

A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF ADJECTIVE POSITION  
IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH

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OF  
ADJECTIVE POSITION  
IN  
ENGLISH AND FRENCH

by



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## ABSTRACT

A contrastive study is not a study to find out the various ways one language can translate the ideas contained in a word or group of words of another language. This would be a study in translation. Throughout this paper it will be seen that very often we are not giving, or attempting to give, direct translations for every one of the examples, or even in-direct translations. (We are here considering direct translations to be of the type: "Je connais cet homme" = "I know this man"; and indirect translations to be of the type: "Ici, on parle français" = "French is spoken here"). For semantic reasons, one has often to choose a French example different from the English one (and vice versa), in order to keep to the same structural pattern. One of the questions to be kept uppermost in our minds throughout this paper is not "Can English/French translate this phrase in the same way, using the same structure?", but "Does French/English have a similar structure, or similar pattern for each variation of the adjective-and-noun phrase?", and "If not, in what structural ways does the adjective-and-noun phrase differ from English to French, and vice versa?".

This study has been undertaken with the object of examining the position that the adjectival can occupy in English and French, and comparing and contrasting the two. We have been mainly concerned with the epithet adjective--in prenominal and postnominal position.

In Chapter One we give a brief survey of the adjective in a few Indo-European languages, going back to some early representatives (Greek and Latin), and also looking at some modern-day types (modern Czech, for example). Chapter Two examines the facility that English and French

possess for nominalizing the adjective. Chapters Three and Four concentrate on adjective position in English and French respectively, with Chapter Five making some comparisons and contrasts which have already been given separately (in the preceding two chapters), and adding a few new structures.

Although a small amount of morphology is given in Chapters One, Three and Four, the syntactic ordering of the adjective and noun is the main object for discussion throughout (Chapter Two excepted).

It is hoped that others will find in this essay a few new insights into some of the similarities and differences in English and French, and that maybe some food for thought is contained herein for students who are endeavouring to study these two languages.

The writer expresses his sincere thanks to the following persons: to André Lafargue (native French speaker), for his willing assistance in some translation; to Dr. V. Bubenik (native Czech speaker), for helpful suggestions with regard to modern Czech and Albanian; and lastly, I am grateful for the helpful criticism and advice of my supervisor, Dr. John Hewson, whose guidance and patience have benefited the writer in no small degree.



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## INTRODUCTION

This essay will concentrate on adjectival position in English and French. Since both of these languages belong to the Indo-European phylum, it was thought that a survey of adjectival position in some of the other Indo-European languages would provide a useful chapter to the study, and such is therefore the subject matter of Chapter One. The question of the adjective necessarily raises the question of dependency of one linguistic element upon another, since it raises the question of the predication of the adjectival to the nominal. The discussion of nominalization in Chapter Two is relevant not only to the question of dependency, however, but also reveals different styles of nominalization of the adjective in English and French. Chapters Three and Four supply the data on adjectival position in English and French, with Chapter Five comparing and contrasting the basic, distinctive positions appropriate to each language.

The fact that the adjective is syntactically dependent requires a terminology to express this dependency. The adjective must be predicated to a nominal and the nominal therefore becomes the notional support of the adjective. Expressed more exactly we should say that it is the import of the adjective which is predicated of the noun and which finds its support in the noun. These terms are originally taken from Guillaume, being a translation of his terms apport and support. A discussion of the relationship of noun and adjective, using these terms, is to be found (p. 205-8), for example, in the collection of excerpts from Guillaume's lecture notes that is entitled Principes de linguistique theorique de Gustave Guillaume (Presses de l'Universite Laval, 1973).

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE ADJECTIVE IN INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

#### 1. Introduction

At least ten different (but similar) language groups have developed from Proto-Indo-European. In this phylum we find such modern-day representatives as Hindi, Lettish, Polish, French, Norwegian and English. These languages, through their separate evolutions during the centuries, have developed many different characteristics in their phonology, morphology, and syntax. In most of the modern languages the adjective and noun have become quite distinct in their morphology. In Proto-Indo-European (PIE) these categories were very similar (except for demonstratives, interrogatives, and other types of pronominal adjectives), so that many linguists have discussed both together (Hudson-Williams 1951: 47). Nevertheless, a noun, in PIE, had only one gender, but the adjective reflected the gender of all the nominal declensions. Thus we have Latin tabula, murus, templum, which are three different nouns each with its own gender, but bona, bonus, bonum, which are three variations of the one adjective. The inflections, however, are alike; as Meillet says: "Les adjectifs n'ont pas de flexion différente de celle des substantifs" (Meillet 1964: 252).

#### 2. Greek and Latin

Since the concentration of this paper will be on adjective position as it relates to English and French, only a brief mention of morphology will be made here. Because there are no written records of PIE, we have no real certainty as to what the early forms of the language were like. It is through comparing and contrasting the oldest attested languages, which developed from the original "mother" language, that much has been discovered about PIE. It is therefore necessary to investigate those languages which



would be least removed in time depth from the original. Representatives of such languages are Greek and Latin--the adjectives and nouns in these may be expected to be similar to those in PIE; in these languages we note that the morphology of the adjective follows the nominal paradigms.

## 2.1. Greek

In Greek, every adjective must agree with its noun in gender, number, and case, whether that adjective comes in attributive or predicative position (Jannaris 1968: 315, and Smyth 1956: 272). There are three genders in Greek and they denote masculine, feminine, and neuter. As in French, many objects have only grammatical gender which, in Greek, is frequently determined only by the form. This is commonly done by means of the adjective: "makròs lógos" = "a long speech"; "makrà nēsos" = "a long island"; "makròn teĩkhos" = "a long wall".

Since inflection is extremely elaborate in Greek, with most important words in the sentence being inflected (there are only nominal and verbal declensions, however), there is hardly ever any need for words to be arranged in a particular order to show their relation to one another, as is necessary in English and other modern languages (Jannaris 1968: 312). Because, then, word order is so free and arbitrary, many linguists and grammarians have not at all succeeded in formulating rules that would give fixed or definite ordering (Dover 1960: 1). Because of such freedom, many authors change order in different parts of their writings. Identical utterances--in structure and content--may have different word orders (Dover 1960: 3). This may be due, however, to what the writer wants to emphasize, or to change of style. For example, when emphasis is required of the attributive adjective, the adjective follows the noun and the article is

repeated: "ho agathòs anēr" = "the good man"; but "ho anēr ho agathós" = "the good man" (literally, "the man, the good"), the latter with emphasis on "good". The adjective may follow the noun without the repeated article, but then it has no emphasis. It is then predicative: "ho anēr agathós" = "the man (is) good".

Besides emphasis, there are a few restrictions which require the adjective to be placed either before or after the noun, because some adjectives change meaning with position. Among such adjectives are the following: ákros (high), mésos (middle), éskhatos (last), mónos (alone), autós (self), and pás (all). These differ in meaning according to whether they come in attributive or predicative position. For example

(1) "tò ákron óros" = "the high or projecting mountain"

"tò óros ákron" or

"ákron tò óros" = "the top of the mountain";

(2) "ho mónos, huiós" = "the only son"

"ho huiós mónos" or

"mónos ho huiós" = "only the son".

## 2.2 Latin

In Latin, as in Greek, the adjective agrees with the noun that it qualifies, in gender, number, and case. Agreement is a very strict rule in Latin, and there are only a very few examples where the "rules" of agreement have been broken (Ernout and Thomas 1953: 125-126). Thus, ordinarily the attributive adjective agrees with its substantive in gender, number, and case, but if the attributive is a substantive the number agreement is not always made: "captivi militum praeda fuerunt" = "the captives were the booty of the soldiers". And the gender agreement can be made only if the

attributive is a substantive having a double form: dominus/domina; effector/effectrix. For example: "(pecunia) est...effectrix multarum et magnarum uoluptatum" (Ernout and Thomas 1953: 127). The attributive adjective did not have a close, or narrow relationship with the subject. It may have been because of this that the attributive could often be in the neuter, although the subject was masculine or feminine: "turpitude peius est quam dolor" = "depravity is a worse thing than grief"; also "triste lupus stabulis" = "the wolf is a sad thing for the sheepfolds" (Ernout and Thomas 1953: 127). Here the adjective is nominalized into a predicated noun.

The epithet adjective was more closely bound to the substantive and it, too, agreed in gender, number, and case. However, when there are two or more substantives, there is only one way to make the agreement, and that is generally with the nearest substantive. If, however, the substantive furthest away from the adjective is more important, then agreement may be made with it. Compare the following: "reliquas merces commeatusque... reseruant" and "urbem ac portum moenibus ualidam". If both substantives are singular and of the same gender, then the epithet adjective is, of course, also in the singular (Ernout and Thomas 1953: 134).

In Latin there was a much greater freedom as to where words came in a sentence than in its "daughter" languages of today--the Romance languages. The role of the word in the sentence which is today (in the "daughter" languages) mainly marked by the syntactic order, was, in Latin, marked by case. Nevertheless, word order was greatly influenced by preference, or by a small, but significant change in meaning.

In this connection, the views of Jakobson might throw some light on this aspect of our study. If two constructions have identical lexical

elements, and, as such, are identical as to their "conceptual content", but allow of two separate orders, then one is "marked", the other "unmarked" (Jakobson 1939: 113-114). When the total expression is one considered as a whole (un "tout"), then this is the "unmarked" order ("l'ordre zéro"). However, if some part of the expression is felt to be an "appendix" (an addition) to the context, or, if it has an affective value, then this is the "marked" order. In Russian (many of Jakobson's examples are taken from Russian), if the syntactic function of the words in an expression is not determined by morphology, then, according to Jakobson, the language makes use of order. This happens, for example, when an adjective is used as a substantive, as in "slepoj sumassedsij", "the fool (foolish one) who is blind", and "sumassedsij slepoj", "the blind one who is foolish". Here we find two nominals, with identical inflections, and so order has to be used, if Russian is to be able to express the two distinct meanings which are possible.

In general, in Latin, in the "unmarked" order, the determiner precedes the determined, the qualifier precedes the qualified. The attributive comes before the verb "to be": bonus est. The reverse order, however, is the one which has become commonplace in modern French (and English). In Latin the demonstrative adjectives usually precede, whereas the possessive adjectives generally come after: "haec urbs", but "pater meus". If the positions of the demonstrative and possessive adjectives are changed, then they become the conspicuous elements, and are emphasized. The "marked" order would be "urbs haec" and "meus pater".

The adjective precedes the substantive when it is closely allied with it, when it is used as an epithet adjective: "pulchra domus", "beautiful

~~house~~ It follows the noun when it has a determining, attributive value: "domus sumptuosa", "a house (which is) sumptuous" (Ernout and Thomas 1953: 162). (More will be said as to how this relates to modern French in the chapter on the French adjective).

### 3. The Adjective in Modern Indo-European Languages

We will now give a brief survey of the adjective in a few modern Indo-European languages, with emphasis on Czech, Russian, and German, and briefer mention of a few others. The emphasis is placed on the position of the adjective in these various languages, and it will be quite obvious that position is becoming more and more important as a syntactical factor, taking over much of the work of case in Latin, Greek, and the other earlier Indo-European languages.

#### 3.1. Czech

The order of words in the Czech sentence is rather flexible. Those words which are most important, or which have strongest emphasis, begin or end the sentence (Harkins 1953: 35). However, where shorter groups of words (or phrases) are concerned, there is more restriction. In general one could say that position is quite "fixed"--rigid. The most normal position of the adjective is before the noun; when it comes after, it is archaic or poetic. It is not placed after in colloquial Czech, unless one wants to be poetic.

As with most "rules", there are exceptions. For example, in the English phrase, "a pleasing picture to look at", "pleasing" is placed before (it could, however, be placed after "picture"), and "to look at" comes after. In Czech this kind of adjective-with-complement expression

has three possibilities, either:

- (1) "obraz pěkný na pohled  
("picture pleasing for the view"),
- (2) "na pohled pěkný obraz" (This is the most normal position because here the adjective precedes the noun),
- or (3) "obraz pěkný pohledet" (pohledet is the infinitive form).

A rather curious thing happens when an adjective is modified by an adverb. One gets what might be referred to as either a "French" or "English" pattern. Let us take the English phrase, "a rather pleasant film". In Czech we have:

- (1) "dost příjemný film"  
"(a) rather pleasant film",
- or (2) "film dost příjemný"  
"(un) film assez agréable".

With comparatives and superlatives, there are two ways to form them, either "analytically" (as is done in English by the use of "more", "most"), or "synthetically", that is, by means of different morphological or lexical items, like English "good", "better", "best". Here is a "synthetic" example:

- "a good school" = "dobrá škola"
- "a better school" = "lepší škola"
- "the best school" = "nejlepší škola".

For foreign words and longer (native) words, Czech would normally make use of the "analytic" form, thus:

- "communist" = "komunistický"

"more communist"	=	"více komunistický"
"most communist"	=	"nejvíce komunistický",
and "reduced"	=	"redukováný"
"more reduced"	=	"více redukováný"
"most reduced"	=	"nejvíce redukováný".

### 3.2. Russian

As a general rule, in Russian, if an adjective has both long and short forms, the attributive position will be taken most frequently by the long form, while only in the predicative will the short form be used. The short form is used, however, in attributive position in a few set phrases as, for example, in: "in broad daylight", which in Russian is "sredy byla dnya" (Borras and Christian 1971: 80).

A few remarks about these "long" and "short" forms might be in order here. (1) There are many relative and possessive adjectives, adjectives which have been derived from verbs, and ordinal numbers, which only have the long form--the short form does not exist for them. However, some of these adjectives in "-ičeskij", that do not have short forms, have synonyms in "ičnyj" which provide short forms. For example, "tragičeskij" becomes "tragičnyj", in English, "tragic". (2) When there are two morphological forms for adjectives, they have often acquired different meanings: "ploxo" = "bad"; "plox" = "weak", "ill". (3) Only the short form is used with a few adjectives to express the particular characteristic of the adjective as being possessed in too great a degree: "this hat is too small" in Russian would be "eta šlyapa mala". (4) Only the short form is used with adjectives which are followed by (delimited by) a preposition: "far from" = "daleko ot"; "deaf to" = "glux k". (5) Only the short,

predicative, adjective is used for some set expressions and idioms: "my conscience is clear" = "sovesty moja čista". Other idioms use only the long form: "he was a lucky fellow" = "ruka u nego byla lyegkaja". (6) Earlier in Russian history the short form was used for defining, or designating, a non-permanent quality without any definite person or thing in mind. For permanent characteristics of a definite person or thing the long form was used.

Because Russian is a highly inflected language, the word order is much freer than in English. It is for this reason that Russian can, by means of order, express ideas and subtleties that English might find it quite difficult to express (Borras and Christian 1971: 403). The Russian speaker, though, is not, by any means, completely free. The normal position of the attributive adjective is before the noun. But, for emphasis, it may be placed at the beginning of the sentence: "she is a charming woman" = "očarovatelynaja ona ženščina". For emphasis also, but not as frequently, an adjective may come at the end of the sentence: "he was an uncommonly good storyteller" = "rasskazčik on byl neobyknoennyj". If placed before a possessive or demonstrative adjective, the attributive adjective may then receive a slight stress: "I remember my first morning in barracks" = "ja pomnya pervoje mojo utro v kazarme". If, in a noun phrase, the logical stress falls on the adjective (or adjectives), then the adjective(s) come(s) after the noun (especially is this true if there is an accumulation of adjectives): "my father was a thoroughly kind, clever, cultured, and unhappy man" = "otec moj byl čelovek vesyma dobryj, umnyj, obrazovannyj, i nesčastnyj".



### 3.3. Modern German

Germanic languages belong, without any doubt, to the Indo-European group of languages, but they represent a very distinct group. They are descended, along with the others, from the common Proto-Indo-European language, but very little now remains of that old PIE morphology and syntax in their present-day representatives. So that, if linguists and grammarians did not have access to the direct line connecting PIE with modern English, for example, they would have found it more difficult to demonstrate convincingly that the latter is an Indo-European language. For modern English, in particular, has lost almost all resemblance to the "original" language in which it had its beginnings (Meillet 1970: 1).

Of the three main branches of the "Germanic" languages, which are Gothic, Scandinavian (or North Germanic), and West Germanic, we will here be considering the West Germanic branch, in particular, modern-day German. (The Goths, a conquering people, travelled widely, and thus, in time, their language was completely absorbed by others. There is, therefore, no present-day Gothic language.)

In the morphology of modern German one can distinguish a strong, weak, and a mixed declension (Lockwood 1968: 37). The mixed declension appears later than the others since it is a secondary development. The first two are the traditional ones, and they go back to the period of Early Germanic. The mixed declension is composed of both strong and weak endings.

The only time the adjective is inflected (declined) in German is when it is used attributively, that is, when it precedes the noun. There is no inflection with non-attributive adjectives (Hammer 1971: 46), which are consequently somewhat similar to Slavic short adjectives.

The weak adjective occurs in the general pattern: der (dieser, etc.) + adjective + noun. Taking the adjective, "gut" ("good"), and forgetting the article and noun changes, we could set up the following table (to show the declensions):

	<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Singular: N(ominative)---	gute	gute	gute
A(ccusative)---	guten	gute	gute
G(enitive) ----	guten	guten	guten
D(ative) -----	guten	guten	guten
Plural: N -----	guten		
A -----	guten		
G -----	guten		
D -----	guten		

Examples of the nominative singular would be: "der gute Wein", "die gute Suppe", and "das gute Brot". This declension is not only used after the definite article, but also after such items as "aller" ("all"), "dieser" ("this"), "jeder" ("each"), "jener" ("that"), "welcher" ("which?"), and other such definers.

The mixed declension is used with the indefinite article (and other items declined like it): ein (kein, mein, sein) + adjective + noun. With the mixed declension "gut" would now change accordingly:

		<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Singular:	N----	guter	gute	gutes
	A----	guten	gute	gutes
	G----	guten	guten	guten
	D----	guten	guten	guten
Plural:	N----	guten		
	A----	guten		
	G----	guten		
	D----	guten		

Examples of the singular accusative would be: "einen guten Wein", "eine gute Suppe", and "ein gutes Brot".

The strong declension (the most complex of the three) is used when there is no article, and therefore the adjective may have to do the job of indicating the particular case, except in the masculine and neuter genitive. Continuing with the same adjective, "gut", the strong declension (adjective + noun) is inflected thus:

		<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Singular:	N----	guter	gute	gutes
	A----	guten	gute	gutes
	G----	guten	guter	guten
	D----	gutem	guter	gutem
Plural:	N----	gute		
	A----	gute		
	G----	guter		
	D----	guten		

The genitive singular would give "guten Weines", "guter Suppe", and "guten Brotes".

