

SOME ASPECTS OF THE ADJECTIVE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

An adjective is one of the parts of speech in English Language. Its job in the sentence is to limit, add, change or identify some specific details about the noun or pronoun it modifies. It's not required in the way that a noun and verb are, but adjective are important because they provide additional descriptions of whatever it is one is describing.

As the topic focuses on some aspect of the adjective is in English. The paper looks into the definition of the adjective, characteristics of the adjectives, types of adjectives and syntactic functions of the adjectives as head and qualifies of noun.

KEYWORDS: Noun or Pronoun, Noun and Verb & Qualifies of Noun

INTRODUCTION

Adjectives are lexical in function. They are very common but less common than nouns and verbs. Adjectives commonly modify nouns. They usually describe a noun or pronoun and also tell more about them. Adjectives give a clearer picture of what is been described, therefore are often and mostly used in descriptive form of writing or descriptive essay.

Fundamentally, adjectives are a word that describes or modifies a noun. They describe nouns or pronouns by giving some information or picture about an object or a person.

Example

A big tree.

The word big is the adjective it describes and tells more about tree.

It is a red car.

The word red is the adjective, because it explains the color of the car.

The African man.

The word African is the adjective that described the man.

What is an Adjective

An adjective is a kind of word that modifies a noun. Nouns are words that name a place, a person, a thing or an idea. An adjective is a word that gives more information about the nouns that goes with it. It is a part of speech. Adjectives are something that describes something and make the thing sound better. Some adjectives describe how something feels, looks, sounds, tastes and acts.

Example

Spicy food – describes taste

Delicious meal – describes taste

Salty snacks – describes taste

A sharp knife – describes touch

Smooth skin – describes touch

Cool breez – describes touch

Melodic tune – describes sound

Noisy environment - describes sound

Quiet room - describes sound

A purple dress – describes color

Multicolored shore - describes color

Gray jacket - describes color

Tall man - describes size

Small room – describes size

Fat cat - describes size

Kind heart - describes emotion

Embarrassed look - describes emotion

Obedient servant - describes emotion

From the above examples, one can see that, an adjective is a word or part of speech that explains or describes a noun or pronoun in terms of feelings, emotions, sizes, sounds etc.

Adjectives are words that describe or modify other words, making ones writing and speaking much more specific, and a whole lot more interesting. Words like small, blue and sharp are descriptive and they are all examples of adjectives. Because adjectives are used to identify or quantify individual people and unique things, they are usually positioned before the noun or pronoun that they modify.

Example;

Blue bag

The blue bag is mine.

In the above examples, the adjective blue comes before the noun bag, so also in the second example: the adjective blue comes before the pronoun mine.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ADJECTIVE

- **Morphological Characteristic:** Most adjectives have degree of comparison the comparative degree and the superlative degree as in strong, stronger and strongest.

Tall, taller and tallest

Small, smaller and smallest

- **Comparative Degree:** An adjective used to compare two persons or things or the qualities is known as comparative degree.

Example

Better than, fatter than, taller than, heavies than, cleverer than, more beautiful than, healthier than, weather than, richer than, smaller than, and stronger than.

She is more beautiful than her sister

He is braver than his brother

She is taller than her mother

The comparative degree denotes a higher degree of a quality and than is added in the comparative degree.

Example

She is taller than her mother.

- **Superlative Degree:** An adjective use to talk about comparing more than two persons or things or their qualities is known as the superlative degree.

Example

The tallest, the smallest, the bravest, the best, the fattest, the heaviest and the cleverest.

She is the most beautiful of all her sisters

He is the bravest of all his brother

She is the tallest of all her friends.

The superlative degree denotes a higher degree of a quality and the definite article the is placed in the superlative degree.

Example

She is the smallest in the class

- **Syntactical Characteristic:** Here adjective serves both attributive and predicative roles
- **Attributive:** In an attributive position, an adjective forms part of a noun phrase.

Example

Terrible accident, horrible scene, clement weather, tall tree, nice book, lovely flower, large building, fair face, terrible mistake, small room. An adjective used with a noun is known as attributive.

- Predicative adjectives are not part of the noun phrase. They occur after the verb.

Example

She is afraid, he is alive, they are dead, he looked happy, she is ugly, it taste sweet. An adjective used with a verb is known as predicative.

- **Semantical Characteristic:** Adjectives are usually descriptive. Example: sharp, green, dull sunny, good, bad, big, lay, fast, low, quiet. In addition they are gradable, that is they can show different degrees of a quality. Gradable adjective can take the comparative and superlative forms. Example: late, later, latest, old, older and oldest, small, smaller and smallest, big, bigger, and biggest.

