**DETERMINERS**

Consider the following sentences in the paragraph:

*I had met some shopkeepers in the market yesterday. There were very few carrots. So the shopkeepers were selling them at a very high price. So I bought more potatoes and a cauliflower.*

Try to identify how the nouns ‘shopkeepers’, ‘market’, ‘carrots’, ‘price’, ‘potatoes’ & ‘cauliflower’ are described and quantified by certain words around them.

A Determiner is a word that is used with a noun to indicate if it is referring to

* A definite or indefinite thing,
* A closer or more distant element
* An element belonging to a specified person or thing
* A particular number or quantity and so on.

Further, look at the italicized words in the following three groups of expressions:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pre Determiners | *twice* my salary  *double* my salary  *ten times* my salary  *half* my salary  *one-third* ofmy salary  *all* my salary  *both* my books |
| Central Determiners | all *the* books  half *a* chapter  all *your* money  all *our* money  all *these* problems  twice *that* size |
| Post Determiners | the *two* children  his *fourth* birthday  my *next* project  your *previous* remark  our *several* achievements |

Three major types of Determiners:

**Pre Determiners:** These are the determiners placed before the main or central determiners.

*Multiplying Expression*: Twice, Double, Ten times

*Fractions*: Half, One-Third

*Quantifiers*: All, Some, Both

**Main/Central Determiners:** Central or main determiners are most commonly occurring determiners before a noun. A central determiner may be preceded and followed by other determiners, namely Pre-determiner and Post-determiner.

*Articles*: A, An, The

*Possessives*: Your, My, His …

*Demonstratives*: These, That, This

**Post Determiners:** These are the determiners placed after the main or central determiners.

*Cardinal/Ordinal*: One, Two, First, Second

*General Ordinal*: Next, Last, Previous, Subsequent

*Quantifiers*: Many, Several, Few.

**Placement of determiners in a sentence**

*He is a student.*

*He is an intelligent student.*

*He is a very intelligent student.*

* A determiner is placed immediately before a noun.
* If an adjective precedes a noun, the determiner is placed before adjective, and the adjective governs the choice of the determiner.
* If an adverb precedes the adjective, the determiner is placed before the adverb. Here, the adverb governs the choice of the determiner.

Look at the following expressions:

*All the right people*

*Half my weight*

*My first three classes*

*All my relatives*

Note: A noun can take more than one determiners. The underlined parts of the expressions given above are instances of occurrance of multiple determiners in the same expression.

**Zero Determiner/No Determiner**

Ravi likes sweets.

Boys like to wear t-shirts.

Bees make honey.

Determiners are not used before proper nouns, uncountable nouns and plural nouns. In the examples given above, ‘Ravi’ is a proper noun, ‘sweets’ and ‘honey’ are uncountable nouns, and ‘boys’, ‘t-shirts’ and ‘Bees’ are plural nouns.

**MODIFIERS**

Consider the following sentence

Rishi bought *a* *chocolate* cake *yesterday*.

Here, ‘*a*’ is an article which modifies ‘*cake*’ and the word ‘*chocolate*’ is the direct adjective modifying ‘*cake*’. The word ‘*chocolate*’, here, is an adjective which modifies the noun ‘*cake*’.

The word ‘*yesterday*’ states the time of the action, i.e., the verb ‘*bought*’. So it is an adverb which modifies the verb.

A modifier is a word or phrase or clause that can modify other words. Either an adjective or an adverb is mostly used as a modifier. Adjectives modify nouns, and adverbs modify verbs, adjectives and other adverbs in the sentence.

The following can function as Modifiers:

* Adjectives
* Adverbs
* Phrases and clauses functioning as adjectives or adverbs

**Adjectives**:

He does not like to wear *old* clothes.

These books are very *old*.

*Green* trees are symbolic of life.

I can never forget those *cheerful* moments.

*Adjectives* are words that describe nouns or pronouns. ‘Old’, ‘Green’, and ‘Cheerful’ are examples of adjectives in ‘Old clothes’, ‘Green trees’, ‘Cheerful moments’, etc. In the second sentence, ‘old’ is used predicatively and modifies ‘books’. And so, these are all modifiers.

Some useful *Adjective Types*:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Appearance | attractive, clean, dusty |
| Colour | blue, cyan, dark |
| Condition | absent, broken, careful, dead |
| Personality | annoying, brave, complex, dizzy |
| Quantity | ample, countless, deficient |
| Sense | aromatic, bitter, cold, deafening |
| Size and Shape | angular, broad, circular, deep |
| Time | ancient, brief, daily |

**Adverb**:

She danced *gracefully.*

The tree is *very* tall.

The race finished *too* quickly.

Look *up* the word in the dictionary.

In the first expression the adverb ‘gracefully’ is modifying ‘danced’, in the second, ‘very’ is modifying the adjective ‘tall’, in the third, the adverb ‘too’ modifies another adverb ‘quickly’, and in the last expression, ‘*up’* is playing the role of an adverb and not a preposition. Generally, a preposition takes an object unlike an adverb.

An *adverb* is a word that modifies (describes) a verb (he sings loudly), an adjective (very tall), another adverb (ended too quickly), or even a whole sentence (Fortunately, I had brought an umbrella).

**Phrases and Clauses as modifiers**:

The boy *in black shirt* is my younger brother.

I tried my *heart and soul* to accomplish the target.

She speaks *in a low voice*.

The boy, *who killed the scorpion*, is very brave.

He responds *only when he is asked repeatedly*.

In the first sentence, ‘in black shirt’ is a prepositional phrase functioning as an adjective and modifying the noun phrase ‘the boy’; in the second sentence, ‘heart and soul’ modifies the verb ‘tried’, and so, functions as an adverb; in the third sentence, ‘in a low voice’ is again a prepositional phrase functioning as an adverb to modify the verb ‘speaks’; in the fourth sentence, ‘*who killed the scorpion*’ is a clause modifying the noun phrase ‘the boy’ and hence functioning as an adjective; and in the last one, ‘only when he is asked repeatedly’ is a clause functioning as an adverb to modify the verb ‘responds’.

Thus, phrases and clauses can also act as modifiers.

**Types of Modifiers:**

1. ***Misplaced Modifiers***

The teacher said *tomorrow* students have to submit the assignments.

In the sentence given above, the adverb ‘*tomorrow’* is incorrectly placed and distorts the intended meaning. It can be written as below:

The teacher said that students have to submit the assignments *tomorrow*.

The first sentence answers ‘When did the teacher say?’ whereas the second one answers ‘When are the students required to submit the assignments?’

These are instances of misplaced modifiers. A misplaced modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that is improperly separated from the word it modifies / describes. Because of the separation, sentences with this error often sound awkward, ridiculous, or confusing.

1. ***Dangling Modifiers***

*Jogging in the park*, a dog bit me.

*Having arrived late for practice*, a written excuse was required.

In the first sentence, it is unclear who is exactly jogging- the dog or I. An addition of the phrase “*when I was”* gives the sentence, its proper meaning.

In the second, “*Having arrived late for practice*” is not related to or modifying any information mentioned in the sentence. As such, this is a dangling modifier which is there without performing any proper function. This can be revised to make a better sentence by introducing a correct sentence.

Here, we find the instances of Dangling modifiers.