As mentioned above, only attributive adjectives are inflected. Predicative adjectives have no inflection: "ein guter Mann", but "der Mann ist gut". There are, however, instances where attributive adjectives are not inflected. Before a nominative or accusative neuter noun, where certain set phrases are used, there is no inflection: "ein gehörig Stück Kuchen", "a substantial piece of cake". The words "einzig" ("only") and "all" ("all") are often not inflected if they precede the adjective, and if they refer primarily to the adjective: "Er war der einzig zufriedene Mensch", "He was the only contented person", and "In all diesen Geschichten ...", "In all these narratives...".

The most normal position of the adjective in modern German is before the noun. In this respect it is very much like English, which is to be expected as both are Germanic languages. If there are two or more adjectives, quite frequently they are arranged in the same order as in English: "eine arme, heimatlose alte Frau", "a poor homeless old woman" (Hammer 1971: 380). Attributive adjectives, however, could be placed after the noun which they qualify, but then the effect would be somewhat literary, as it would be in English: "eine arme Frau, heimatlose und alte", "a poor woman, homeless and old", literally. Infrequently, with adjectives indicating number or quantity, adjectives and nouns are separated in order to emphasize both: "Fehler habe ich in seiner Arbeit mehrere gefunden", "I found several mistakes in his work".

### 3.4. Danish

In Danish, adjectives normally precede the nouns which they qualify

(Koefoed 1958: 196). In this regard Danish is similar to modern German and English: "the old man" is, in Danish, "den gamle mand". Notice the position in relation to the article in the following idiomatic-type expressions: "en halv time" = "half an hour"; "det dobbelte antal" = "double the number" (literally, "the doubled number"). With "so", "such", and "much too", the article can have variable position in relation to the adjective:

- (1) "så stor en mand"  
"so big a man",
- (2) "en så stor mand"  
\*"a so big man" -- literally
- (3) "en alt for lille kage"  
?"a much too small cake" -- literally,
- (4) "alt for lille en kage"  
"much too small a cake".

### 3.5. Albanian and Armenian

In Albanian, the adjective follows the noun and agrees with it in gender, number, and case (Drizari 1947: 85). The adjective is preceded by a particle which, in reality, imparts the particular description of the adjective to the noun. So we find the following pattern: noun + particle + adjective. For example: "burrë i mirë" = "good man", literally, "man of good"; "grua e mirë", literally "woman of good", that is, "good woman". And it is the same for definite nouns: "Burri i mirë", literally "the man of good", that is, "the good man".

This use of particle (called izafet) is very much like that of the Persian language. In modern Persian we have: "Persian horse"; "asp i

fārs", literally, "horse of Persian". It may have been spread to Albania by the Turks who borrowed Persian izafet as well as having their own, somewhat different, version of it. Persian probably borrowed it from Arabic, a language which, for religious reasons, has had wide influence on Persian. For example, corresponding to Persian "Koh-i-nur" we find in Modern Arabic "Zabal en-nūr", "mountain of light", although this en is an article. In any case, it seems to have been a Semitic phenomenon, originally.

Interrogative adjectives precede their nouns, in Albanian, but possessive adjectives follow. There is, however, one exception to the latter--the possessive adjective precedes with relatives: "my father" = "im at" ("im" = "my"); "my brother" = "im vëlla".

The tendency in Armenian is for adjectives to precede the noun, and, if they come after, they attract attention, are emphasized or are more expressive (Meillet 1936: 138, also Feydit 1969: 256). The epithet adjective is normally invariable, but when it is used as a noun, it is then declined according to the first declension of the noun.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, we may observe that of the eight languages which have been discussed here, the normal position of the adjective in all but one is before the noun. In Albanian the usual position is after the noun--seemingly under the influence of Turkish and Persian izafet. The post-position is normally reserved for emphasis, or for special effects (affective, or poetic, for example). The most rigid language of those we have looked at, as far as position is concerned, is German.

As for the morphology of the adjective and noun, it is interesting to note that, although they have both tended more and more to go their separate ways from their very similar beginnings, yet the adjective is still very much notionally dependent on the noun. The adjectives that agree in gender, as in Greek and Latin, emphasize this relationship. Nevertheless, the adjective has a certain amount of independence when it is nominalized-- the subject of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE NOMINALIZATION OF ADJECTIVES

#### 2.1. Introduction

"Substantifs et adjectifs échangent ainsi leurs rôles dans toutes les langues; grammaticalement il n'y a pas entre eux de limite tranchée. On peut les réunir tous deux dans une catégorie unique: celle du nom" (Vendryès 1921: 138). (This is not true for every language--particularly those with very few or no adjectives; it is over-generalized. It is true for IE.) We have just observed and discussed some of the morphological similarities between those two categories in a few IE languages, and now we find a linguist saying that grammatically the noun and adjective are very similar in that their rôles can be interchanged. Whenever we find these two categories then, we would expect to find some degree of nominalization capable of the adjective and, vice versa, some degree of adjectivization of the noun, or substantive, since there is no clear-cut boundary (limite tranchée) between them. If it seems strange why this should be so, one might do well to note that some languages have remarkably few items that could be classified as "adjectives", and some languages have none at all. There are no adjectives in Cree, for example; adjectival function is always carried out by means of intransitive verbs. It would appear then that the adjective is not a separate part of speech in many modern non-IE languages.

In the IE languages in general, the nominalization of adjectives is a widespread and frequent phenomenon, although there are frequently syntactic restraints of various kinds. But, why nominalize adjectives at all? Some might attribute it to brevity, others to style. However, it appears that the main reason for this phenomenon, in English and French, is



neither one of style nor one of economy, but of necessity. Sometimes a nominalized adjective may be the only or the most convenient way to express a certain concept or idea. The usual nominal may not have the desired connotation that is required, and the adjective along with the noun may also be lacking in effectiveness.

## 2.2. French

A French adjective can become a noun, either by ellipsis of the noun which is qualified: "la [ville] capitale", "un [costume] complet"; or by putting in relief the quality which one considers to be in the person or the thing named: "un malade", "un aveugle"; or by using the neuter to express an abstract notion: "le beau", "le vrai", "le possible" (Grevisse 1964: 75). Some grammarians would put the last two categories of Grevisse together and say that there are only two ways to substantivize: either by ellipsis or by "direct transposition, in order to designate the very quality in itself without relation to a noun" (Dauzat 1947: 52). This can be done because the quality of the person or thing named is an abstract notion.

Before continuing, a couple of points need to be discussed here. The French adjective, unlike the English, is notionally complex; it not only has notional import, but it also has notional gender and number. Ordinarily the adjective (in both English and French) takes the noun that it qualifies for its support. When, in French, the adjective is nominalized (predicated of itself); then it is apparently the gender/number element which provides the support for the lexical import. The result is that un beau, une belle refer to people; le beau (neuter) is a quality.

Exactly what is meant by gender in French needs to be made clear, since many grammar books only distinguish two genders, masculine and feminine,

and we have already mentioned neuter, and will meet it again. In general, all male animate beings are masculine, all female animate beings are feminine. But, for inanimates, sex cannot be used to determine the gender. "Ainsi pour les noms d'êtres ~~inanimés~~, et souvent aussi pour les noms d'êtres animés, l'attribution du genre s'explique par des raisons de forme, d'analogie ou d'étymologie" (Grevisse 1964: 169). Guillaume has called this attribution of masculine and feminine to inanimates le genre fictif (Guillaume 1971(A):72-73). It is also pointed out by Grevisse that semantically there is a neuter in French. He gives as examples: le boire, le manger, le vrai, le beau, le mieux. These neuters are masculine in form (Grevisse 1964: 169). They are abstractions, qualities, ideas. We observe also that whereas la chose, "the thing", is feminine, quelque chose (indef.), "something", is neuter (masculine in form).

### 2.2.1. Nominalized Adjectives Referring to Persons

In French, in general, adjectives of both genders (here is meant gender by form, singular or plural) can be nominalized. Let us take the following four examples (one example for each possible gender and number combination):

"un inconnu sur sa guitare..." (Francis Lemarque, Marjolaine)

"où est ma petite?"

"les deux égarés entendirent quelques petits cris qui paraissaient poussés par les femmes" (Crocker 1958: 59)

"c'était nos voisines pendant une année".

These nominalized adjectives are still felt by the French to be basically adjectival, since they are used in common everyday expressions adjectivally:

"un professeur inconnu", "ma petite fille", etc.

The nominalizing of adjectives in French is not restricted to any formal type. In the above examples one will notice that two are past participle forms: égarés and inconnu. The present participle is also frequently employed in this way; "le conquérant" (Guillaume le Conquérant), "un consultant". There seems to be no restriction as to which adjectives can be nominalized in referring to persons, as far as the graphic form of the adjective is concerned. Note the different forms of the following: un ambitieux, un aveugle, un banni, un calomniateur, un campagnard, un défaitiste, un droitier, un insulaire, un lâche, un marchand, un opiomane, un mortel, un prochain, and the list could go on. Similar lists could be made for the feminine and plural forms. (Many other forms and types can be seen in Appendix A.)

When referring to persons, the French language can sometimes use all four forms of the nominalized adjective (all the forms of a regular adjective): masculine, feminine (both singular), and masculine, feminine (both plural). This may be done without changing the basic meaning of the adjective. For example, in "le calomniateur", "la calomnatrice", "les calomniateurs", and "les calomnatrices", they all have the same meaning, "the slanderer(s)". Often the meaning changes significantly for one or more of the forms. Thus, when we nominalize "bon", we have "le bon", "good" in the abstract sense, "les bons", which could be translated as "the righteous"; but, "la bonne" is (generally) "the maid", so that "une bonne" could be either "bonne" or "mauvaise"! Note also that "bon" as a "pure" adjective may qualify persons or things in any of its forms: "bon oncle" or "bon livre"; "bonne tante" or "bonne chemise"; "bons amis" or "bons examens"; "bonne filles" or "bonnes écoles". When nominalized, however, "la bonne" generally refers to a person ("la bonne" = "the maid")--unless it

is taking the place of feminine noun already mentioned: "Nous avons essayé plusieurs chemises avant de trouver la bonne".

### 2.2.2. Nominalized Adjectives Referring to Things

As with those nominalized adjectives referring to persons, those denoting things may also be found in all four forms. For example: "un adhésif", "une alliée", "les carrés", and "les liquides" ("liquid consonants"). Not every nominalized adjective may have all four forms, however. There are many instances where only one form is normally nominalized. "L'acoustique" ("la science acoustique"), for example, can only be given in the feminine singular. Another example is "la phonétique". There is no masculine form, and, since it is a non-numerical entity, it cannot be pluralized. The final s in English is not a plural marker: "Acoustics is a very necessary consideration in the construction of modern buildings".

### 2.2.3. Adjectives Which are Nominalized as Neuters

As with nominalized adjectives referring to persons, there are a great many adjectives which are nominalized as neuters. But, in contrast with the former, those forming the neuter are given only in the masculine singular form. (Since there is no distinct "neuter" morphology in the French article system, the French have had to make a choice as to which gender to use to express the "neuter concept". The lot has fallen to the masculine singular--for historical reasons.)

The neuter may express an abstract quality. Examples of how the neuter is used in French are given in the following sentences:

Il y a du vrai dans ce bruit  
(There is some truth in the rumour)

Il a du bon  
(There is some good in him)

'Le beau' était un sujet préféré de Platon  
('The beautiful' was a favorite subject of Plato)

Il est difficile de croire à l'absolu  
(It is hard to believe in the absolute).

One reason why it cannot be argued that these are simply masculine forms of a certain class of things (the "things" being "abstractions") is that there are no feminine forms for these nominalized neuters. If a feminine form is given it is no longer an abstract notion, but it becomes a particular reference: "la bonne" = "the maid"; "la belle" = "the beautiful girl" ("the beauty" = "the fair one"). Also, "le blanc" is "la couleur blanche", but "une blanche" is a musical term, "a minim".

The neuter may also express other, less abstract, notions: languages ("le français"; "l'espagnol"); time reference ("le passé"; "le présent"); and spatial positions ("le haut"; "le bas"; "le milieu").

#### 2.2.4. Other Points on the Nominalization of the French Adjective

The nominalized adjectives we have considered so far have retained, for the most part, their full adjectival sense (import): the "beau" of "le beau" is easily seen to be semantically related to the "belle" in "une belle fille"; the "voisines" in "nos voisines" is likewise very similar in meaning to the "voisines" in "nos amies voisines". However, there are cases where the nominal form (in one of the genders, at least) will have a somewhat different surface meaning from the "pure" adjective. "Relevé", as an adjective, means "raised", "erect"; "exalted". But "le relevé" is "the abstract, or summary", completely different in meaning.

When there are both masculine and feminine forms for some nominalized adjectives, they are not always identical in meaning (with the only difference being the gender). Very often the feminine will have a marked,

distinctive meaning: "la bonne" ("le bon" is not the masculine equivalent--in meaning--of "la bonne"). Note also the following "special" meaning of the feminine form: "causeur", "causeuse", as adjectives, mean "talkative"; this gives "un causeur", "a talker", but "une causeuse", "a small sofa". Often, too, the same gender may have a variety of surface meanings: "le fort" may mean (1) "the strong part", or "the most difficult part" (for example, "le plus fort est fait" = "the most difficult part is done"), (2) "the strong man", or (3) "the fort". Sometimes the plural form of the nominalized adjective has a restricted (but allied) meaning: "les blancs", "the whites" (that is, "the white people"); "les petits", "the common folk", "humble folk".

Another interesting fact to note about the nominalizing of adjectives in French is that there can be a change in meaning according to whether one uses the definite or indefinite article, without a change in gender. "L'inconnu" is the abstract notion "the unknown", whereas "un inconnu" (used often as an introductory reference) refers to "a person who is unknown", that is, "an unknown person". "The unknown" is very frequent in English, but "an unknown" (without the addition of "person") is rare, although it will be heard in modern-day English in sentences like: "He remained an unknown for the rest of his life". (Some of these have been remade as nouns, in English, so that they now have the total morphology of the noun. One can say, for example, "Banting and Best would have remained two unknowns had it not been for their great discovery". Other examples are "a sweet", "the sweets"; "a special", "the specials"; "a modern", "the moderns" (Hewson 1964: 68). The plural is an indication that they are nouns.)

There are adjectives in French which, as adjectives, may qualify things, but when nominalized may refer only to persons. Such is the adjective "accidenté". "Une vie accidentée" means "an eventful life", but "une accidentée" is "an injured (woman)", "a victim". Here, of course, there is also some change of meaning.

We will also find nominalized adjectives to refer to both persons and things. Such, for example, is the expression "le (la) meilleur(e)": "le meilleur avait gagné le premier prix", referring to a person, but "j'ai vu, hier, au cinéma, le meilleur du toute l'année", referring to a film. Another example is with "intérieur". Thus, "elle demeurait dans l'intérieur du pays", refers to a section of the country, whereas in "notre équipe avait un bon intérieur gauche" ("our team had a good inside left"), "intérieur" refers to a person.

For Albert Dauzat, certain kinds of "nouns" (the names for inhabitants, for example) may be either substantive or adjective. (He makes a fine distinction between "substantive" and "noun", and includes "substantive" and "adjective" in a single category: noun) (Dauzat 1947: 112). In this case, for inhabitants, he says that when it is substantivized it takes a capital letter. Compare "une Française" with "la langue française". For states we have (without the capital, of course): "Il est malade" ("malade" is an adjective here), but "c'est un malade" ("malade" is now a substantive). What he is saying is simply that its use determines whether it is to be considered a substantive or adjective. This is a rather naive but basic fact about these two categories in many languages.

### 2.3. English.

Before going further, it might be in order to point out here what

Jespersen suggested as a way of looking at the English four major "parts of speech"; and also to briefly discuss some points made by Guillaume.

For Jespersen, the English language has three distinct ranks, namely Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary, these three comprising the four "major" parts of speech--noun, adjective, verb, and adverb. In the Primary rank he puts the nouns (or substantives), in the Secondary rank he has two parts of speech, adjective and verb, and in the third rank (Tertiary) he places the adverb (Jespersen 1964: 78).

The Guillaumian view on this point is to say that the noun does not rely on anything else for its support--it has its own support (internal "incidence"). Incidence means "the resting of an import upon a support" (Hewson 1972: 51). The adjective, however, must rely on another "part of speech" for its very existence (external incidence). When the adjective is nominalized, the notion (import) must be said of itself; that is, the import also becomes the support. English, unlike French (see section 2.2.), has no gender/number in the adjective to be the support of the notion (import).

If we were to take the English noun phrase, "rather smoky factory", we find here (in Jespersen's terms) all three ranks: "factory", the Primary, "smoky", the Secondary, and "rather", the Tertiary. "Factory" can only be said of itself (except when it is used as an adjective: "factory ship", for example), whereas "smoky" is here said of (predicated of) something else. Likewise "rather" must be predicated (in this instance) of "smoky"; that is, "smoky" is the "momentary carrier" of the notion of "rather". So here we find three distinct ranks of predication which Guillaume also refers to as Immanence, Transcendence<sub>1</sub>, and Transcendence<sub>2</sub>. This may be seen more clearly by means of a schematic chart like the following (based on Hewson



1972: 51):

Immanence	Transcendence <sub>1</sub>	Transcendence <sub>2</sub>
factory	smoky	rather
Internal Incidence	External incidence in the <u>first</u> degree	External incidence in the <u>second</u> degree
(noun)	(adjective)	(adverb)

(In this paper we are concerned mainly with the noun and adjective--Primary and Secondary, Immanence and Transcendence<sub>1</sub>--and only with the adverb--Tertiary and Transcendence<sub>2</sub>--as it affects the position of the adjective.)

So then, what happens when an adjective is nominalized? It changes rank. In Jespersen's terms, it moves from its rank as a Secondary to become a Primary. As Guillaume might put it, the adjective moves from Transcendence<sub>1</sub> to Immanence--it internalizes its incidence. It may now be easier to see why it is more feasible for an adjective to become nominalized than for an adverb to do the same, since the adjective has only to make one move; the adverb would have to make two.

### 2.3.1. Nominalized Adjectives Referring to Persons

It is very rare, in modern English, for an adjective to be nominalized in the singular to refer to living beings. But, historically the adjective could be used in this way. In Shakespeare, we find: "whilst they behold a greater than themselves" (Schibsbye 1970: 123). And in the Bible (King James' Version, 1611) we have: "A greater than Solomon is here" (Matthew 12: 42). Nominalization in the singular (referring to persons) can be done

with comparative and superlative because they necessarily have internal predication (morphological predication): great-er, great-est. "Greatest" can quite easily refer to one person: "The greatest is not always the one who is the best known". And we still get such nominalized adjectives in the singular as: "the Almighty", "the accused", "the deceased" (Jespersen 1964: 80).