TYPES OF ADJECTIVES

There are ten types of adjectives namely;

- **Adjective of Quality:** An adjective used to talk about the quality of a person or thing is known as adjective of quality. Example, wealthy, fundamental, weaker, richer, primary, Lazy, handsome, pretty.

She is a beautiful girl.

The Hausa is a regional language.

Lagos is an industrial city.

- **Adjective of Quantity:** An adjective used to talk about the quantity or measurement of things is known as adjective of quantity. Example, little, many, much, no, any, some, whole.

There is little sugar in the container.

My mother earned enough money.

She loves him so much.

How many children do you have?

- **Adjective of Number:** An adjective used to talk about the number of things or persons is known as adjective of number. Example, one, three, no, all, many, first, second, any, most, several.

She ate four bananas.

He came first in the final examination.

All the women are kind hearted.

- **Demonstrative Adjective:** An adjective used to point out which person or thing we speak about is known as demonstrative adjective. They describe which noun or pronoun one is referring to. Demonstrative adjective always come before the word they are modifying. Example, which, what, this, that, those, these,

Which bicycle is yours?

That car is hers.

This dress is mine.

- **Distributive Adjective:** An adjective used to refer to each and every person or thing separately is known as distributive adjective. It describes specific members out of a group. These adjectives are used as single out one or more individual items or people. Example, each, every, either, neither, any, none, both. Those adjectives are always followed by the noun or pronoun they are modifying.

Example

Every rose has its thorn.

This movie is very interesting.

That dress is lovely.

- **Interrogative Adjective:** An adjective used to question is known as interrogative adjective. Interrogate, meaning that they ask a question. These adjectives are always followed by a noun or a pronoun, and are used to form questions. Example, which, what, whose.

Which song will you play?

What pet do you want to get?

Whose book is this?

- **Possessive Adjective:** An adjective used to talk about ownership or possession is known as possessive adjective. They describe to whom a thing belongs. Example, my, his, hers, mine, their, your, our, its.

Whose dog is that?

Its mine.

That's my dog.

- **Emphasizing Adjective:** An adjective used to emphasize a noun or to make a noun more noticeable is known as emphasizing adjective. Example, own, very,

I wrote it with my own hand.

It was the very first day I visited Lagos.

That was the very book I was looking for.

- **Exclamatory Adjective:** The word what is known as an exclamatory adjective, it is used to express an emotion. Example,

What!

What a beauty!

What an insult!

What a tragedy!

- **Proper Adjective:** An adjective derived from a proper name is known as a proper adjective. Proper noun is a specific word that named a person, place or thing. Example, Nigeria army, American soldier, Asian parliament, African man, Asian woman. (partofspecch.org)

FORMATION OF ADJECTIVES

- Many adjectives are formed from nouns:

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Adjective</u>
Accident	Accidental
Fool	Foolish
Danger	Dangerous
Hope	Hopeful
Length	Long
Dirt	Dirty
Wind	Windy
Courage	Courageous
Speech	Speechless
Envy	Envious

- New adjectives can be formed from verbs:

<u>Verb</u>	<u>Adjective</u>
Enjoy	Enjoyable
Help	Helpful
Rest	Restless
Read	Readable
Include	Inclusive
Obey	Obedient
Play	Playful
Talk	Talkative
Believe	Believable
Exclude	Exclusive

- Some adjectives are formed from other adjectives.

<u>Adjective</u>	<u>Adjective</u>
Ironic	Ironical
Lyric	Lyrical
Historic	Historical
Philosophic	Philosophical
Economic	Economical
Red	Reddish
White	Whitish
Electric	Electrical

SYNTACTIC FUNCTION OF ADJECTIVE AS HEAD AND QUALIFIERS OF NOUN

As explained above, adjectives used attributively are pre-modifiers with nominal group. They must precede or come before the noun. Example: modern picture.

Therefore, when adjectives describe the aspect of nouns, it is modifying it as head and qualifier of noun (www.ef.com).

In addition, adjective functions as noun phrase modifier. A noun phrase modifies is a word, phrase, or clause that describes a noun phrase. Example,

The ugly modern picture.

The black cat drank the fresh cream.

The audition calls for young, female actresses.

CONCLUSIONS

An adjective is a word that describes the word that describes nouns or pronoun in English languages.

In conclusion attempt has been made to define, and explained the meaning of adjectives as one of the parts of speech in English language. An adjective is also called as a describing word.

The paper also explained the syntactic role of adjective, which is to qualify a noun or noun phrase, giving more information about the object signified. The three characteristics of adjective morphological, syntactical and semantically characteristics were explained and some examples of each were cited. So also, attempt has been made to examine the types and examples of adjective, and also explained how adjectives are formed.

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