, are adjectives: • *That lovely woman lives in a friendly neighborhood.*



Types of Adverbs

Adverb of Time

These answers when.

Examples:

Later, Ago

Frequency Adverbs

These answer how often.

Examples:

Sometimes,
Regularly

Adverb of Place

These answer where.

Examples:

In, out, below

Adverb of Manner

These answer the question of how.

Examples:

Clearly, Honestly

Adverb of Degree

These answers how much.

Examples:

Too, Very, Quite

Reason Adverbs

These Answer why.

Examples:

Consequently,
resultantly

Relative Adverbs

These join clauses and sentences together.

Examples:

where, when, why

Attitude Adverbs

These express the speaker's attitude

Examples:

Frankly, clearly

We can put adverbs and adverb phrases at the front, in the middle or at the end of a clause.

The mid position is between the subject and the main verb:

*Apples **always** taste best when you pick them straight off the tree.*

Where there is more than one verb, mid position means after the first auxiliary verb or after a modal verb:

*The government **has occasionally** been forced to change its mind.* (after the first auxiliary verb)

Adverbs Word Order		
TYPE	POSITION	EXAMPLE
Adverbs of Manner	They usually go in end position. They sometimes go in mid position if the adverb is not the most important part of the clause or if the object is very long.	He drank quickly . He quickly drank his super strong beer and left the room.
Adverbs of Place	They usually go in end position. They sometimes go in initial position, especially in writing.	Put the cake there . His house is nearby . After a long day at work , we headed home. Here is the book I was telling you about.
Adverbs of Time	They usually go in end position. They sometimes go in initial position especially if we want to emphasize the adverb.	John went to the cinema yesterday . This month , she will graduate.
Adverbs of Frequency	They usually go in mid position. They sometimes go in initial position. They can also go in end position. Always , ever and never do not usually go in front position.	I always go to bed before 10 pm. I am never pleased to see him. She isn't usually bad tempered. We go on a vacation annually . Occasionally we meet for a coffee. Usually I don't give personal advice.
Adverbs of Degree	Really , very , quite usually go in mid position. A lot and a bit usually go in end position.	The man drove really badly. She travels a lot . My teacher is terribly grumpy today. They enjoyed the film immensely .
Adverbs of Attitude	They usually go outside the clause, often at the beginning – initial position . They might also go in end position. They can sometimes go in mid position, especially in formal writing.	Frankly , I don't think we'll win. I didn't like any of them, honestly . He obviously doesn't want to come.

THE ROYAL ORDER OF ADVERBS

Verb	Manner	Place	Frequency	Time	Purpose
Beth swims	enthusiastically	in the pool	every morning	before dawn	to keep in shape.
Dad walks	impatiently	into town	every afternoon	before supper	to get a newspaper.
Roger naps		in his room	every morning	before lunch.	

In actual practice, of course, it would be highly unusual to have a string of adverbial modifiers beyond two or three (at the most). Because the placement of adverbs is so flexible, one or two of the modifiers would probably move to the beginning of the sentence: "Every afternoon before supper, Dad impatiently walks into town to get a newspaper." When that happens, the introductory adverbial modifiers are usually set off with a comma.