In general then, the singular is used very infrequently in English for a personal reference. A notion said of itself is essentially generic, abstract, -neuter. In order to make it personal, it must be given number. So the plural is employed in the great majority of cases. But, what kind of plural? When a new noun is created in modern English, its plural is invariably given in the '-s' form: "astronauts", "cadillacs", "sputniks", etc. But, one cannot say \*"the poors"; it has to be "the poor". This is what Hewson calls "quasi-substantivation" (Hewson 1972: 50). It is "quasi" because these nominalized adjectives do not accept ordinary plural in '-s'. They are incapable of doing this because they have no unit reference. Although "the poor" is not plural in its form (the regular form having an '-s' ending), yet it is notionally plural, since we would use a plural verb if "the poor" is used as a subject: "The poor have always been social outcasts". If singular reference has to be made, then one must revert to an adjectival use: "the poor professor", or use the prop-word one: "the poor one" (Hewson 1972: 54).

Before continuing, it might be useful to point out here that there are many substantives in modern English that were once full ("pure") adjectives (Jespersen 1954: 231). These, then, cannot be rightly referred to today as substantivized adjectives, since, for most speakers of English, they are now

felt to be substantives. Some of these are "a native", "the natives"; "a savage", "the savages"; "a regular", "the regulars"; "a Christian", "the Christians" (Hewson 1964: 68). Others are "infant" and "tith" (originally, "tenth part"); and also all ordinals: "three sevenths". In this paper, the forms are restricted to those which are still felt by ordinary speakers to be primarily and fundamentally adjectives. The difference between those forms which have become substantives (those that have regular plural in '-s'), and those that are simply nominalized adjectives (no change in form from ordinary adjectival use), is shown in the following: "we moderns are to the ancients what the poor are to the rich" (Jespersen 1954: 234). The following is a somewhat shortened list of the examples of Jespersen, examples which have the normal final '-s' (and, as such, are probably felt to be "pure" nominals by most English speakers today):

Human beings in general: we mortals  
 Races: the whites, the blacks  
 Social position: the nobles, the domestics  
 Gender: males, females  
 Age: three-year olds, grown-ups  
 Creed and Party: the Christians, liberals  
 Physical and Psychical characteristics: mutes, degenerates  
 Personal relations: the children, little dears  
 Comparatives: elders, your betters (Jespersen 1954: 234-237).

The superlative cannot be used in this way, since it is necessarily a singular, not a plural, notion.

To recapitulate, when the substantivized adjective of English is used for referring to people, it cannot have singular reference. It is used to include the whole group or class, and it usually has the definite article: "Only the cruel and the blind possess themselves of arms"; "to the young these new things are often themselves the background" (Schibsbye 1970: 123).

This nominalized adjective may be used in a similar, but slightly different way in that it may refer to a smaller, more restricted class, when used in a certain context. For example: "In the north outdoor games are seldom played except by the young", and "the work of rescuing the injured and removing the bodies of the dead lasted well into the afternoon". But one reverts to the definite article + adjective + noun when the group is seen as part of a larger whole: "I want to meet the young people after the service" (Schibsbye 1970: 123-124). However, there appear to be exceptions to this general "rule", for one can say: "On his first trip, the doctor will see only the very sick". The "very sick" are part of a larger whole that includes the "not-so sick". (But it still means all the very sick).

Before leaving this section on nominalized adjectives referring to persons, a brief comment will be made on those that refer specifically to nationality. For this category, they may also denote the whole nation: "the French", "the Japanese". And the definite article does not monopolize as a modifier: "we English" (Jespersen 1964: 80-81). All names for nationalities are not spelled in the same way when they change their roles from that of a "pure" adjective to that of a substantivized one. There are those that remain the same: "The English nation was very strong under Churchill", and "The English are governed by the common law". And there are those that change: "The Finnish population were all gathered around their television sets when the proclamation was made", and "The Finns are a hardy race". The singular and plural forms of some peoples are often the same: "the Eskimo", "the Batungo", "the Chinese", "the Japanese", "the Portuguese". When one is referring to a very small group of a particular nation, -men or people either must be used or need not be used: "these two Englishmen", "all those French people"; \*"an English", but "a Japanese". But, after we

and you, the name for the nation combined with -men or people can refer to the whole nation: "we Englishmen", "you French people" (Jespersen 1954: 280-281). The nominalized adjective (alone) referring to nationalities does not have to include the whole nation though. Sometimes only a small section of the nation is meant: "The English played well in yesterday's game". Here it is a group which is representative of the whole nation.

I remember in one of my old history books in elementary school the statement (presumably made by Samuel de Champlain): "Us French mean to settle Canada". It shows the modern translators using the nominalized adjective to refer to a section of the French nation.

### 2.3.2. Nominalized Adjectives With References Other Than Persons

The English adjective has, of course, lost all of its old agreement with the noun, agreement which it did have in its earlier history. Now the morphology of the adjective is unchanged no matter what the gender or number of the noun that it modifies: "a good poem", "good poems"; "a thoughtful father", "a thoughtful mother". In referring to things, the nominalized adjective may be in the singular morphology, but may be notionally singular or plural. Jespersen says that in most cases it is found in the plural form (Jespersen 1954: 241). This is a questionable assertion.

#### (a) Things

Jespersen gives a long list of pluralized forms, among which are the following (Jespersen 1954: 241-244): "absolutes", "fundamentals", "classics", "greens", "valuables", "greys", "whites" (of eyes), "initials", "the Rockies". Some speakers of English may consider some of these examples of Jespersen as full substantives. One may say, for example: "He was in

his room studying a classic", "Backchecking is a fundamental", and "What a beautiful green!".

### (b) Abstractions

For abstractions, although there can be plural forms ("the absolutes"), they are often neuter and singular: "One arrives at the unknown by means of the known", "The evil that men do lives after them/The good is oft enterr'd with their bones" (Julius Caesar). Note also that it is the generic sense which is given: "the unseen", "the forgotten" (Schibsbye 1970: 273), "the true", "the beautiful" (Hewson 1972: 51-52). It is the quality of some person or thing which is given: "Burke's Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful" (Low and Hollingworth 1948: 34).

To get around the generic sense, in order to express something particular, something which is quite concrete, very often "thing" is added: "This is the very latest thing", "The only thing we know..." (Jespersen 1964: 80). Another word used similarly to "thing" is "part": "That is the most important part of the whole lecture". Other ways to substantivize an adjective in English is to use the prop-words "one", "ones", "man", and "men".

### 2.3.3. The Prop-word One(s)

This "prop-word" (as it is commonly called) may be used for both the living and non-living. In referring to living beings it can be either anaphoric or independent. In order for "the little one" to refer to "the little flower", then the latter must have already been mentioned (this is the anaphoric use). If there is no previous reference to an object before "the little one" is used, then it has to refer to "the child" (independent

use). Of course, the anaphoric use may also be used with persons (Jespersen 1954: 246).

This prop-word may also be used in its plural form, ones: "He would marry a nice steady girl...instead of one of those sloppy ones". Sometimes "one" can be left out, but it makes for a very literary statement: "It is a wet light rather than a dry"; or it is quite formal: "Rich babies are taller than poor" (Schibsbye 1970: 279-280).

A rather curious thing happens with this prop-word. It may lose its numerical quality completely, or nearly so. Note the following examples (Jespersen 1964: 81):

- (1) When "a" precedes: "such a one"
- (2) With definite article: "This grey horse is stronger than the black one"
- (3) With numerical noun "one": "German teachers would rather manage a dozen German boys than one English one"
- (4) A numeral may even be used with the plural form, "ones": "Two grey horses and three black ones".

#### 2.4. Comparison of English and French Nominalization

On the whole it appears that French has a more flexible system for the nominalization of adjectives. This appears to be due to the fact that, in French, there is, for the majority of cases, number and gender agreement between adjective and noun. In general, there is at least one form of the adjective which can be nominalized, and sometimes all four variations can. "L'agréable" is the only usual nominalized form for the adjective "agréable" (if "les misérables", why not "les agréables?"); with others there are two forms: "le couchant", "les couchants"; and with others all four possibilities exist: "le menteur", "la menteuse", "les menteurs", and "les menteuses".

French is capable of nominalizing the adjective referring to persons where English would have to use another noun with the adjective, or make use of the prop-word, which has already been discussed. It is perfectly good-French to say, for example, "un abandonné", but, in English, we generally say "a stray (person) (man) (one)". However, in some regions, "This cat is a stray" and "These cats are strays" would be quite good and acceptable English. "Un avaricieux" would have to be, in English, "a stingy (man) (person) (one)". And, for other than persons, French does not need a prop-word: "L'important est...", "The important thing is...".

The generic use in English, referring to persons ("the dead", "the rich"), has to be put into the morphological plural in French: "les morts", "les riches". In English it is notionally plural (with singular form); it cannot be morphologically otherwise. One cannot say, in English, \*"the deads". With abstractions, the form in both English and French is similar (neuter singular): "the beautiful", "le beau"; "the unknown", "l'inconnu".

French, then, seems to be able to substantivize more freely, more efficiently, than English. L.C. Harmer provides us with some examples (from various authors) to try and prove this point. To quote him: "In French a greater condensation can be achieved" (Harmer 1954: 136). Note his examples:

Dans la mesure où les scribes désiraient enfler leurs écritures, les moyens ne leur manquaient donc pas, et efficaces,--and efficacious ones at that.

Mais là était l'extraordinaire de la chose,--But therein lay the extraordinary part of the matter.

L'étrange était qu'il n'éprouvait plus rien de son émoi,--the strange thing was that...

Le triste...c'est que ça ne peut pas durer,--the sad thing...is that...



It can be quite easily seen from these examples how the French can dispense with the English expediency of using prop-words: "thing", "ones", "part".

We have attempted to show here that, in general, French can nominalize more effectively, and more efficiently, than can the English: "un droitier", "a right-handed man"; "le meilleur", "the best thing". What about the reverse process, adjectivization? This area of study is beyond the scope of this paper, and only the following brief comments will be made.

Both English and French seem to be able to "adjectivize" their nouns quite easily--with English probably being able to use this particular process a little more successfully than French. In the final analysis, might it not be the case that the two processes "balance out" one another in the two languages? The following diagram might show more clearly what is meant:

Both processes

French	Nominalization		Adjectivization	gender helps nominalization
English	Nominalization		Adjectivization	lack of gender hinders nominalization

If both processes were done to the same degree in both languages (an unlikely phenomenon), then the dotted line might be an accurate division. It is also to be noted that these processes are not static in either language, and that they realign themselves with the passage of time. At different times in the history of the language, adjectives gain or lose the power to nominalize, and nominals (substantives) gain or lose their power to adjectivize.

In English, we find such "pure" nouns as "rainbow" and "dog", yet they can be used adjectivally quite freely: "with rainbow colours", and "a dog collar". In order to translate these expressions into French, we would generally make use of a preposition: "avec (les) couleurs d'arc-en-ciel", "un collier de chien". Nevertheless, there are many instances where an ellipsis is made of the preposition, and the noun used like an adjective. Harmer gives many examples, among which are: "la question alcoolisme", "des chemises saumon", "pourquoi? répliquait-elle de sa voix la plus jeune fille" (Harmer 1954: 140-141). Marouzeau gives examples of nouns that have now been joined by hyphens so as to form a complete entity: "un chou-fleur", "un bracelet-montre" (Marouzeau 1954: 166-167).

## CHAPTER THREE

### ADJECTIVE POSITION IN ENGLISH

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter and the next will concentrate separately on the English and the French adjective respectively. It is then the intention, in the fifth chapter, to analyze and synthesize some of the points made in the following two chapters, in order to bring to the surface some points of similarity and some of contrast. (We have already shown some similarities and differences in the preceding chapter on nominalization)

The main objective of this paper is to study the adjective in English and French, from a syntactic point of view. In any two languages, the morphology is bound to be different. It is inconceivable for two different languages (regardless of the "degree" of difference) to have identical, or even very similar, morphologies. And, in dialects of the "same" language, although morphology might be quite similar in both, yet phonology keeps them separate.

But, these are "common-sense" differences, differences which are necessary in order to keep languages apart. A contrastive study of phonology and morphology would therefore probably reveal very little that would not have been already known or surmised. (A study of these areas for other reasons--lexical or historical, for example--would, of course, be interesting and rewarding.) What is really meant here is that most people know that languages differ according to word structure and sound--ask any old fisherman! However, not everyone realizes that languages could have the same morphology and the same phonology, and still be quite different because of syntax--the arrangement of words in a sentence.

This situation (identical morphology and phonology) would be ideal for studying syntax, since the other two areas would be kept constant, and only one variable would need to be studied. However, such is certainly not the case in any languages of the world. Nevertheless, the fact that English and French have quite separate phonology and morphology will not interfere to any recognizable extent in this study. Here we are mainly concerned with syntax; but, a brief look at the morphology of the English adjective might help.

### 3.2. Morphology

Every word, in English, is made into a part of speech as one speaks ("But me no buts": Shakespeare). A lexical notion (import) can be processed as a noun, verb, adjective, etc., and will receive the morphology appropriate to the category in which it is processed. "But" is considered by most grammarians to be a conjunction (and, there is no doubt that it is that in the great majority of instances), but (here is one!) it can be easily processed into other parts of speech as the example of Shakespeare shows. The first "but" in that example is a verb; the second is a noun.

In English, therefore, it just will not work to say that a word is a part of speech: the notion of "word-class" gives a false picture of the reality of the so-called parts of speech. A word necessarily starts out as an import--a lexical notion which has to be grammatically processed. Every import is grammaticalized as a part of speech (with appropriate morphology), which will be appropriate to a certain function (with appropriate position--syntax).

There are, however, those (Willis 1972: 23-26, and Jespersen 1954: 288, for example) who contend that a distinction can be made between an adjective

by form and an adjective by function. They are still patronizing the old Latin grammars, and it should be common knowledge with today's linguistic awareness that English just does not remain true to the categories of Latin. It is true that what grammarians have classified as "pure" adjectives are, perhaps, more often used as such than they are used as other parts of speech.

The point is, however, that the morphology of English is not the morphology of words, but the morphology of (in our case) the category adjective. Round, for example, does not become an adjective until you process it as such--then you may get rounder, roudest. But, if you process it as a verb you will get round, rounds, rounding, rounded. The point is that round is not a part of speech to start with. In the lexicon it is nothing but an import, a notion. Nevertheless, there are many notions that are never ordinarily processed as anything but adjectives, as, for example, those ending in ish (foolish), y (crazy), al (personal), etc. It is also necessary to point out here that an import may be grammaticalized at first as an adjective and then recycled as a noun: hence the substantivized adjective (an example of two successive grammatical processes).

There are, too, many items that are ordinarily processed as other parts of speech, but which may be used as (processed as) adjectives quite freely in English (that is, making use of two successive grammatical processes). What are some of these parts of speech? Willis gives a convenient list of them. The following is a somewhat shortened version of his section on adjectivals, showing some of the different parts of speech and other items that can become adjectivals in English (Willis 1972: 43-46):

Kind of AdjectivalHow used

Nouns

the steel rails; the rubber tires

Verbs

the boy swimming is my brother;  
the girl to date is Suzie

Adverbs

the racketeers pulled an inside  
job; the car ahead is speeding

Prepositional phrases

the girl in the next apartment;  
the man from Mars

Verbal phrases

the girl wearing the sweater is  
Trudy Bess

Dependent clauses

the student who finishes first  
will receive the highest grade

Structure words

one dog is enough; John's girl  
is intelligent.

(These examples should show us that one cannot tell an adjective by form!)

There is continuing disagreement in modern English as to whether a noun modifying another noun is an adjective or if it remains a noun. This argument is typified by the discussion over "cannon ball" (Jespersen 1954: 310-312). Some grammarians say that "cannon" is an adjective; others claim that it is still a noun. One way to settle the question is to accept the view that "cannon" in "cannon ball" is a notion (an import) which functions as an adjective in this particular case--that it is here processed first as a noun and then recycled as an adjective. It is difficult to reason otherwise about this particular problem because, in English, there is a lack of formal characteristics distinguishing adjectives from nouns. We observe, however, that when a noun is recycled as an adjective the singular form must be used, and the singular/plural option of the noun is not available: "tooth paste" is "paste for the teeth". Nevertheless, such a word is not a full-blown adjective either, since it cannot be compared.

### 3.3. Syntax

The concentration of this paper is on syntax--the arrangement of words in a sentence to show their relationship. More specifically it deals with the syntactic arrangement of the adjective with the noun. The remainder of this chapter will attempt to show the various positions of the adjectives and nouns in relation to each other.

In English, there are four positions that the adjectival can occupy in relation to the noun. (From now on, the term "adjectival" will be used to refer to those parts of speech which are not normally processed as adjectives, but it will also include those items which are usually processed as such. When "adjective" is used, it will mean only those words which show the usual range of adjective morphology.) The different positions for adjectivals in English are (1) prenominal, (2) postnominal, (3) predicative, and (4) shifted. An example of each is (1) "All mad dogs will be shot on sight", (2) "The stores uptown are having a sale", (3) "The cake was delicious", and (4) "John just stood there, dumbfounded". There are other positions for the latter type, but these will be dealt with later.

#### A. Prenominal Position

Of all the positions that the adjectival can possibly take, the most frequent is the one before the noun. "Adjectivals, like nominals, occupy certain characteristic positions. The main one is that between the determiner and the noun" (Stageberg 1965: 206). This is fairly easily shown by taking up any novel, or other type of English literature, and noting the position of the adjectivals in a paragraph or two. For example, in A Pocketful of Rye, by A. J. Cronin, there are twenty-three adjectivals in the first paragraph, of which twenty-one precede the noun, and only two

come immediately after. Although there is no theoretical limit to the number of single adjectivals preceding the noun (J.R. Smallwood was famous for stringing together a whole series of them!), all of those twenty-one were either one-, two-, or three-word examples. After three adjectivals in a row, the English sentence begins to become a little unmanageable.

