

## LCRC - 2019 Workshop on Adjective Classes - Guidelines for Presenters

*Preliminaries:* Where the language is spoken, how many speakers, etc, Phonemes. General grammatical characteristics.

Word classes should be distinguished on language-internal grammatical criteria. The label 'adjective' is appropriate for that class which

- (A) functions either as intransitive predicate or as copula complement and/or
- (B) modifies a noun in an NP.

It is extremely likely that this class will include lexemes from the semantic types DIMENSION, AGE, VALUE and COLOUR (and, if the class has more than a few dozen members, also from PHYSICAL PROPERTY, HUMAN PROPENSITY and SPEED).

The linguist should investigate

- The size of the adjective class — whether it is small and closed, or large and open to the addition of new members (derivations within the language and/or loans from without).
- The morphological and syntactic properties of the adjective class — whether these are similar to the grammatical properties of nouns, or to those of verbs, or to both, or to neither.

Some of the recurrent criteria for distinguishing adjectives from verbs and from nouns were discussed and exemplified in §§12.5.1-2. A fuller list of features to examine can now be provided. (These can, of course, only be investigated after the full set of morphological and syntactic properties of nouns and of verbs have been established.)

### (i) Useful criteria when adjectives are grammatically similar to verbs

- 1 Can an adjective function (like an intransitive verb can) as head of an intransitive predicate? And can a noun or pronoun (or any other kind of word) or NP also be head?
  - 1a Do the same morphological processes apply to an adjective as to an intransitive verb in this slot? (TAM marking, pronominal marking, etc.). Or just some of them?
  - 1b If the same processes apply, are they realised in the same way on verbs and on adjectives?
  - 1c If a verb may take an auxiliary, may an adjective do so too?
- 2 Are there any affixes or particles which apply to both verbs and adjectives but have a different meaning with the two word classes?

- 3 Can an adjective be used in imperative mood, in the same way that a verb can?
- 4 Do adjectives behave like verbs with respect to derivational processes (for example, causative)?
- 5 What are the transitivity values of predicates that accept adjectives and verbs as heads? (Generally, adjectives only occur in intransitive predicates. There may be several subclasses of verbs, each having distinct transitivity potential.)
- 6 Does reduplication apply to adjectives but not to verbs (or vice versa)? If it applies to both, does it have the same or different form and/or meaning with the two word classes?
- 7 If there are nominalisation process(es) do they apply in the same way to verbs and to adjectives?
- 8 Can an adjective modify a noun (and also a pronoun) in an NP?
  - 8a Directly (preceding or following the head or either)?
  - 8b Indirectly, with relative clause or other marker?

If a verb may also be modifier, how do its possibilities and marking differ from those of an adjective modifier?
- 9 Can an adjective be head of an NP? Can a verb also function as head of an NP? If so, does this apply for a simple NP, or an NP which is a nominalised clause?
- 10 Does an adjective have the same possibilities as a verb for functioning as head of the predicate in a subordinate clause?

**(ii) Useful criteria when adjectives are grammatically similar to nouns**

- 11 When an adjective is modifier to a head noun
  - 11a Does it agree with the head in gender/number/definiteness/etc.?
  - 11b If it shows a category in common with the head noun in the NP, does this category have the same realisation on noun and on adjective?
- 12 Is gender/noun class (or classifier) choice a criterion for distinguishing adjectives from nouns? (A noun may have just one inherent gender/noun class, whereas an adjective may take any gender/noun class, agreeing with the noun it is modifying.)
- 13 Do adjectives differ from nouns in number marking? In system or in realisation? For example, in Berber languages, nouns have irregular number marking but adjectives are all regular.
- 14 Is there an affix or particle that applies to both nouns and adjectives but has a different meaning with the two word classes?

- 15 Does reduplication apply to adjectives but not to nouns (or vice versa)? If it applies to both, does it have the same or different form and/or meaning with the two word classes?
- 16 Can an adjective make up an NP all by itself? If so, is this best described as an elliptical NP, with head omitted, consisting just of a modifier, or as an NP for which the adjective is head?
- 17 If an adjective is NP head, can it be modified in the same way as can a noun when it is NP head?
- 18 If the language has case marking, investigate the rules for its realisation on an NP; for example, on last/first/head word, on every word, on words of certain types. Does case go onto adjectives according to this general rule? (For example, if case goes on the last word of the NP, it attaches to an adjective just when it is the last word.) Or does a special case rule apply for adjectives?
- 18a If both nouns and adjectives show case, does the same case system apply for the two word classes?
- 19 Do adjectives function in the same way as nouns for possession? For example, do they take bound possessive pronouns or other markers of possession?
- 19a Can an adjective be (i) possessor, (ii) possessed, within a possessive construction?
- 20 If a noun can also be a modifier to an NP head:
- 20a Which nouns may be modifier?
- 20b Do noun modifier and adjective modifier behave in the same way? For example, if an adjective modifier may be further modified by an adverb (or 'very'), may a noun modifier also be?
- 20c If a noun may have several adjective modifiers, may it have several noun modifiers?
- 21 Can an adjective modifier be used anaphorically, for a full NP? And can a noun modifier be?
- 22 Are there alternative constructions for linking a head noun with an adjective modifier? Does each of them also apply for head noun and noun modifier?
- For example, in Hausa, 'Adj<sub>1</sub> Genitive-Copula Noun<sub>2</sub>' can also be expressed as 'Noun<sub>2</sub> Adj<sub>1</sub>', but 'Noun<sub>1</sub> Genitive-Copula Noun<sub>2</sub>' can *not* be expressed as 'Noun<sub>2</sub> Noun<sub>1</sub>' (Parsons 1960).
- 23 If there are verbalisation process(es) do they apply in the same way to nouns and to adjectives?

24 Can an adjective function as copula complement?

24a In bare form?

24b Or only as part of an NP? Or only when nominalised?

Compare with the possibilities for a noun in a copula complement.

**(iii) Useful general criteria**

25 Can an adjective have manner adverbial function, modifying a verb?

25a In bare form? (And can noun and/or verb also have this function?)

25b In derived form? (Does the derivation apply to any other word type?)

If only some adjectives have this property, which semantic types do they belong to?

26 Can an adjective function as 'parameter of comparison' in a comparative construction (if the language has such a construction type)? What else can function in this slot? Verb? Noun?

27 Can some or all adjectives be modified by an intensifier with a meaning like 'very' or a quantifier such as 'much'? If so, does this property also apply to nouns and/or verbs?

28 How is an adjective negated? In the same way as a verb? Or as a noun?

29 Does an adjective have any affixes/take any particles/etc. which all other word classes lack, e.g. comparative, superlative; or augmentative, diminutive.

30 Do adjectives lack any properties that all other word classes have? For example, in Tamil and Telugu (from the Dravidian family) the adjective class is the only word class whose members do not accept any clitics.