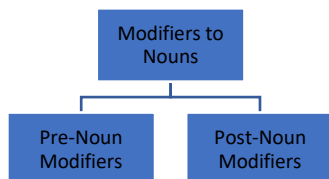


MODULE 1: DETERMINERS



Consider the following sentence:

*Both the two injured **birds** that flapped their wings and kept chirping are being rehabilitated at the wildlife rescue centre.*

Pre-noun modifiers: *Both* (pre-determiner), *the* (central determiner), *two* (post-determiner), *injured* (adjective)

Post-noun modifiers: *that flapped their wings and kept chirping* (relative clause)

What are Determiners?

- A class of pre-noun modifiers
- Many nouns (single countable nouns, plural countable nouns and uncountable nouns) are usually preceded by a determiner, i.e., determiners signal nouns.
- A determiner, unlike an adjective that specifies the quality of a noun, is a word or group of words placed before a noun or noun phrase to indicate its reference. This includes indicating whether the noun is definite or indefinite, its ownership, quantity and other such aspects (excluding quality).
- Depending on their relative position before a noun, determiners can be classified into three types: pre-determiners, central determiners and post-determiners.

For example:

***All the seven** students who were whispering, fell silent as **a strict** teacher entered **the** room.*

Pre-Determiners	Central Determiners	Post-Determiners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to express a proportion of the whole-- <i>all, both, half</i> • Multipliers <i>double, twice, thrice, five times, etc.</i> • Fractions <i>one-third, one-tenth, etc.</i> • <i>Such, what</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles (Definite and Indefinite) <i>a/an, the.</i> • Possessives <i>my, your, his, her, its, our, their etc.</i> • Demonstratives <i>this, that, these, those</i> • Quantifiers <i>some, any, every, each, either, neither, no, enough, much</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardinals <i>Numbers like five, ten, two thousand etc.</i> • Ordinals <i>Ordering numbers like first, twentieth, fifth etc.</i> • Quantifiers <i>several, most, many, (a) little, (a) few, less, etc.</i>

In this sentence, the pre-determiner “all” modifies the noun “students,” the central determiners “the,” “a” and “the” modify the nouns “students,” “teacher” and “room” respectively. The post-determiner “seven” specifies the noun “students” and the additional pre-noun modifier “strict” describes the noun “teacher.”

Quantifiers: A quantifier or quantifying determiner is a word or phrase which is used before a noun to show the amount or quantity. It can be used with both countable and uncountable nouns.

Quantifiers used with both countable and uncountable nouns: all, no, some, any, more, most, a lot, enough, less.
 (i) All employees should be treated well.
 (ii) No decisions have been taken yet.
 (iii) More teachers need to be recruited
 (iv) He makes less salary than his father does.

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COUNT		MASS
Singular	Plural	Singular
<i>all</i>	<i>all</i>	<i>all</i>
<i>every</i>	—	—
<i>each</i>	—	—
—	<i>both</i>	—
<i>half</i>	<i>half</i>	<i>half</i>
<i>some</i>	<i>some</i>	<i>some</i>
<i>any</i>	<i>any</i>	<i>any</i>
<i>either</i>	—	—
—	<i>many</i> <i>more</i> <i>most</i> <i>enough</i> <i>(a) few</i> <i>fewer/less</i> <i>fewest</i> <i>several</i>	<i>much</i> <i>more</i> <i>most</i> <i>enough</i> <i>(a) little</i> <i>less</i> <i>least</i> —
—		
—		
—		
—		
—		
<i>one</i>	—	—
<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>no</i>
<i>neither</i>	—	—

(Leech and Svartvik, 2002)

Some and Any

Some is used in positive statements to denote “no particular” and it can also be used in interrogatives for offers and requests.

- (i) *I was some fifteen miles by sea from the nearest village.*
- (ii) *It took Kiyen some years to realize the truth.*
- (iii) *Would you like some cookies?*
- (iv) *Can I have some extra cheese, please?*

While ‘any’ is used in negative and interrogative sentences.

- (v) *She has not received any mails yet.*
- (vi) *Do you have any friends who speak French?*

Quantifiers used only with countable nouns:

- (not) *many, several, each, both, either, neither,*
- (a) *few, fewer*
- (i) *Not many people attended the seminar.*
- (ii) *He doesn't have many friends.*
- (iii) *It took him several minutes to respond.*
- (iv) *There were fewer cars on the road due to lockdown.*
- (v) *There are fewer assignments than you think*

Much and Many

Much is used with singular uncountable nouns and many with plural nouns.

- (i) *There aren't many scholars in that team.*
- (ii) *Is there much poverty in that locality?*
- (iii) *He has many friends.*

Each and Every

Every and each are used with singular nouns to mean all.

- (i) *Each request will be given careful consideration.*
- (ii) *She wrote to every member of the committee.*

Each and every are used alongside one another for emphasis.

- (iii) *She took each and every opportunity to excel.*
- (iv) *She thanked each and every person present there.*

Both, Either and Neither

Both, either, neither are used to talk about two people or things. Nouns with ‘both’ take plural verb but nouns with either and neither take a singular verb. Neither is used to make a negative statement.

- (i) *Both the writers are very popular among youth.*
- (ii) *I didn't particularly agree with either group.*
- (iii) *At first, neither student could speak in English.*

Quantifiers used only with uncountable nouns:

- (not) *much, a bit of, a little, a great deal of, a good deal of.*
- (i) *There was not much difference between the two.*
- (ii) *Can I have a bit salt, please?*
- (iii) *She spent a good deal of time planning presentation.*

Use of articles with quantifiers:

'a/an' is used with several quantifiers.

MODULE 1: DETERMINERS

- a little
- a few
- a lot of

'no article' is also used with several.

- little
- few
- lots of

'a little' or 'little' is used with an uncountable noun.

'a few' or 'few' is used with a plural countable noun.

Both have slightly different meanings 'a little' or 'a few', means a small amount, but it's enough:

(i) I have a little money, enough for the lunch at least.

On the other hand, 'little' or 'few' also mean negligible amount:

(ii) I have little money. I really can't afford to go out for lunch.

However, 'a lot' means the same as 'lots'. A lot of and lots of can both be used with plural countable nouns and with singular uncountable nouns.

(iii) They have got lots of assignments to finish.

(iv) There was a lot of money in the purse.

(v) There aren't a lot of options.

(vi) We don't have a lot of time.

Note: Several determiners including fractions (*one-third, two-fifths*) and quantifiers like *a lot, a bit, a couple*, etc. have the alternative *of*-construction.

Reference:

Leech, Geoffrey and Jan Svartvik. *A Communicative Grammar of English*. Pearson Education, 2002. Pp 205-215, 259-263.