### 1. One-word adjectivals before

As noted above, the most frequent position for the adjectival in English is between determiner and noun. This is so frequently the case in modern English that examples abound and long lists could be rapidly made from any text, selected at random; but, this would be uninteresting and unnecessary. However, it is interesting to note what types of adjectivals can precede the noun. The one that is the most natural in this position is, of course, the "pure" (normal) adjective: "Black cats are bad luck", "hard games are not for old people". Other types can also precede: "A frightened child should never be scolded" (Verbal), "an outside sweater is a good idea for cold weather" (Adverb), "he is a star gazer" (Noun).

For Schibsbye, the prenominal adjectivals fall into five separate groups: (1) those with -ic endings ("a lyric poet", "the stoic values"); (2) those ending in -en, still having a material reference ("an earthen jar", "woollen socks"); (3) past participles in -en ("shrunk<sup>en</sup> limbs", "the sunken head"); (4) the comparatives used to express contrast, not degree ("the upper hand"), and a few Latin comparatives ("major", "minor"); and (5) the adjectives "joint", "live", "very", and "lone" ("in this very room"; "to play a lone hand") (Schibsbye 1970: 140-141). (If "joint", "live", and "lone" are adjectives, how do we give the comparative and superlative of them?)



## 2. Two adjectivals before

### (a) Adjective-plus-adjective

When one adjectival precedes the noun there can be no choice as to position--it must come directly in front, after the determiner, if there is one. (There are some exceptions to this rule, "such a night", for example; this type will be considered in Chapter Five.) With two adjectivals that both precede the noun, a choice has generally to be made as to their order. "If the adjuncts are strictly coordinated, however, they may come in the order that they come to the mind" (Jespersen 1954: 361). Such would be the following example:

a heartbroken, crying, bewildered child.

There are six different ways to order these adjectivals (keeping them before the noun), either one of which would make a perfectly good English phrase.

Now, there are two basic types of adjectives, and this difference might help us decide on some kind of "rule" of placement. There are adjectives of a descriptive nature, such as naughty, crazy, beautiful, and intelligent. The other type is what grammarians refer to as limiting, which includes such adjectives as little, wide, and big. When we find two adjectives preceding, one descriptive and the other limiting, the descriptive precedes the limiting (Schibsbye 1970: 141). Thus, we have "the naughty little boy", "a beautiful wide avenue", and "an intelligent big boy". It seems, however, that Schibsbye should have qualified his statement by remarking that this is usually the case. In certain circumstances it would be quite conceivable to say, for example, "the little naughty boy", as opposed to "the big naughty boy"; and "a big intelligent boy" as opposed

to "a small intelligent boy". In these cases, however, it seems that the limiting adjectives have become more descriptive in nature, and vice versa; and that the original descriptive adjectives have become more closely tied to the noun, so that they both form one single unit: naughty boy, and intelligent boy.

To go back to Schibsbye's examples of descriptive preceding limiting, he has the following: "a naughty little boy", "a nervous young man", and "a beautiful French girl". In the first two examples it is more easily seen that the second of the two adjectives does have a closer affinity with the noun than the first adjective. "French" does not seem to be one with the noun here: note the difference in stress between "a naughty little boy" and "a beautiful French girl". However, "little boy", "young man", and the like, are often considered to be one notional unit, one single entity. And so, if taken as one, then it would be more "unnatural" to separate them and insert another word than it would be to keep the two together. This is not a speculative answer for this phenomenon; it has an historical basis. It has often happened in the history of the English language that the first word (originally an adjective) of a combination has become part of the following noun, so that sometimes the two have combined to form one noun, and at other times they are joined by hyphens: gentlemen, and light-year.

Schibsbye comes close to saying much the same as what has just been given as an explanation of why one adjective precedes another (close affinity of the second with the noun) when he says that "the adjectives little and old are often closely associated with the succeeding noun, so that other adjectives precede them: a brave little woman/a rich old man"

(Schibsbye 1970: 141). Might it not be the case that a limiting adjective is somehow "notionally closer" to the noun than is a descriptive one? The descriptive quality is brought to bear on the full nominal (if a single noun), or the nominal plus the limiting factor (an adjective). And, if there were two descriptive modifiers they both would come before the limiting one. Schematically, it would look like this:

(descriptive) { (limiting) noun } .

This would help to explain the next case that Schibsbye mentions: when the adjectives little and old are separated from the noun when adjectives of colour, material, or nationality are used: "the little red town", "old wooden furniture", "a charming little Italian girl" (Schibsbye 1970: 141). Following our pattern, the adjectives red, wooden, and Italian have become "more limiting" (more specific) than little and old. The latter have therefore been moved back to the descriptive slot, since they now take on more of a descriptive nature. In the last example, "charming" is probably the most descriptive of the three; it not only is used to qualify "girl", or "Italian girl", but the "little Italian girl".

The above explanation seems to work well for another of Schibsbye's examples (this one with three adjectives): "a large thick sweet pancake" (Schibsbye 1970: 141). He says that adjectives of size normally precede those of form. Let us take each adjective in order. "Large" refers not only to the diameter of the pancake, but also to its thickness; in other words, it applies to the total impression. The adjective, "thick", refers only to the vertical dimension of the pancake. "Sweet" refers to something "interior"--the pancake would have to be tasted in order for this quality

to be applied. This adjective, "sweet", could be said to be at one with "pancake" itself, so that "sweet pancake" could be taken as one entity. "Large" and "thick" speak more of "exterior" judgements. But "thick" is less descriptive of the pancake than is "large", if only in quantitative terms--it does not refer to as much as "large"; it does not include as much. (If "sweet" were put in front of "thick", then it would tend to refer to the overall impression--"sweet little girl"--it would be more of a synonym for "nice".) Putting this phrase in our general pattern we would get:

(descriptive) { (limiting) noun }  
 large thick      sweet      pancake.

Now, what happens when we have only two adjectives and both are equally descriptive? Then it would be either a matter of preference, or the order in which they would appear in the mind, or, and what is more likely to be the case, a matter of context. Some descriptive adjectives would more naturally adhere to the noun than others: "a long, hard exam". However, it is not easy to obtain, in natural, everyday speech, two adjectives which we are able to classify, in an objective manner, as equally descriptive. "A fast, smooth ride" is maybe close, for here it would not make much difference, semantically, if it were "a smooth, fast ride".

A possible problem with our "rule" occurs when we have quantitative adjectives, which come invariably before the descriptive adjectives. We would never say "young two people", but always "two young people". But, there is a way to explain this, and still keep within the bounds of our "theory" that descriptive precedes limiting. We say that "young people" is one entity, one notional unit, and that, therefore, "young" (in this instance) is not really a descriptive adjective at all--it is connected in

some subtle, yet real, way to "people". The same kind of reasoning helped us when we were dealing with "a brave little woman"/"a rich old man". And there are others which are similar: young man, young woman, old people, old friend, etc.

Other grammarians bring out other aspects of this category--two adjectives preceding the noun. Jespersen approaches the subject using a different terminology. He says that "when the same substantive has one direct and one shifted adjunct, the latter must be placed nearest to the substantive" (Jespersen 1954: 288). A direct adjunct is used to "specify the principal", to "make more specific" (p. 285). Examples he gives are "this", "tallest", "young". A shifted adjunct is one that can be moved ("shifted") from, for example, being a Secondary to a Tertiary; that is, there is a rank change. To take his example: "an ordinary secret sinner", he is saying that "secret" comes next to "sinner" because "secret" is a shifted adjunct. A transformation of this phrase would give "an ordinary man who sins secretly". Here we note that "ordinary" is still a Secondary (it is an adjective which did not change rank), whereas "secretly" is now a Tertiary (an adverb). Of the two adjectives, "ordinary" and "secret", the latter is the one which changes rank.

To go back to our former analysis, the fact that "an ordinary secret sinner" transforms into "an ordinary man who sins secretly" reinforces what we have been proposing. One should note that not only is there a shift from "secret" to "secretly", but there is also a corresponding shift of "sinner" to "sins". Both go up or down one rank together. The point is, however, that the notions contained by "secret" and "sinner" are not separated by the transformation--they remain together. In other words, in this example, "secret" has a closer affinity with the noun "sinner" than

does "ordinary". This example brings us to another important variation, when one of the preceding adjectivals is an adjectivized noun ("Secret" is given as both adjective and noun in the lexicon.)

(b) Adjective-plus-noun

We have already noted that the "pure" adjective is the most frequently-employed type of adjectival. It would appear that, in English, the adjectivized noun ranks a close second in the frequency of use. (We are considering an "adjectivized noun" to be an item which is normally used as a nominal. It would, perhaps, make a very interesting study if one were to compare the frequency of pure adjectives to adjectivized nominals-- but that is outside the scope of this paper.)

The heading for this section is written as "adjective-plus-noun"; actually, no other order could have been possible. That order is invariable. Let us take some "pure" adjectives and some adjectivized nouns and see what different arrangements are possible:

<u>Pure adjective</u>	<u>Adjectivized nouns</u>	<u>Nouns.</u>
great	class	dress
beautiful	party	exam
tremendous	school	dance
difficult	evening	activity

When we seek to arrange these into clusters so that they will make good sense in English, we get the following:

great class dance  
 beautiful evening dress  
 tremendous party activity  
 difficult class exam  
 tremendous evening dance  
 tremendous evening dress  
 great party dance

and so on. It would be impossible to interchange the first two words in either phrase. It is impossible to say, for example, \**"party beautiful dress"*, \**"class difficult exam"*, or \**"evening great dance"*. One can, however, change the order with some of the last two words: *"great dance class"*, *"tremendous dance evening"*, and *"great dance party"*, for example. In these instances, the nouns have become adjectivized, and the adjectivized nouns have reverted to being "pure" nouns.

Others have demonstrated that "adjective-plus-noun" is the only order. "When an adjective and a noun both precede the noun head, the adjective precedes the modifying noun, thus:

<u>D</u>	<u>adj.</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>NH</u>	
our	sturdy	garden	fence	
that	low	wire	fence"	(Stageberg 1965: 236).

He follows this with an exercise in which he has jumbled the various words, and they have to be arranged in their "proper" order. For example, he has the following group of words: a, street, village, narrow, which, of course, is easily arranged into the only possible pattern of determiner + adjective + noun + noun head: *"a narrow village street"*. One could say *"a narrow-street village"* with a hyphen, but this makes "narrow" and "street" into one adjectival. Any other variation of this is just not said in modern English.

A curious thing sometimes happens when one of the adjectivals is a noun. The phrase is often ambiguous--at least when given out of context. The reason for this is that the adjective can go either with the noun which is being used adjectivally, or with the following noun (usually the final one). Stageberg points this out in his book (Stageberg 1965: 236-237). The phrase *"a decent college graduate"* may be interpreted as *"a*

graduate of a decent college", or "a decent graduate of a college".

(Another example that would give similar transformations is "a small boys' school": this could be interpreted as "a school for small boys", or "a small school for boys".) In the exercise which follows this phrase, he has another phrase, "the basic book service", which yields similar interpretations: "a service which deals in basic books", or "a book service which is basic". In both of these instances, however, it seems that it is the second of the two possible interpretations which is the most usual. In other words (in the first example), "decent" will more often be bound to "graduate" than to "college". If it is the "decent college" which is meant then more often it will be given as: "a graduate of a decent college". Likewise, "boys' school" and "book service" will more often have their elements bound together than "small boys'" or "basic book". It is probably more "natural" for a noun to have a closer affinity with another noun than with an adjective.

There is another aspect to this. Hewson has suggested that the noun when used as an adjective has a "more exact sense" than the adjective itself (Hewson 1964: 65). He uses as examples: "An England cricketer" (member of the national team), and "an English Cricketer" (one among millions). If the noun used as adjective is more exact, then it is more specific--it has, in fact, a limiting value. And, according to what we have put forward, descriptive adjectivals precede limiting ones. This explanation of Hewson's then, tends to reinforce and verify what has been given as our analysis: a noun used as an adjectival is limiting and, therefore, descriptive adjectivals would tend to come before. So, to go back to our example, we say "a decent college graduate" and not \*"a college decent graduate".



### (c) Noun-plus-noun

In English, not only can one noun modify another, the second of the two being the "head noun" (or topic noun), but, within the modifying part two nouns may be used. So that, we may get the pattern: determiner noun noun head noun (the only portion which is not adjectival is the final noun). One can find examples such as "an iron garden fence", "the kitchen table set", and "a community song festival". What principle of ordering is present in these and other examples? One cannot say \*"the table kitchen set" or \*"a song community festival". (Types like the last two could work in English only if the first adjectival were a descriptive adjective: "the large kitchen table", "a fine community festival".) Could there be some close semantic affinity between the last two words? If we delete one word at a time (except the article) from the phrase "an iron garden fence", we get the following possibilities: "an iron fence", "a garden fence", but \*"an iron garden". If "garden" is to be used here, it has to be combined with "fence" in order to make sense (it does, of course, make sense if used alone!). This semantic peculiarity, however, does not operate with the other two examples; they can use all three possibilities. Nevertheless, the fact that it operates for some examples seems to indicate that there might be something which holds together the last two words--one cannot put the two modifying nouns in any order.

### (d) Other Adjectivals: Predeterminer and Postdeterminer

As the names suggest, these two classes come, one before and one after the determiners--and immediately after. Since the determiner always precedes other kinds of adjectivals, then these two groups will logically and naturally come before descriptive and limiting adjectivals. Stageberg

gives a short list of some of these determiners, among which are the following:

Predeterminers: all, both, half, double

Postdeterminers: ordinal numbers, cardinal numbers, every, few, less, more, most, some, single, many (a), such (a), and others (Stageberg 1965: 240).

The first class, predeterminers, are fairly consistent in the order in which they come: "all the old buses", "half those mental patients". It is the postdeterminers which cause the headaches in that there are so many irregularities among them, even within the group. As Stageberg points out: "Not all postdeterminers follow all determiners, but each one follows at least one determiner" (Stageberg 1965: 240).

Within the group, there is a "tendency to place numerals before first, last, next" (Jespersen 1954: 361): "the three next pictures", "the two first dances". However, not everyone would agree with Jespersen on this point, as he himself points out when he says that there is much conflict over this point, many preferring to put the numeral immediately before the substantive: "for the next two days", "our last four Prime Ministers". (The writer of this paper prefers the latter order.)

A similar argument occurs for "other" and a numeral: "the other two gentlemen", or "the two other gentlemen". If we applied our "rule" to this we would get the more descriptive preceding the more limiting. Thus, the numerals would come immediately before the noun, since numerals are quite specific (limiting): "the first four pages", "the other two gentlemen".

### 3. Adjectival Phrases Before

#### (a) One-Word Phrases

The most usual position for phrases of any kind in English is after the noun (this will be considered in the following section). However, under certain conditions, and in different circumstances and contexts, some phrases may occur before the noun. One of these conditions is that there be terminal juncture before the noun. (Terminal juncture, or terminal contour, is indicated by the use of a comma, or other punctuation; it points out a change of pitch at the end of an utterance, or between utterances. Note the difference in the following pair of sentences: "If you have to, give him one"/"If you have two, give him one". The breaks in the middle of these sentences are different due to different terminal contours, the first contour falling, the second rising). "A word group almost never precedes the noun it modifies unless there is terminal juncture between it and the noun" (Willis 1972: 256). So that we cannot ordinarily say \*"the swimming in the river girl is Joan". The phrase "swimming in the river" could be hyphenated, but then it is considered as one adjectival. And, of course, one-word adjectivals are freely used in English in this position. However, "the swimming-in-the-river girl is Joan" would still sound very strange.

Terminal juncture is not only used for complex phrases; even one-word adjectivals can be used with it. But this, too, is rare. Note the following examples: "Satisfied, Bert left the complaint department" (Willis 1972: 257), "Weary, Paul lay down to rest", "Delighted, Mary ran all the way home". These sentences sound very formal and would hardly ever be seen in print, much less heard in the spoken language. Note also that in these examples, proper nouns have been used, since they are probably the most

frequently-used type of item in this position. Pronouns and common nouns could be used too, but they tend to be even more formal: "Satisfied, he left the complaint department", "Delighted, the girl ran all the way home".

One other thing to note here is that the definite article is not used for pronouns, is rarely used with proper nouns, but is often used with common nouns. The definite article cannot be used with proper nouns except when a contrast is being made: "The satisfied Bert left the complaint department" = "The (now) satisfied Bert..." and contrasts with "The (formerly) dissatisfied Bert..."; but, with certainty, one cannot say \*"Satisfied, the Bert left...". With pronouns, neither one of the above structures will work: \*"The satisfied he..." and \*"Satisfied, the he..." are impossibilities. It is normally only when the noun is common that one can use the definite article: "Satisfied, the customer left the complaint department", and "Delighted, the girl ran all the way home". Note that if the definite article comes first, juncture disappears, and the sentence becomes a very "normal" English sentence: "The satisfied customer left the complaint department", "The delighted girl ran all the way home".

#### (b) Adverb-Plus-Adjectival

We have already discussed the case of adjectivals preceding the noun. Now, since adverbs modify adjectivals, one should expect adverb-plus-adjectival quite frequently to precede the noun. And, in fact, this is so: "a very weak heart", "a rather frightful look", "the most joyful news".

"An exceedingly great storm" is a type of phrase which is heard infrequently today, although one will occasionally hear a phrase like: "a gorgeously attired person". But it is a very clumsy expression. Very

often, in today's English, the adverb becomes a kind of "semi-adjectival" (if such a term can be permitted); in that the -ly is removed. So that, one often hears, "a bitter cold night" (cf. Jespersen 1954: 366, "the night was bitter cold"). Notionally, this appears to be "a [bitter-cold] night", like "a tight-fitting suit". Compare also: "a four-footed animal" = "an animal with four feet". Another example is "a fine grained sand". Of course, this does not hinder a person from saying "a bitterlyly cold night", or "a finelyly grained sand".

### (c) Verbal Adjectival Phrases

Of the three types of verbal phrases (infinitive, present participle, and past participle), only the first cannot be used prenominaly. Not even the single infinitive can be used in this position. One cannot say \*"The to go place is Jamaica", or \*"Where can we find to eat something?". The other two can be placed in preposition: "The running boy tripped on a wire", and "The printed book is one of man's great inventions" (Willis 1972: 269, 272).

As phrases, however, these two, present and past participle, must make use of terminal juncture: "Arguing heatedly, Jack gave evidence for his case", and "Educated at Harvard, John was able to pick his job" (Willis 1972: 270, 272). With the one-word verbals we could substitute a common noun for the proper, and add the definite article after juncture ("Satisfied, the customer..."). We can do the same here: "Arguing heatedly, the man gave...". Here, however, we rarely separate the article from the noun, with the verbal phrase coming between. It is very awkward to say "The heatedly arguing man...". This is one more piece of evidence that long phrases have a tendency to be placed after the noun in English, and single words before.

## B. Postnominal Position

### 1. One-Word Adjectivals

It is very rare, in English, to have a postnominal adjective. It is, however, required after an indefinite pronoun: "Something valuable was stolen from my office". One cannot say \*"Valuable something was...", or \*"A watch valuable was...". There are a few idiomatic-type expressions, though, where the single ("pure") adjective comes after: "the heir apparent", "the body politic", "God Almighty", "the devil incarnate" (Willis 1972: 258). These terms are all calques upon the French; it is a basic French structure, to which we have given English words. Jespersen suggests that expressions like "the heir apparent" and "blood royal", go back to the time of the Norman Conquest, and are thus a French influence (Jespersen 1954: 378). Schibsbye also has a list of these (Schibsbye 1970: 142).

It is formal English to put a limiting adjective after the noun: "He had no time to spare for problems academic" (Schibsbye 1970: 142).

Another group of one-word adjectivals that are postposed in English are present and past participle types, as well as adjectivized nouns. Many participles always occur after the noun: "a gentleman born", "for three days running", "for the time being". "Born" may also come before the noun, with meaning change (see "Change of Meaning with Position" below, section E.3.): "a born poet". The participle is postposed when the verbal quality is stressed: "The bias of those concerned had vitiated the conclusions drawn", and "My heart bounded like that of a prisoner escaped". (This last example seems quite unnatural). When the participles have become adjectives completely, they usually come before the noun: "at a given

point", "a well-known writer" (Jespersen 1954: 382-383).

There are no apparent rules why some participles cannot go after the noun. Willis gives examples. One can say "the girl listening is...", but cannot say \*"the girl hearing is..." (The reason for this may be because hearing (or seeing) is not normally an activity--the progressive of these verbs is unusual.); we can say "the meal served was...", but cannot say \*"the meal finished was..." (Willis 1972: 257). Willis is wrong here, however: we can say "the meal finished was...", if we are contrasting it with another unfinished meal. And a Catholic might say "the priest hearing (confessions)...".

Schibsbye also points out that it is the verbal aspect of the adjectival that is stressed when it is postposed: "all men living", "the sum added". He says it has a value which is close to a relative clause (Schibsbye 1970: 143). So do all postposed adjectives: "They found the bottle empty". If, then, there are no well-stated rules for some participles in postposition and some in preposition, and, if, in some cases, it just has to be done that way, then maybe the "stressing of the verbal quality" or "the resemblance to a full clause" may be the only possible answers. (We exclude poetic exigences which call for position changes because of stress or rhythm--this is not "normal", everyday English.)

Certain single adjectivized nouns may also be postposed in English, although this is also a rare phenomenon (Willis 1972: 258). Willis gives examples such as "operation bread-basket", "the party outdoors", "the affair indoors", "a trip overseas". Some consider the types like "outdoors", "indoors", "overseas", to be adverbials being used as adjectives (Stageberg 1965: 247).

An oddity occurs with numerals used in postposition. They were often postposed in Early English, and are used in this way in some cases today, although it gives an affective twist: "his apostles twelve", "soldiers three". The oddity comes, however, in instances like "chapter three", "page four", "in the year nineteen hundred and ten", where the cardinal is used to express the ordinal. Jespersen says that this has come to be in English (and French) because of the way it has been written: Chapter III (Jespersen 1954: 380). Hewson suggests (through personal communication) that it might be short for "Chapter number three". Note that, in the latter examples, if the numerals are placed before they have to be ordinal numbers: "the third chapter", "the fourth page".

## 2. Two-Word Adjectivals

One-word adjectivals more often come before the noun than after. But "adjectives in pairs are frequently used in the postnominal position" (Willis 1972: 258). His examples are "The night nurse, pale and weary, was...", "The winner, confident and jubilant, prepared to...", and "Alfred, tired but happy, was...". Note that they are all connected by a conjunction. Schibsbye says that "when two or more coordinate descriptive adjectives are attached to a noun" they are in postposition (Schibsbye 1970: 142); for example, "He was a big man, square-shouldered and virile". If these adjectives were not coordinated, but used separately, then they may come before or after the noun, but the preference for separately-used modifiers seems to be preposition; thus, "He was a big, square-shouldered, virile man". Adjectives with the contrastive conjunction, "but", are often placed after the noun: "a laugh, musical but malicious".



### 3. Phrases

#### (a) Adverb-Plus-Adjectival

Not only may two adjectivals follow the noun, but there are other possible combinations. One of these possibilities is the adjectival which is modified by an adverb. These follow the noun more often than they precede it. "Word adjectivals normally occur after the noun...when the word is not alone but is modified" (Stageberg 1965: 246). His examples are

The mailman, exuberantly happy, whistled merrily  
He had never seen a woman more happy.

These examples have an adverb plus one single-word adjectival. However, often the adjectival is a rather long expression: "The university, magnificently situated on a 400-acre site, was the ideal place for the conference". Schibsbye gives: "The speaker, truly majestic in full-bottom wig, made his immemorial procession to the Chamber" (Schibsbye 1970: 142).

#### (b) Prepositional Phrases

Prepositional phrases, in modifying nouns, nearly always follow. If they come before, then they are always used with terminal juncture: "In the wealthiest country of the world, famine can suddenly strike". This terminal juncture is not necessary when the phrase follows the noun, which it does in the vast majority of cases.

Willis gives a fairly exhaustive sketch of the different kinds of nouns that a prepositional phrase can qualify, after saying that "a prepositional phrase can modify any noun in a sentence except a noun that is modifying another noun" (Willis 1972: 264). (We expect this after what was said earlier in this chapter, section 3.3, sub-section A.2, (b), about

"a decent college graduate", etc. A noun modifying another noun seems to have a closer affinity with it than an adjective would. In order to have the modifying noun modified by a prepositional phrase, one would have to separate the two nouns.). Here are some of Willis' examples, showing the different kinds of nouns a prepositional phrase can modify (Willis 1972: 264-265):

- Noun-subject: The man in the grey flannel suit is a panhandler.
- Noun-direct object: He found a car of 1905 vintage.
- Noun-indirect object: She gave the man in the sportscoat a poppy for his lapel.
- Noun-object complement: We elected Henry president of the club.
- Complement of the adjective: Your book is not worth a dollar of my money.
- Noun object of preposition: I went to the chief of the bureau.
- Predicate noun: He is a man of means.

And there are other types.

### (c) Verbal Phrases

Of the three types of verbal phrases already mentioned as single verbals, the infinitive is the only one which has to follow the noun. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the other two follow more often than they precede. The following infinitive phrases modify the preceding noun: "Crowly is the man to see about political appointments", "The first to break Campbell's record was Lockman" (Willis 1972: 267).

### (i) Present Participial Phrase

Prenominaly, the present participial phrase is always accompanied by juncture, but postnominaly, it can occur with or without it. With juncture, it is non-restrictive; without juncture, it is restrictive. A non-restrictive phrase (or clause) is one which is not felt to be essential for the sense of the sentence; it is a descriptive segment, and is thus nearly always marked off by commas. It is more or less an extension of the descriptive adjectival. The restrictive phrase is one which restricts or limits the meaning of the sentence, and is thus essential to its meaning. It is rarely marked off by commas. It is closely associated with the limiting adjectival. Note the difference in the following (Willis 1972: 270):

The dog biting the postman is rabid (restrictive--without juncture).

Janie, feeling that she had been insulted, left in a huff (non-restrictive--with juncture).

The first phrase, "biting the postman", is essential--it answers the question, "Which dog?". The second phrase simply adds something about Janie; it does not answer the question, "Which Janie?". So, there is a difference here that some grammarians overlook (or relegate as unimportant) --Stageberg has only the descriptive, non-restrictive kind: "The hawk, spotting his prey, swooped to the meadow" (Stageberg 1965: 248).

### (ii) Past Participial Phrase

The past participial phrase acts in much the same way as the present participial one. It too can be restrictive (limiting) or non-restrictive (descriptive); that is, it can occur with or without juncture, as the following examples show (Willis 1972: 272):

Joan, having been received graciously, felt quite at home  
(non-restrictive)

The suspect jailed by the deputies refused to talk (restrictive).

#### 4. Clauses

Clauses that modify nouns (and pronouns) have been traditionally called adjective clauses. Just as one-word or two-word adjectivals, or a phrase, can modify a noun, so, too, can a complete clause.

The clause, like the phrase, can be restrictive or non-restrictive. The main difference between the phrase and the clause is that the latter has both subject and verb. Since the restrictive and non-restrictive concepts have been sufficiently explained, two examples (one of each) should be enough to show how the two kinds of clauses relate to the noun:

She drove to the supermarket which she liked best  
(restrictive)

She drove to the supermarket, which was two miles away  
(non-restrictive).

The first clause limits the supermarket to one out of many possible; the second clause simply adds some information about the one supermarket.

#### C. Predicative Adjectivals

The continuing debate as to what is the "predicate" as distinct from the "subject" will not be brought in here. It is mostly a philosophical question. (For those who are interested, see Jespersen 1924: 145-147).

For our purposes, the predicate adjectival is a word or group of words that modifies the noun, but not directly (epithet adjectival). It is joined to the noun, or pronoun, by a verb (Low and Hollingworth 1948: 30). And what is distinctive about the predicative adjectivals is that the verb is a

special class of verb, called the copula or linking verb. Note the copulas and the predicative adjectivals in the following:

That man is mean.  
The cheese tastes bitter.  
The butter smells awfully bad.  
He got angry.

(This is not to say that these verbs can take only a predicative adjectival. They can also be full transitive verbs: "Did you taste the wine?").

One other thing which is interesting about predicatives is that (according to Jespersen) some adjectivals can only be used as such. Such are alive, asleep, awake, and afloat. Many of these were felt to be derived from verbs (live, sleep) and so other verbs that began with a consonant were remade according to this 'a-' pattern. Some of these can be used predicatively and in postposition (Jespersen 1954: 332-333). Willis has a list which, he says, are common "predicative adjectives": afraid, aghast, awearry, agape, akin, awaken, and alive; for example, "That snake is alive" (Willis 1972: 26). Although \*"That alive snake is..." cannot be said, yet alive in postposition is possible: "That snake alive is worth \$100; dead, it is not worth half that amount". And what about "They found the snake alive"? Here alive seems to be a part of the verb "found", so that we have the verb "to find alive".

Jespersen gives a possible (but very weak) reason for those words avoiding preposition in relation to the noun. He says "'An a-' was felt as an awkward repetition, and 'the a-' as a kind of contradiction" (Jespersen 1954: 333). Actually the a was originally a preposition and the whole a prepositional phrase; note that a prepositional phrase modifying a noun is normally postposed. The possible reason he gives ("awkward repetition" and

"kind of contradiction") for these words avoiding preposition is complete nonsense. Note the following examples:

an apostle  
 an adept critic  
 an afflicted soul  
 an acute observer  
 (cf. a cute observer)

an amazed...  
 an anointed...  
 an appointed...  
 (cf. a pointed)  
 an ascetic, etc.

The definite article can, of course, be used equally well with all of the above examples.

#### D. Shifted Position

This position is rather rare for all forms of adjectivals; so rare, in fact, that many grammarians do not consider it in any detail, or they make no mention of it at all. It appeared in only one of the books that have been used for references in this chapter. That book is the one by Willis: Modern Descriptive English Grammar. But, the fact remains that it is a very "proper" and viable position for the adjectival in English, and comes naturally to many of its speakers in certain contexts. There are three positions for it: at the beginning and end of a sentence, and one other position somewhere in the middle.

The very first thing to note about the shifted position of adjectivals, whether one word or many, is that it never occurs without juncture. This is easily explained in that a pause is necessary since the adjectival is not modifying the word next to it.

A one-word adjectival in the shifted position at the beginning of a sentence is perhaps rarer than most other types in other positions, and perhaps rarer than the one-word adjectival in other positions. But there are occasions when it can be used at the beginning of a sentence:

"Embarrassed, the big fellow walked quickly away". One-word adjectivals can occur in other shifted positions also; at the end of a sentence, for example: "Jim just walked away, grinning", "She was all alone at home, deserted" (Willis 1972: 269, 272). They can also occur in the middle of a sentence: "John just stood there, awed, gazing into the starry night".

4. For all these positions, one can double-up the adjectivals: "Embarrassed and blushing, the big fellow walked quickly away", "She was all alone at home, deserted and lonely", and "John just stood there, awed and amazed, gazing into the starry night".

It is the phrases which, perhaps, can be more easily placed in shifted position. Note the following examples (different kinds, and in different positions):

Present participial phrase: Being of a capricious nature, sometimes and without warning, Jane would defy her parents.

Prepositional phrase: There she sat, in a gay mood.

Present participial phrase: Jerry studied the question, wondering whether he could fake an answer.

Past participial phrase: John just stood there, awed by the size of the General Sherman tree (Willis 1972: 259, 267, 270, 273).

#### E. Preposition and Postposition

##### 1. One Adjectival Before, One After

Poets have often postposed adjectivals for metrical reasons. Some of these have become household phrases, used by people who do not know their poetic origins: "instead of homage sweet", "in a place divine", "things immortal". Often, especially in poetry, one adjectival precedes, while another comes after: "gem of purest ray serene" (from Gray's Elegy)

(Jespersen 1954: 383). However, it is not only in poetry that we get instances like that. It is quite common in modern English with "thing": "one thing clear is that...", "there are at least three things known about the accident". "Thing" may here be considered an indefinite pronoun.

## 2. Other Variations on Basic Positions

The usual thing in English, as already noted, is for a one-word (or equivalent) adjectival to be placed before the substantive. However, if a phrase is added to the single adjectival, the whole phrase may (and often does) change to postposition:

a well-behaved boy

a boy, well-behaved in school.

Another similar example is

a sparkling lake

a lake, sparkling under the moonlight beams.

Sometimes one adjectival remains before, when two or more others go after:

he had the big suitcase packed and ready.

Or there can be one adjectival before with a modifying phrase after:

a great voice for singing.

In the last example, all the modifiers could go after:

a voice great for singing.

All these examples (and one could find many more different types and variations) make the language rich and complex, with many subtleties which are sometimes difficult to sort out when one tries analysis.



### 3. Change of Meaning with Position

In a language such as English, where adjective inflection is nil, one could use either position of the adjectivals in order to give different meanings, or else use a different lexical item. English, almost exclusively, uses the latter, since position is often "fixed". Sometimes, when there is a change of meaning, it is so very subtle that it is hard to pinpoint. In fact, there may not be any meaning change when the position change occurs because of other aspects of the sentence requiring the change--rhythm, for example, or a phrase that requires the adjectival, ordinarily preposed (when used alone), to be postposed. Note, for example:

- (1) an angry dog  
a dog angry with his master;
- and (2) a foolish act  
an act, foolish in every respect.

In these instances, it is the phrases ("with his master", "in every respect") which add any change of meaning which occurs in "angry" and "foolish". They did not change position because of an interior meaning change, but because of exterior influences.

Nevertheless, there are cases where there is a definite meaning change with a change in the position of the adjectival. Schibsbye makes a list of some of these instances, from which the following examples are taken (Schibsbye 1970: 145-147):

above: the examples above/the above examples. Here we have much the same meaning in both positions--"mentioned before, or above". But, we do say "the Powers above", meaning "the Powers which are over us".

alive: she had a most alive mind--alive in the sense of lively. But, in apposition, or predicatively, it has the sense of "living": "he is the

greatest man alive". (However, colloquially, "alive" could be a synonym for "lively" in, for example: "That fish is really alive, eh?", and "Man, that dog is alive!").

born: when it comes before it has a metaphorical sense, extending the quality of the noun: "He is a born swordsman/poet". When it comes after it has the literal sense of "by birth": "He was a nobleman born"/ "a beggar born"; that is, "he was born a nobleman/a beggar".

present: when it means "existing now" it is put before the noun: "the present king", "the present plan". When it means "being in the place referred to" ("here"), it is placed after the noun, or is used as a predicative complement: "the Cabinet members present will agree", "we were present at the wedding" (cf. also Jespersen 1954: 386-387). But, what about "present company excepted"? Does that not mean "those present here now"?

### Conclusion

This discussion of the English adjective (with emphasis on position) has not been exhaustive by any stretch of the imagination--and it was not meant that it should be. It was simply hoped that the English adjectives would be presented in as many aspects as were deemed necessary for this study. Most examples and comments have been concerned with standard, formal English. Style, colloquialisms, and poetry have been kept to a minimum.

Looking back, we have now reached a point where we can point out the following interesting overall view of the adjectivals in English: for one-word adjectivals, the most frequent position is before the noun; for two-word adjectivals, the position varies (sometimes before, sometimes after); for phrases, the position is mostly after the noun (the infinitive can

only come after); and, for the clause, it is always in postposition.

Schematically, we get the following, almost symmetrical, pattern:

	Before	Noun	After
one-word			
two-word			
phrases			
clauses			

More will be said about the English adjective when we get to comparing it with the French adjective in Chapter Five. But, before that, we will have to discuss the adjective in French separately, in much the same way as we have discussed it in English.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ADJECTIVE POSITION IN FRENCH

#### 4.1. Introduction

In every field of study there will often arise problems which, at first meeting, seem to be unsolvable, unapproachable in many instances. Scholars will attempt the problem(s) from different angles with no, or little, success for long periods of time. Then, suddenly, someone, maybe quite accidentally, will "see the light"--and progress gets another shot in the arm! In the field of the physical sciences this happens frequently. Notice, however, that the discovery must take place before the theory can be put into practice. The sequence usually is: theory→discovery→practice. There was the theory as to what could be done to alleviate the suffering of diabetics, until Doctors Banting and Best discovered insulin, and then put it into practice. People still question the theory of evolution because they cannot see it "working".

With linguistics--the study of language--linguists often meet with very difficult problems. There is a very basic difference, though, in the kind of problems met in linguistics. Language is not something that will be put into practice once a discovery is made. Language is "alive and well": language is working, and has been since Adam gave names to the animals! With language, practice goes at the beginning of our sequence: practice→theory→discovery. One of the problems of the linguist is seeking to find how and in what way language "works". The linguist seeks to analyze, synthesize, categorize, classify, etc.

One of the problems of French which continues to plague linguists is the place of the adjective. There have been many different views and

theories offered as solutions, and many opinions raised, but none has had very wide acceptance in the French community. Some of the views have covered a great deal of the cases; others have only dealt with a certain category--preposed adjectives, for example. In the course of this chapter, some of these theories and opinions will come up for discussion.

It is the intention (in this chapter) to remain as close as possible to the format of the last chapter. In some instances, some changes will have to be made. In the first section, in dealing with morphology, there are new items that have to be brought in (briefly), since they do not happen to be a part of the English system--agreement, for example. The section on syntax will be similar to the English outline. The chapter will end with a few ideas of my own--to try and bring together the various points of view.

#### 4.2. Morphology

As with the English adjective, the concentration in this chapter will likewise be the position of the adjective in relation to the noun it qualifies. However, some brief mention of morphology will be in order. No attempt will be made to have an exhaustive coverage--just a few remarks on the formation, agreement, and function of the adjective.

##### 4.2.1. Formation

What is there about the "form" of an adjective in French which tells us it is in fact an adjective? A foreigner trying to learn all (or even most of) the French adjectives by such a "formal" method (a very dubious quest) would accomplish very little. There is no characteristic adjective morphology. What is there about the form of "bleu" which says it is an adjective? "Feu" is a noun. Is the "-eau" an adjectival ending? What

about "tableau" and "eau"? Both are nouns. We cannot tell an adjective then, just by looking at it. We notice immediately that the noun is so very similar. (We briefly mentioned the very similar morphology of the adjective and noun in PIE in chapter one; and also the similarities in Latin, from which most of modern French is derived.)

Most French adjectives, however, can be known from what happens to them when they are used. The noun, of course, has one particular gender, either masculine or feminine--le tableau, la table; the regular adjective has two genders (masculine and feminine) and two numbers (singular and plural). This is what "formally" distinguishes an adjective from a noun and other "parts of speech".

There are, of course, a number of invariable adjectives. Such are chic, bon marché, etc. For most adjectives, however, there are the four possibilities: masculine singular, masculine plural, feminine singular, and feminine plural.

The general rule for making the feminine of an adjective is to add -e to the masculine form: petit -- petite; grand -- grande; intelligent -- intelligente. (If an adjective ends in -e in the masculine, there is no change in the feminine.) Often this addition of -e causes other changes to occur in the "stem"--the masculine form. The most common of these changes is the doubling of certain final consonants: gros -- grosse; pareil -- pareille; violet -- violette; canadien -- canadienne. There is a great variety of other changes: léger -- légère; concret -- concrète; actif -- active; jaloux -- jalouse (but, faux -- fausse); blanc -- blanche; franc -- franque (but, sec -- sèche); voleur -- voleuse (but, acteur -- actrice; and vengeur -- vengeresse). And there are a few other minor types.

There are exceptions to the "general rule" in the forming of the plural also. The usual thing is for the masculine to add an -s (The feminine form will always add an -s): petit -- petits; grand -- grands; grosse -- grosses; active -- actives. Those adjectives that end in -s or -x in the masculine, do not change in the plural: frais -- frais; heureux -- heureux. Those masculine forms that end in -eau add an -x for the plural: beau -- beaux; nouveau -- nouveaux (but, bleu -- bleus). Most adjectives which end in -al in the masculine, add -aux in the plural: loyal -- loyaux; oral -- oraux (but, final -- finales). (Most of the above material is summarized from Morle and Jammes 1960: 20-22.)

#### 4.2.2. Agreement

As a general rule, adjectives in French agree, in gender and in number, with the nouns they qualify. This is a basic difference between the adjective in French and in English. In the latter there is no agreement, since the adjective is totally invariable in English. In general, in French, if the noun is masculine, the adjective is the same: un petit garçon; if feminine, then so is the adjective: la bonne cuisine. With number, we find a similar phenomenon: de grands jardins; les belles fleurs. There is generally no difference in kind of agreement, whether the adjective comes before or after the noun: les grandes pommes, les pommes délicieuses. Nevertheless, there are some instances where position does influence the agreement: une demi-heure -- une heure et demi; nu-pieds -- les pieds nus (Morle and Jammes 1960: 23). The "nu" of "nu-pieds" is an adverbial, rather than an adjective.

When there are two or more nouns, the adjective modifying them is masculine, unless all the nouns are feminine: un gâteau et une crêpe

délicieux pour le petit déjeuner. If there is one noun with two or more adjectives they agree according to meaning: les troupes françaises et anglaises, les langues française et anglaise (Morle and Jammes 1960: 22). The first phrase means, in effect, "the French troups and the English troups", the second means "the French language and the English language". (There are many other items that could be mentioned here, but the scope of this paper does not allow it. For those interested, any good grammar will have long lists of different kinds of agreements.)

#### 4.2.3. Function

As mentioned before (chapter two), English has greater facility than French in adjectivizing other parts of speech and different kinds of phrases. Nevertheless, there are occasions when the French do use other than "pure" adjectives in the adjectival function. And so, the following brief comments are made in that regard:

The greatest difference between English and French in this regard is that normally nouns do not directly modify other nouns in French, but this can be done quite easily in English. In English, we can have such phrases as "iron fence", "canvas mat" and "Easter day". In French, this normally cannot be done without invoking a preposition to join the two nouns. The above phrases would be translated into French as "clôture en fer", "nappe en cannevas", and "jour de Pâques". The two nouns in each phrase remain nouns (cf. Hutchinson 1969: 21). However, Mansion says that nouns used as adjective equivalents may be placed directly after the noun without any intervening preposition: "la loi Béranger", "la rue Racine", "le Code Napoléon" (Mansion 1919: 101). Note that these are all proper nouns. Another example is "la voiture Pullman". A common noun may sometimes



be used, however: "un veston sport".

There are some adverbs which take on the adjectival function, one of the most frequent being "bien": "le malade est bien"; "il est bien de garder une certaine dignité"; "montrez-moi quelque chose de bien" (Grevisse 1964: 796). Others also note this function of "bien": "un homme bien"; "on fit donc une fosse et Caïn dit: 'c'est bien'" (Chevalier et al. 1964: 418).

"Adjective equivalents (other than adjective clauses) generally consist of (a) a noun governed by the prepositions de, à, en...; or (b) an infinitive governed by à..." (Mansion 1919: 101). Among his examples are the following:

un homme de talent --- a talented man  
 un homme à barbe grise --- a grey-bearded man  
 une tasse à café --- a coffee cup  
 une montre en or --- a gold watch  
 une salle à manger --- a dining-room  
 voici une lettre à expédier --- here is a letter to be  
 dispatched.

Since, of course, adjective clauses are frequently "pure" adjectives that have been expanded, it is to be expected that adjective clauses are as abundantly used in French as they are in English. They are generally introduced by "qui", "que", or some form of "lequel" (the latter having to agree with the noun to which it refers.). There is no lack of examples: "Voici un livre qui est intéressant", "Ce n'est pas lui qui m'a dit cela". The various forms of "lequel" are also used after prepositions: "L'Arc de triomphe est le monument sous lequel se trouve le Soldat inconnu".

#### 4.3. Syntax

#### 4.3.1. Introduction

##### (1) The Approach

It is a quite obvious and naive remark that all parts of speech have some mobility in the sentence. Even the sentence itself, according to grammarians who worry about "style", may go best at the beginning or end of a paragraph--or elsewhere. And within the sentence, verbs, for example, may come at various points, for semantic, phonologic or stylistic reasons. So may the nouns. Even articles may be separated from their nouns by adjectives or their equivalents.

Now the adjective, in both English and French, is, perhaps, one of the most mobile of the elements. There are four basic positions in French (as there are in English): preposition, postposition, predicative ("attribut"), and shifted. Each position, however, does not have the same relative importance as in English, as we shall see presently.

One way one could approach this section is by taking the views of various persons who have said anything about the importance of position of the adjective in French, and only discuss what they say in relation to one another. Instead of that method, an effort will be made to remain close to the format of the preceding chapter on the English adjective. This means that each position will be taken and discussed separately, starting with preposition. Of course, from time to time, it will be necessary to make cross-references to another position, and to what another person has said about a particular aspect, so that one has to beg toleration for, perhaps, making (in different sections) not a few references to the same author. The big advantage of this approach is that it will be easier, both for me and the reader, to make comparisons of English and French (the subject of chapter five).

## (2) Historical

In Latin, the adjective could come either before or after the noun since inflection had most of the function of what is today (in French) accomplished by order, or by another lexical item. In old French, the tendency was to place the adjective after the noun, although Dauzat suggests the opposite! (Hutchinson 1969: 16). Today some say French, under a strong English influence, is beginning to place adjectives more and more before the noun. This is what Hutchinson calls "anglicisation" (Hutchinson 1969: 16). It will probably take many more years before we can get the proper perspective and can say with any amount of certainty whether English will have such a tremendous influence on the position of the French adjective.

### 4.3.2. Preposition

#### (1) One Adjective

This position is often used by one adjective in French, the general pattern being determiner + adjective + noun. (There are certain exceptions to this pattern which will be considered in chapter five). What kinds of adjectives most often fill this position? According to many writers on the subject, there are, in French, adjectives which form with the noun a single notional unit. These adjectives generally precede. This integration of the adjective with the substantive is a well-known fact: "une chère soeur", "une bonne soeur" (Faucher 1971: 120).

How do we know it is a single notion that the phrase is expressing? "Un cheval blanc" (with the adjective coming after) refers to two classes, that of horses, and that of white objects. On the other hand, "un petit fumeur" belongs to only one class, that of people who smoke very little

(Fauchér 1971: 121). Others say it is one entity because the adjective expresses a characteristic which "comes to our mind at the same time as the object to which we apply it" (Glatigny 1967: 201, commenting on the view of Clédat).

Some of these have come to be compound nouns, so that they are semantically indivisible: "une grande personne" (= "une adulte"), "les petits pois". The way to tell if they are compound, or if they are still adjective plus noun, is to see if they are preceded in the plural by de or des. If they take des then the phrase is one single entity (Kelly 1970: 789). The difference can be shown in "de gros arbres", and "des petits pois". (Another example is "des petits pains" = "rolls"). The latter then is representative of a single entity. This is also shown by the fact that one can have "grands petits pois". Many phrases having adjective plus noun are not as close as this last example, but are still considered as a single entity.

Harald Weinrich makes the distinction that those adjectives which come before function as "morphèmes", and those that are postposed function as "lexèmes". What he means by these two terms must be understood in order to comprehend what he is saying here. His "morphèmes" include the articles, demonstrative and possessive adjectives, interrogative and relative adjectives, indefinite adjectives, numerals and prepositions--with some others. For "lexèmes" he has the following: participle and verbal adjective, adjective modified by complement, and preposition complement (Weinrich 1966: 84). The first category consists of grammatical words, the second of lexical words. To explain the difference he uses the terms "semantic extension" and "semantic intention". He takes a "morphème", "le", and a "lexème",

"poète", to help in the explanation. He says that the "semantic extension" of "le" is far greater than that of "poète". "Le" covers all masculine nouns--"poète" only includes all poets. As for "semantic intension" (amount of "information" the term carries), "le" is very weak, but the "information" contained by "poète" much greater. "Lexèmes" are more in number than "morphèmes", but the latter are used more frequently (Weinrich 1966: 84-85). If the article precedes because it is a "morphème" ("semantic extension" great, "semantic intension" small), then what about the postposed article in Rumanian?

What has all that got to do with adjectives coming in preposition? He says that adjectives which precede the noun have semantic status of a "morphème" (Weinrich 1966: 85); that this position is, in fact, reserved for "morphèmes", so that if a "lexème" (ordinarily postposed) is put before it loses some of its full sense.

Bondi Sciarone has attacked this particular aspect of Weinrich's proposal, by stating that "amount of information" has nothing to do with whether an adjective comes before or after. He says that an adjective which normally comes after carries a greater amount of information when you put it before the noun because it is unexpected in this position (Sciarone 1967: 588). If the "amount of information" has nothing to do with adjective position, why does he continue with "an adjective which normally comes after carries a greater amount of information..."? It is true that some adjectives in postposition have a great amount of "information" ("un cheval gris"); but, so do some adjectives in preposition ("un délicieux repas"). "Amount of information" is a very subjective item in any case; how does one evaluate the "amount of information" that an adjective might contain?

Still other linguists say that those adjectives which are generally preposed are in this position because of their affective or emotive characteristics. Michel Glatigny, in his article, "La place des adjectifs épithètes dans deux oeuvres de Nerval", first summarizes the comments of what others have said in regard to adjective position (Glatigny 1967: 201-220). Three of the persons he mentions (Boillot, Dauzat, and Blinkenberg) consider the adjective placed before the noun as having an emotive or affective sense. Wartburg says essentially the same. Adjectives which are used emotionally (affective use) often precede: "ce cher ami", "notre aimable correspondant" (Wartburg 1947: 152). But, is not "magnifique" emotive in "une cathédrale magnifique"?

Others have taken different viewpoints and theories as regards adjective position in French. Some of these will come up for discussion when we look at postposition. And we will have to refer back to some of the views already presented here, since postposition almost always contrasts with preposition.

## (2) Two Adjectives

As was the case with English, when we have two or more adjectives which precede, then the order that we place them in has to be considered. As a general rule, if one of the adjectives has a closer connection with the noun (closer affinity) than the other, then it, of course, will immediately precede. So, we get such examples as: "une belle jeune fille", "ma chère vieille grand-mère". In these examples "jeune fille" is a compound (des jeunes filles), and "vieille grand-mère" is nearly so.

### (a) Co-ordinated Adjectives

The examples above are with adjectives coming side by side. What happens when two adjectives are joined by a conjunction, the most common of which is "et"? It is difficult to even postulate a rule when there is such a scarcity of examples for this type of phrase. (Most adjectives combined in this way are postposed in French.) This indicates that the French have a tendency not to use this kind of phrase very often in preposition. Maybe it is due to rhythmic order, the desire not to have the (pre)determiners of the noun separated by several accents. However, there are cases where it is used: "sa longue et naïve figure". But note the famous line from Mallarmé (with repeated article): "le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui" (Glatigny 1967: 215). It appears that, in the first example here, it would make very little difference if "longue" came immediately in front of the noun. It would be difficult to state categorically that either one of the adjectives had a greater affinity with the noun. The use of the conjunction tends to bind together the adjectives, so that they qualify the noun as one.

#### (b) Non-coordinated Adjectives

Some work has been done in the area of non-coordinated adjectives preceding the noun. One of the most recent attempts at categorizing is that of Reine Kelly. She attempted to formulate some rules for students who would be learning French as a foreign language. For source material she checked the adjectives of 34 works by 21 authors, and when that did not yield what she considered to be sufficient data, she sent off questionnaires to France. From the books and the questionnaires she formulated her rules as to what she meant by "fixed", "preferred" and "optional" orders. Then she set up the orders which she summarized in a chart (Kelly 1970: 787):

I				II	
1	2	3	4	5	6
deux trois etc.	seul moindre	autre même	premier deuxième etc. dernier prochain	pauvre	cher
II (Cont'd)			III		
7	8	9	10	11	12
nouveau ancien	vrai véritable faux	bon mauvais	beau joli vilain	gros	vieux jeune

13

petit  
(grand)

Those in Group I are "fixed" (Examples: "nos deux seuls amis"; "la seule autre solution")--that is, another order would be very rare and would have to be "justified by context". She takes the "exception": "les derniers deux jours", and says that this is possible if time is considered in periods of two days. But, one may add, if there is a factory or laboratory where time is usually partitioned thus, then it would be very "natural" to speak of "les derniers deux jours", and rare, perhaps, to hear the other: "les deux derniers jours". If, then, it depends on the "situational context", who is to say which context is the one nearer the norm? That would be a cultural judgement, not a linguistic one.

Although most of the "fixed" orders were found in Group I, some she considered "fixed" between Groups I and II, and also, between Groups II and



III. Here are two examples (one of each): "le seul vrai bonheur", and "une pauvre petite chose".

Nearly all those that could be combined within Group III were classified as "optional": "une belle grande carte", or "une grande belle carte"; "une petite vieille maison"; or "une vieille petite maison". All those not already given as "fixed" or "optional" are listed as "preferred", most of them in Group II. Examples are "nos pauvres chers cousins", "son cher bon sourire" (Kelly 1970: 788).

### (3) Phrases

Most adjectives that are parts of phrases, are modified by phrases, or are modified by adverbs and other items, are put after the noun in French. So, this aspect of adjective position will be considered in some detail when we look at postposition. However, there is one pattern which can be mentioned here, and that is the adverb + adjective. Preceded by an adverb of quantity (monosyllabic), "peu", "si", "trop", "très", or "assez", the adjective often remains in front: "une très belle femme" (Wartburg 1947: 154). If the adjective is relatively long it comes after: "un livre assez intéressant", "une robe si élégante".

### 4.3.3. Postposition

Most writers agree on one point when it comes to adjective position in relation to the noun; that is, that, in the majority of cases, adjectives are postposed. Such are the views of Harald Weinrich (1966: 82-89), Glatigny (1967: 201-220), and Dauzat (1943: 240). Not everyone is so certain of this. Hutchinson argues that the position is free for every adjective (Hutchinson 1969: 15). (This viewpoint will be considered later).

### (1) One Adjective

It has been statistically shown that the "normal" position for the adjective in French is after the noun; that is, adjectives come after more often than they precede. The ratio (before/after) has been given as 35/65, but sometimes, in certain contexts, postposition will average around 90% (Weinrich 1966: 82).

One other fact bears noting in this regard though, and that is that there are only about thirty common adjectives which precede, according to most grammars (Kelly 1970: 783). There are many times that number which ordinarily come after. When seen in this light, the ratio 35/65 is not all that one-sided. Also, the adjectives which normally precede can be used before more nouns than a particular adjective which is normally postposed. Let us take "bon" (as an example of those that ordinarily precede), and "intellectuel" (to represent those that come after). We can apply "bon" to almost anything: "bon livre", "bons gâteaux", "bonne chaise", "bonnes idées", etc. "Intellectuel", however, can be applied to only two of these nouns: "des idées intellectuelles", and "un livre intellectuel".

We have considered some of the types of adjectives which precede: "single entity", "morphèmes", and "affective". One characteristic of postposed adjectives that many linguists and grammarians give is that it is "distinguishing". The adjective placed after the noun adds a distinctive and intellectual trait to the idea expressed by the noun. It is used to classify, describe, define. Its function is to distinguish the noun from all other nouns of the same kind: "une grande maison", that is a subjective and emotional appreciation; but, "un enfant anglais" is simply "an English child" (Hutchinson 1969: 17, commenting on the views of Ullmann).

Sciarone says much the same thing as the above, but he talks of the "degeneralizing" function of the postposed adjective. To lead up to his conclusion he speaks of any particular name for an object as being very general. "Table", he says, can refer to all sorts of tables: round, square, etc. This general notion of "table" has to be narrowed down in order for sound communication to take place. He says the notion of "table" is an abstraction, and we do not talk in abstractions. The object we wish to talk about is specific, which means we have to "degeneralize" the word "table". This we do by adding other words. The more an adjective functions to degeneralize the sense of the noun, the more reason it has to be after the noun (Sciarone 1967: 590-593).

This "degeneralizing" function does not seem to be the reason for adjective position in French. In speaking of the article system in French, Guillaume pointed out that the indefinite article was a "mouvement de particularisation", that the definite article was a "mouvement de généralisation" (Guillaume 1971(A): 43). Would Sciarone put the indefinite article (un) after the noun?

Sciarone seeks to put his "theory" into operation, to show that it works. He takes the views presented by Blinkenberg but interprets them his way. He applies his theory in the following manner: for adjectives like "bon", "mauvais", which regularly precede, he says they do so because they do not "degeneralize"--they express a judgement. Adjectives which express duration come before because they also do not distinguish one object from another; they only judge space or duration: "un court séjour" (Sciarone 1967: 595). When the sense of the adjective is inherent in the noun, it precedes. This is what Blinkenberg calls "emotive". They, too, do

not specify. The meaning of the adjective has already been implied before it is used: "la sainte colline"--the hill was presented as holy. For him, an adjective "raised in relief" is the same as saying "degeneralized"--one thing is distinguished from a very similar one by means of the adjective: "ce n'est pas une rue courte, c'est une rue longue"--the noun is specified (Sciarone 1967: 594-596).

But, one could object, what about "vrai"? Does not "vrai" in "le vrai Dieu" distinguish God from all other gods? And what about "un vrai ami", "a real friend"? Certainly "mauvais" is "degeneralizing" in "le mauvais numéro", "the wrong number".

Faucher does not agree with Sciarone saying that the only function of the postposed adjective is to "degeneralize" the noun. He says the adjective which follows certainly has the monopoly on the "degeneralizing" function, but it can take all the functions of the adjective which precedes (Faucher 1971: 124). According to him, the adjective in postposition can judge sometimes: "ce rapport perfide et mensonger", "la France pauvre". The latter example could mean "those Frenchmen who did not benefit from expansion" ("classifying", "degeneralizing"), or it could mean "France is a poor country"--making a judgement (Faucher 1971: 124). And "propre" ("clean"), coming after the noun, is a judgement.

Others speak of the adjective coming after as being used in an "intellectual", "objective" sense, in opposition to the view that the adjective coming before has an "emotive", "subjective" sense. There is a difference, then, between "d'odieux gens" and "des gens odieux". The former expresses an emotional reaction, the latter a judgement, but an objective judgement (Wartburg 1947: 152). Here it is more a difference in the

attitude of the speaker (or writer) than it is a difference in the thing itself.

Glatigny (who bases his conclusions on two works by Nerval that he studied) contradicts Wartburg here, and says you cannot make the distinction between preposition being "affective", and postposition being "objective". He notes that a colour (generally placed after) is objective ("intellectual"); but, placed before, does it not lose its objective quality and become "affective" (Glatigny 1967: 205)? It appears that Glatigny has misinterpreted Wartburg here--Wartburg would agree with him on this point. He is simply saying if (and when) an adjective comes after, it has the "objective", "intellectual" function. He did not say it might not change its value (or function) when it preceded.

Boillot says much the same thing as Wartburg: "femme riche" (judgement--objective), but "riche femme" (here one is painting--being "affective") (Boillot 1952: 272-273). But Boillot continues that there are some adjectives which are only "intellectual", and therefore always come after. His examples include naturel, artificiel, supérieur, légal, and neutre (Boillot 1952: 273). Earlier (Boillot 1952: 94) he had said that rules are made by the genius not for the genius. This unconditional statement seems to make him somewhat inconsistent. Could not the genius find a way to have these adjectives put before?

## (2) Two Adjectives

As when two adjectives precede, a choice has to be made as to the order when two follow the noun. It is more common for two adjectives modifying the same noun to follow that noun than it is for them to precede it. This is true whether the adjectives are coordinated--the use

of "et", "mais"--or whether they are simply separated by a comma. ("Et" is more often used than any other conjunction to join two adjectives after the noun--Hutchinson 1969: 22). Those generally have equal value in relation to the noun and come after: "un homme généreux et intelligent", "une femme vieille, fatiguée, amaigrie" (Wartburg 1947: 155). If they have this "equal value", then, of course, it does not really matter which comes immediately after the noun. The adjectives are simply added as they come to the mind.

It does not "fit in" with the "facts" to say that if one of the adjectives is normally postposed then this is the one which comes next to the noun. In the last example above, "fatiguée" is more often postposed than "vieille", yet "vieille" comes next to the noun. Maybe the ordinarily preposed adjective is the one which comes next to the noun, when it is postposed.

Most of those who have written anything on the position of the adjective in French have generally been referring to only one adjective. Various writers have talked about the postposed adjective as having a "distinguishing", "intellectual", "objective", "degeneralizing", or "specific" function. It can only be assumed that the writer who uses "intellectual" as his favorite term would use the same for two adjectives that are postposed, and that the term "degeneralizing" would also work for two as well as for one. Then might it not be reasonable to assume that if two adjectives are "intellectual" in the value they bring to the noun, then both follow in any order, unless one is "more intellectual" than the other? What would the order be in this case? But then, who is to say whether one adjective is more intellectual than another? For practical purposes, this has very little real significance.

When the adjectives are compared, those which normally precede, come after: "une mère plus belle et plus intelligente que la mienne". Note that here, too, "belle", an adjective which precedes more often than does "intelligente", comes next to the noun when put in postposition (Hutchinson 1969: 21). Further in the same article (p. 22) she has other examples which seem to support the view that the ordinarily preposed adjective is the one which comes next to the noun when postposed: "cette chambre triste et nue", "la figure chère et disparue".

It seems from the foregoing examples that when one of the adjectives is normally postposed and one is normally preposed, that the postposed one tends to draw the other to its position, and not vice versa. This seems to verify what others have suggested: that the postposition is the stronger of the two positions in French.

### (3) Adverbial Phrases

As pointed out before, adverbial phrases (that is, adverb plus adjective) more often come after the noun than before it. As Hutchinson has said:

Dans le cas où l'adjectif se trouve modifié par un adverbe la tendance semble nettement orientée vers la postposition du groupe adjectif/adverbe, même quand l'adjectif serait normalement antéposé: une vie déjà longue. Cette tendance se montre d'autant plus si l'adverbe en question est assez long, du type qui termine en -ent: une chose tellement précieuse, une sensation de froid extrêmement désagréable (Hutchinson 1969: 21).

It appears that in the case where the adjective is modified by an adverb, the position of the adjective depends more on the adverb, and not as much on the kind of adjective itself. For both short/long, "affective"/"objective", or those having inherent qualities, they all tend to come after with modifying adverbs: "un homme, extrêmement jeune...", "le soleil,

énormément éclatant, brillait...", "la jeune fille, entièrement contente de...". Even an adjective like "belle" which hardly ever comes after when used singly, can do so if modified: "une femme merveilleusement belle" (Wartburg 1947: 154). However, if the adjective is modified by an adverb of quantity, like "peu", "si", "trop", "très", or "assez" (already mentioned), then the adjective often remains in front: "une très belle femme" (Wartburg 1947: 154). Hutchinson calls this an "affective" use of the modifiers; the adverbs give an "affective" value to adjectives which would not normally have this value when used alone: "un si merveilleux plaisir", "les trop longues séparations" (Hutchinson 1969: 21).

#### (4) Adjective Equivalents

##### (a) Noun Complements

A list of adjective equivalents is given earlier in this chapter (section 2.3.). We noted that they were of two basic types: nouns that are joined to other nouns by means of the prepositions à, de, or en, and verbs that are connected by use of the preposition à (Mansion 1919: 101).

The rule for the position of adjective equivalents of this type is a rather easy one: they must always follow the noun (see Mansion's list, p. 101). The problem (for foreigners) is knowing what preposition to use-- à, de, or en. (A discussion of this is beyond the scope of this paper.) Note the following examples: "coffee cup" = "tasse à café"; "waste-paper basket" = "corbeille à papier(s)"; "harbour rates" = "droit de port"; "night refuge" = "asile de nuit"; "leather shoes" = "chaussures en cuir"; "bronze statue" = "statue de(en) bronze".



### (b) Adjective Plus Complement

There is somewhat of a problem for foreigners (particularly those speaking English) learning French, when there is an adjective and a complement both modifying the same noun. In English there is no problem with an adjectivized noun, because almost invariably it goes in front of the head noun. In French, however, one has to find (almost always) a substitute expression for the noun modifier. For example, "long summer days" in French is "longs jours d'été". The "summer" of English has become a complement in French: "d'été" (Hutchinson 1969: 21). Hutchinson gives a list of the possibilities as far as position is concerned when there is an adjective and a complement. The three possible constructions are (1) adjective-noun-complement, (2) noun-complement-adjective, and (3) noun-adjective-complement. An example of each is (1) "l'incompréhensible tentative de suicide", (2) "une envie de fumer effroyable", and (3) "le crucifix ancien d'ivoire" (Hutchinson 1969: 21). Note here that not once does the complement come before the noun. This is an impossibility in French: "un homme de talent" could never be \*"un de talent homme". Wartburg also states that an adjective accompanied by a complement is placed after the noun: "un mystère difficile à percer". One may have "un agréable tableau", but "un tableau agréable à regarder" (Wartburg 1947: 154).

### (c) Phrases

#### (1) Verbal Phrases

Even when used singly, past and present participles, as verbal adjectives, are, in the great majority of cases, postposed: "une maison délabrée", "chambre avec eau courante". So, it is not at all surprising that if phrases are connected with these verbals the whole phrase is

postposed: "Connaissez-vous les enfants jouant dans la rue?" and "Tous les dimanches soirs, ce vieillard, sui vi par son chien, se promenait sur le quai". (These phrases can come before, with terminal juncture, for stylistic reasons: "Sui vi par son chien, ce vieillard..."; "Jouant dans la rue, les enfants ont trouvé..."). As with English, terminal juncture is used if the phrase is non-restrictive. "Sui vi par son chien" is a phrase 'added'; that is, it is not essential, and does not limit or restrict as the first phrase does. "Jouant dans la rue" answers the question "quels enfants?".

#### (11) Prepositional Phrases

These must also follow the noun, and follow it directly: "Il est allé au magasin au coin"; "Il y a assez de viande pour tous". Between the modified noun and the preposition one can insert elements (only adjectives): "Il y a assez de viande fraîche pour tous". Elements can also be inserted between some prepositions and their object nouns: "nous voici au premier, où se trouve la chambre avec, en face, la bibliothèque" (Grevisse 1964: 875).

#### (d) Clauses

Adjective clauses can only occur after the noun, with or without juncture: "Nous avons vu son père, qui va en ville à huit heures"; "voici les fleurs que j'apporte à ma grand-mère". In the former, it is a non-restrictive clause, and so it has juncture; in the latter example, the clause serves to restrict the meaning of "fleurs", and so no terminal juncture. Other relative pronouns (which introduce adjective clauses) are "dont", "ce dont", "ce que", "ce qui", and the "lequel" forms.

Generally, the clause immediately follows the noun, but not necessarily: "Les soldats de César, par le courage desquels la Gaule fut vaincue, étaient peu nombreux"; "j'ai écrit à un cousin de ma femme, lequel pourra me renseigner" (Mansion 1919: 128). Note that in these examples the "lequel" forms have to be used to clear up the ambiguity that would arise if "de qui" and "qui" were used. Often, however, "lequel" is not needed because of the semantic nature of the sentence: "Sous la lune d'argent/qui brille au firmament" (Santa Lucia). Here is a case where the noun modifier must come after the head noun in the form of a complement. The "qui", however, must refer to "lune", since otherwise it would be a meaningless sentence.

#### 4.3.4. Predicative

When the adjective is discussed as to its position in French, one generally thinks of the situations that we have so far discussed--before and after the noun. The predicative adjective (or adjectif attribut) is simply taken for granted--since it is not one of the controversial points of modern French. Its position is most often after the verb: "Cet homme est grand", "n'avez-vous pas su que ce monsieur était si paresseux?", and "elle a l'air fatiguée".

Very often the verb used is the copula "être". This is not the only verb though. The Grammaire Larousse du français contemporain has a list of verbs which are referred to as "verbes attributifs", among which are the following: être, tomber, paraître, avoir l'air, devenir, rester, demeurer, vivre, etc. (Chevalier et al. 1964: 81). Examples are "il devient malade" and "elle paraît furieuse".

Although in the great majority of cases the attributive adjective comes after the verb, there are exceptions to this general rule. So Weinrich is wrong when he states that predicative adjectives can come only after the verb (Weinrich 1966: 87). Sometimes the predicative adjective comes at the beginning of the sentence, particularly in poetry: "Verte est la terre, le ciel bleu" (Michelet, Bible de l'Humanité, p. 177), "maigre devait être la cuisine qui se préparait à ce foyer" (Th. Gautier, Le Capitaine Fracasse, I), "fière est cette forêt" (Musset, Souvenirs) (Grevisse 1964: 149).

#### 4.3.5. Shifted

What has been written about this adjectival position is probably next to nil. It is very rarely used in modern French, and would only be seen or heard in very formal language, and in poetry. Grevisse has a couple of examples which he classifies under "L'adjectif détaché" (by which he means "in apposition"), but which are good examples of shifted adjectives: "Il marchait, seul, rêveur, captif des vagues sombres" (Hugo, Chât., V. 13, 3), "Et la morte semblait leur obéir, docile" (Daniel-Rops, Mort, où est ta victoire? p. 206)" (Grevisse 1964: 151). Other examples might be: "Jeanne est allée à l'église, suppliante" (one-word), or "Paul se repose dans le fauteuil depuis quatre heures, épuisé après une si longue marche" (phrase). This position, however, is a very "marked" and stylistic one. In a conversation with a native speaker, I have been told that other positions would be more natural, more normal French. For example, "suppliante" would "go better" before or after the noun, "Jeanne", or even after the verb.

#### 4.3.6. Preposition and Postposition

##### (1) One Adjective Before, One After

When we were discussing "Adjective plus complement" in this chapter (section 4.3.3.4.b), we noted that one of the possible positions was adjective + noun + complement, where one adjectival precedes and one follows the noun. This can also happen with two "pure" adjectives.

Most writers have observed that there is a difference in emphasis (we will do meaning later) between the adjective placed in preposition and that in postposition. Although each particular writer has his own special terminology and emphasis, yet the differences have their similarities. So that some would say it is because of the affective/intellectual emphasis that we can put one adjective before and one after; others would say it is because of inherent quality/distinguishing, vague/specific, or some other basic dichotomy. Whatever terminology one chooses, the fact is that one adjective may be put before and one after the noun (at the same time), as the following examples show: "une jolie cravate bleue", "le petit Pierre intelligent", "un grand homme blond".

##### (2) One Adjective Before, Two After

There is nothing to prevent one adjective coming before and two following the noun, still maintaining the difference in emphasis. We may have, for example: "ma vieille grand-mère, grisonante, ridée". There are other possibilities, of course, some of which are infrequently used because of their being quite formal or poetic. It is usual for several adjectives to be placed, some before, some after the noun, according to their function, and their sense (Hutchinson 1969: 22).

### (3) Change of Meaning with Position

This section is dealing with the small number of adjectives in French which are a special class in themselves. They change meaning according to whether they come before or after their noun. It is not a question of emphasis--there is a complete semantic change. Up to now we have been dealing with adjectives that one can put before or after according to the writer's wishes, and it is more a question of style than of semantics. It is no longer that--it is now a question of being right or wrong, according to the meaning one wants to give.

What are these adjectives? Morle and Jammes give an extensive list, some of which are given below, with their English meanings, to show the kind of change that takes place (the complete list of Morle and Jammes is given in Appendix B.):

<u>Adjective</u>	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>
ancien	former	old
bon	good	kind
brave	worthy	courageous
grand	famous	tall
pauvre	unfortunate	penniless
honnête	polite	honest
malhonnête	dishonest	rude

(Morle and Jammes 1960: 25). Examples are: "c'est notre ancienne maison" = "that's our former house", and "regardez notre maison ancienne" = "look at our old house"; "c'est un grand homme" = "he's a great man", and "c'est un homme grand" = "he's a tall man".

"Honnête" and "malhonnête" deserve special mention. One would think (a foreigner, of course) that these two would be "direct opposites", like, for example, "heureux", "malheureux"; "content", "malcontent". However,

there are four distinct meanings possible here. One cannot say that the opposite of "honnête" is "malhonnête"--it is "malhonnête" in the other position! It is not enough to know the four separate meanings, but one has to know the correct positions also. The following examples will make clear what is meant:

C'est un	honnête	homme	=	He's a	polite	man.
" "	" "	homme malhonnête	=	" "	rude	man.
" "	" "	malhonnête homme	=	" "	dishonest	man.
" "	" "	homme honnête	=	" "	honest	man.

Most grammarians will include this type of adjective with their general theory; that is, they will fit it in their oppositions: affective/objective, vague/précise, etc. This is what Albert Dauzat does when he states that the adjective coming after has its maximum of autonomy, and keeps its proper sense. The adjective placed before is bound more closely to the noun, and loses some of its autonomy, is weakened, and is more likely to take on an emotive, or affective value. His examples show that he is speaking of the adjectives which change meaning according to position: "un homme bon/un bon homme"; "un brave homme/un homme brave" (Dauzat 1943: 240-241).

Some adjectives have very subtle nuances according to their position:

l'année dernière	(opposed to "prochaine")
la dernière année	(of a period)
une femme seule	(living alone)
une seule femme	(only one)
un enfant propre	(clean)
son propre enfant	(own emphasized) (Wartburg 1947: 153).

#### 4.3.7. "Fixed" Versus "Normal" Position

We cannot talk of the "normal" place of the adjective in French for those with change of meaning with position change; and, if Hutchinson is

right, then we cannot talk about "normal" position at all! It depends on what you want to say (Hutchinson 1969: 15). If you want to say "the poor man", with the meaning "to be pitied", then, in French, you must have the adjective in front: "le pauvre homme". If, on the other hand, you wish to say "the poor man" meaning "penniless", the adjective follows: "l'homme pauvre". Hutchinson would not stop with this type of phrase, using those adjectives which most people accept as having to change position with meaning. She goes as far as saying that "tout adjectif, dans un certain contexte, peut se placer soit avant soit après le nom" (Hutchinson 1969: 17).

Statistically, as we have noted earlier, 65% of adjectives come after, and only 35% before the noun. This refers to the "most frequent" of all adjectives considered together. It tells us nothing about how these adjectives are used or can be used. The "most frequent" or "most normal" position of "bon", for example, is undoubtedly before the noun. But if one wants to use it to say "a kind man", one must place it after the noun: "un homme bon". "Normal" is not synonymous with "fixed". (One may not see bon in this after position very often because of other lexical items which are used to give this particular meaning.)

The only way an adjective can be "fixed" as far as position goes is to be able to take it out of context and say: "This adjective goes before the noun" or "this adjective goes after the noun", without any further qualification. Is it possible to take a particular adjective and say: "This adjective has a distinguishing quality--it goes after"? Can this ever be said when speaking of a particular French adjective? According to Hutchinson--no! If there is an adjective which is quite close to "fixed", the genius will find a way to make an "exception".



Another factor (besides semantics) involved in having the adjective "normally" in one position or the other is ~~the~~ the length of the adjective--according to some linguists. The length, of course, will affect the rhythm of the whole phrase, and the language has a repugnance for putting a monosyllabic adjective especially if it ends in a vowel, in front of an equally monosyllabic noun. One can say either "un oreiller mou" or "un mol oreiller", but can only say: "un prix fou", "des frais fous", "un lit mou" (Wartburg 1947: 153-154). However, Wartburg seems to be excluding those examples which would cause loopholes in his "theory". It also depends on the noun used: one can say "un faux pas", "un bon prix", "une vraie fille". This is what Hutchinson is referring to when she says that when we say any adjective can go before or after the noun, we are not saying any noun. It is not a question of admitting "un noir crayon"--it depends on the noun and on the whole context (Hutchinson 1969: 18). Also, when Wartburg says "monosyllabic adjective ending in vowel", it is not clear whether he means phonologically or graphemically.

Glatigny says that rhythmic factors do not seem to determine the placing of the epithet adjective. He gives percentages of one, two, and three syllables to show that rhythm has little to do with it (Glatigny 1967: 207). The monosyllable is more often found before the noun than after, but "les adjectifs monosyllabes ne perdent pas...la possibilité de suivre, ni les polysyllabes de précéder" (Hutchinson 1969: 20). There are many monosyllables which are regularly postposed, in particular the colours.

#### 4.4. Conclusion: Synthesis

##### 4.4.1. Introduction: A Complex System

It should be quite clear by now that the epithet adjective is one of the most difficult items in French to systematize. There is almost a different theory for every grammarian who has said anything about it. One gives his theory and then another comes, tears it to pieces and adds his own, only to have the same thing done to his. It appears that no one of them is absolutely right, nor completely wrong. One of the reasons for the differences in their opinions is that they look at different aspects of the whole system, some concentrating on the preposed adjectives, some on the postposed. Others attempt to make clear the system behind those that change meaning with position change. The basic question is "What causes an epithet adjective to be placed before or after the noun--and for most of them to be capable of coming in either position?". Most ideas and theories expressed so far deal with effects--not with causes, the reasons behind placement.

With such a labyrinth of theories and opinions on the position of the epithet adjective in French, is it possible to have one theory into which all the others might fit--one theory which would include all the others as subdivisions or sub-categories?--including those that are misleading in their conclusions. With all the worthy attempts at finding one complete, accurate theory to date, and the discouraging failures, it is perhaps a novel approach to try and bring all these separate theories together in some systematic way. This we attempt to do in the next section. We are not doing this because we think it will be an accurate theory once they are all put together. This would be a ludicrous conclusion! But, it may help us see that some of these ideas and theories have much in common. (Note that this "theory" is not what we consider to be our theory--it is put forward

to summarize and synthesize what others have said about the epithet adjective in French. Our own theory will immediately follow this next section.)

#### 4.4.2. "Open" Versus "Closed" System

##### (1) The Basis

The basic viewpoint of this proposal is that the adjective coming before is "open", and the one coming after is "closed". Very simply, an "open" adjective is one that can be "open" to question. It is open to either a complete change, expansion, or contraction in meaning. In other words, it is not the last word that can be said about the noun in question. Someone else might quite easily contradict you.

The adjective coming in postposition is "closed". It is non-expandable, and not open to question. Whereas the adjective coming before is of a subjective nature, that coming after is of a more objective, impersonal nature. The adjective coming before makes the speaker or writer more involved in what he is saying or writing; the adjective coming after is a "stand-offish", cold treatment of the noun. One cannot now contradict you, or rather, if a contradiction is made, it is not a contradiction based on personal, subjective judgement, but one based on "fact". A "fact", as such, cannot be contradicted. If someone says "c'est une robe blanche", then the dress is white, unless the person happens to be colourblind. One cannot say \*"c'est une blanche robe", because it just does not mean anything. "Une robe blanche" cannot be anything else--it is not an "open" question. One can say, however, "la blanche neige", because the phrase now admits of questioning. It is nearing the poetic, and is more of a mental (emotional) phenomenon than a physical characteristic of snow. (Poets often choose to put adjectives in front, since they do not want to be "factual").

## (2) Fitting in the Pieces of the Puzzle

Let us now see how well the "facts" as presented by others (the theories we have given earlier in this chapter) fit the proposal as given above.

It was Blinkenberg who said that the adjectives which come before belong to the "central vocabulary" of everyone. That is, every French native speaker has these words readily available to him (Glatigny 1967: 202). This vocabulary, then, does not distinguish the intellectual from the non-intellectual--they are not part of the "learned" vocabulary. It is more likely to be those adjectives that come after which would do this; that is, the more specific vocabulary that comes after the noun. (In terms of type and token, about 30 adjectives constitute some 35% of adjective usage. All the other adjectives of the language account for the other 65%.) A vocabulary that is not known by everyone is generally a more specific vocabulary. One uses a specific vocabulary when one is sure of what one wants to say. This fits the "theory". When one is sure of what one is saying, it is not open to question; it is hard to contradict one who is certain of his facts.

Others say an adjective performs an "affective" or "emotive" function when it precedes, and a more "intellectual" function when it is postposed. Such were the views of Boillot, Dauzat, and Blinkenberg. Any adjective that loses its intellectual quality when put before, or those that are ordinarily placed before the noun, becomes more of a personal opinion. Any personal opinion is subject to contradiction, or to further amplification. One cannot be categorical about a personal opinion. This, too, fits the "theory" presented here: before = "open".

Another opposition that has been suggested is the vague sense (before) versus the precise sense (after). This was suggested by both Blinkenberg and Yvon (Glatigny 1967: 212). Glatigny goes on to put forth his view that the "vague" sense comes from the fact that the adjective before carries with it very little "information"--it is almost a prefix, and can be put before almost any noun. The adjective that follows the noun is precise, and has much more "information", therefore, it is more restricted as to the noun to which it attaches itself. (Position of the adjective is not a question of "information", however, as was earlier pointed out in this chapter, section 4.3.2.1.) The adjective before can be called a "weak" adjective, the one after, a "strong" one (Glatigny 1967: 212-215). If Glatigny means by "weak" and "strong" adjectives, that they are to be understood in the normal (that is, Germanic) sense, then he has them completely reversed, not as to position (since both come before in German), but as to their function. It appears, however, that he is not using these terms in this sense.

He continues that the "weaker" an adjective is, the more "vague" it becomes, then the less "information" it has in preposition. We can make this fit the general proposal that we are giving here. "Weak", "vague", "less information"--all these terms refer to adjectives which are not the "last word". More can be said, and so they have to be placed before the noun because they are "open".

The "strong" adjective--the "precise" one--the one with much "information", comes after. The more precise one is, the more specific one is, and so, this kind of construction--noun plus adjective--is very hard to contradict. It is "closed".

Putting all these different views into a schematic chart might help us see more clearly just how neat (we are not saying "accurate") a system this gives us:

Before	After
OPEN	CLOSED
affective subjective descriptive weak vague basic vocab.	intellectual objective limiting strong precise other vocab.

As we have already remarked, we do not say that this proposal is an accurate one; we have already pointed out that there are loopholes and misleading conclusions in each of the separate theories. For example, it is alright to say that "basic vocabulary" adjectives, or those that belong to the "central vocabulary" of everyone, come before the noun, but why is this vocabulary basic, and more important for our purposes, why would basic vocabulary items come before and not after the noun? And, how would an adjective like "propre" fit in here? Before the noun, "propre" means "own", certainly a limiting word. After the noun, "propre" means "clean", which is descriptive. This is just the very opposite of what appears in the chart above.

The basic fallacy, though, in all of the above is that they attempt to simply describe the facts of discours through discours. We need to get at the underlying causes for placing the adjective before or after the noun. A native French speaker does not have to consciously decide to place the adjective now before, now after, the noun. He has this

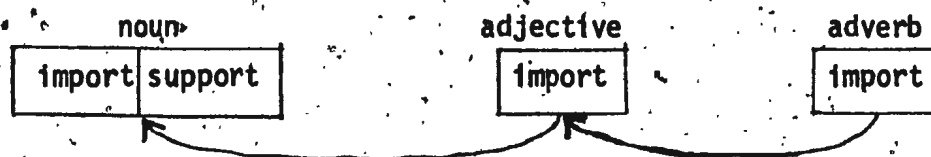
mechanism inherently functioning in his subconscious. This is where we must seek to find the theoretical mechanism behind adjective placement.

#### 4.4.3. Before (Import) / After (Support)

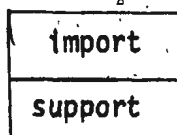
##### (1) The Mechanism

It was Sciarone who wondered about the possibility of ever being able to give one rule for adjective position in French (Sciarone 1967: 589). The task is not an easy one. However, the theoretical mechanism that was developed by Gustave Guillaume--in particular the notions of import and support--will, we believe, clarify some of the distinctions that others are trying to make in respect to the preposed and postposed adjectives. We further believe that it is the most enlightening theory to date, and that it is broader in scope than the others put forward earlier in this chapter.

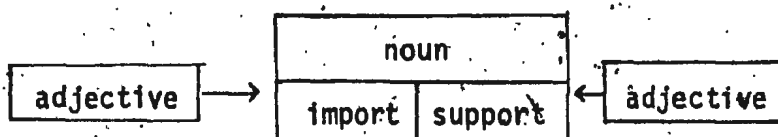
In section 2.3, we produced a diagram which showed the relationships between the Guillaumian terms Immanence, Transcendence<sub>1</sub>, and Transcendence<sub>2</sub>, as it relates to the noun, verb, adjective, and adverb. In that section, the noun was said to have its own "internal incidence", the adjective having only "external incidence". That is, an adjective needs a noun on which to rest its import (lexical meaning)--it needs external support. A noun not only has its own import, but it is its own internal support; it does not need any external support as do the adjective and adverb. (As each adjective is spoken, it becomes the temporary support for the adverb.) The noun, adjective, and adverb can be represented in the following manner:



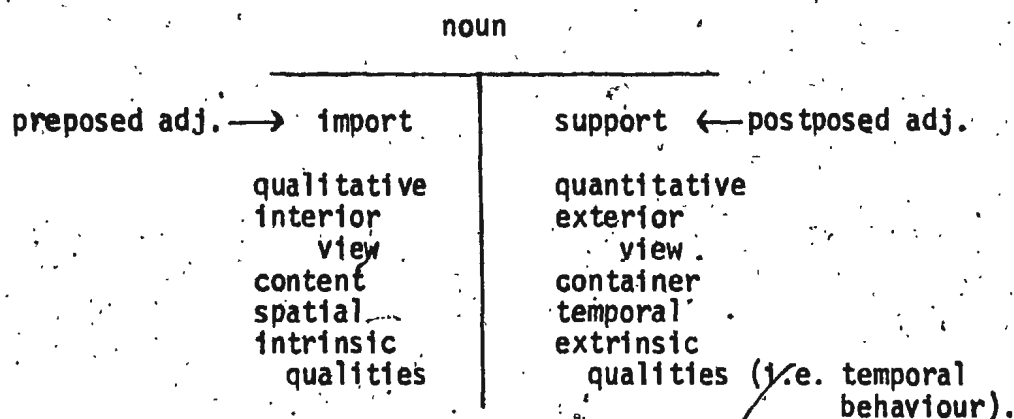
The noun, then, has both import and support, with the former resting on the latter:



It is because the noun can be viewed in this double perspective that an adjective can come before or after the noun in French:



The adjective which is preposed in French relates to the import of the noun; the postposed adjective relates to its support. As a result of this distinction, the following parallelism can be set up:



## (2) Application

Let us apply this theory to a few adjectives in order to test it. First we will look at a couple of adjectives which normally come in front of the noun or after it. Then we will look at some of those which cause the greatest difficulty with most theories--those that change meaning with



position change.

Note the difference in "bonne" and "bleue" in the way they relate to "robe" in: "une bonne robe", "une robe bleue". In the first, "bonne" is an intrinsic quality; in the second, "bleue" is temporal (dyeing can change colour), it is the exterior view. The same kind of explanation works for: "un excellent vin", and "un vin excellent". The first adjective is qualitative, the second is quantitative. Why would one not ordinarily put "charmante" after "fille"? "Vôtre fille charmante" would suggest that there was another daughter who was "not so charming"! This would be relating to quantity--not quality!

With some of those adjectives which have a substantial change of meaning with position change, it is, perhaps, a little more difficult to apply the theory. "Un grand homme" is "a great (famous) man", whereas "un homme grand" is "a tall man". The first is more concerned with getting at the intrinsic qualities of this one man; the second is simply singling out "tall" to distinguish this man from others; therefore, it is quantitative rather than qualitative.

"Une bonne femme" is one who is "intrinsically good"; "une femme bonne" is one who "acts kindly". One who acts kindly may not always be this way; one who is intrinsically good always is this way; it does not refer to a temporal quality, but a spatial or intrinsic characteristic.

A problem seems to exist with "honnête" and "malhonnête", but the following seems to explain them quite consistently:

honnête (before)	=	intrinsic (all good qualities)
honnête (after)	=	extrinsic (acts properly)
malhonnête (before)	=	intrinsic (all bad qualities)
malhonnête (after)	=	extrinsic (acts badly, sometimes rudely).

Note that the adjective which precedes is the one that historically has become part of the noun to form a new notional unit. Two examples are "une grande personne" (= "une adulte"), "des petits pains" = "some rolls". Rarely will the adjective in postposition become one with the original noun. This is because the preposed adjective is predicated (externally) of the import of the noun BEFORE the import of the noun is predicated (internally) of the support of the noun. Consequently, the preposed adjective enters into the internal predication of the noun. It is this that gives it its "value" of intrinsic reference: qualitative, descriptive, affective, subjective, permanent, etc.

The postposed adjective is predicated (externally) of the import of the noun AFTER the import of the noun has been predicated (internally) of the support of the noun. Consequently, the postposed adjective does not enter into the internal predication of the noun, and it therefore has a "value" of extrinsic reference: quantitative, contrastive, intellectual, objective, temporary, etc.

The basic sense of the adjective propre was probably close to English appropriate, for example. The hands that are permanently appropriate to us are those that we call our own. Our hands may be temporarily appropriate, however, (for eating, for example) by being clean.

To place a French adjective before or after the noun makes all these different "values" (respectively) available, but only certain of the values will be exploited in any one usage. If propre takes advantage of the temporary/permanent contrast, for example, it certainly ignores the subjective/objective contrast. This is why it is important to get at the underlying mechanism which releases these surface values: the surface values are themselves contradictory (as always in language) and cannot

be used to explain each other.

This, then, is our theory. When its details have been worked out, one may find certain "loopholes" and inconsistencies. They seem to be present in all other theories, and this one may be no exception. Where language is concerned, a good theory has to be one that works for the majority of instances that one is trying to explain. This one, it appears, does that. Not everyone who reads this short essay will have the same fond hopes for this theory, but there is, however, one point where we can all agree, and that is:

...qu'il n'y a pas d'adjectifs à place fixe. Tout dépend de la fonction, du sens, et de la valeur attributive à l'adjectif par celui qui écrit ou qui parle, et il est temps d'admettre que le choix est libre pour tout adjectif, mais que, sauf exception, ce choix ne dépend pas de raisons frivoles (Hutchinson 1969: 23).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONTRASTIVE POSITION IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH

#### 5.1. Introduction

It is impossible to describe English and French adjective position, without at the same time contrasting and comparing the different usages. And so, a great deal of the substance of this chapter has already been covered. The task now is to attempt to bring together such similarities and distinctions that exist between the two languages in this area of syntax, and to add a few others that have not as yet been mentioned.

Nothing will be said in this chapter about adjectives which are used in predicative position. This position is so very similar in both languages. In both English and French, the predicative adjectives normally come after the verb (a list of these verbs has been given earlier: section 4.3.4. ), and so (but for the very few exceptions), there is very little about this position which can be contrasted. For example: "This boy is very intelligent", "ce garçon est très intelligent". The same can be said for the shifted position. Our concern here is with the epithet adjective and its positions, before and after the noun; and also with phrases and clauses that are directly connected with the noun. This is the area that causes the greatest difficulties, since position and meaning are so interconnected.

The discussion in this chapter will follow this pattern: first, we will look at the similarities in position in English and French, taking - the before-the-noun slot first, and the after-the-noun slot second. Then, the contrasts in both positions will be considered. The conclusion will attempt to tie in and consolidate what has gone before.

## 5.2. Similarities

In English and French, the slots before and after the noun are often filled by adjectives. So, it is expected that there will be similarities as far as meaning and position are concerned; that is, adjectives placed before in English will often have a corresponding adjective placed before in French, with a very similar lexical meaning. And the same will happen for postposition.

### 5.2.1. English and French: Adjective-plus-noun

#### (1) Single Adjectives

Perhaps the most similar in meaning between English and French is the before position, when the adjective and noun are considered as a single entity--when the adjective is notionally considered as one with the noun (for this the English adjective must be unstressed). Except for adjectives of colour, in French, which are more often postposed ("la robe bleue"), those adjectives which have inherent in them the quality of the noun are preposed. (Many colours, however, are not inherent qualities of the noun, since colours may be simply altered by dyeing or painting). Many direct--word-for-word--translations can thus be given for the pattern: adjective plus noun. Examples are:

the young man	=	le jeune homme
the little girl	=	la petite fille
an old grandmother	=	une vieille grand-mère
a high mountain	=	une haute montagne

These adjectives are so much alike in meaning in both languages that, for all practical purposes, they may be said to be identical, as far as any two words in two different languages can be identical in meaning. Some

adjectives of this type have become semantically indivisible with the noun (Chapter IV, section 3.2.(1)), such as "petits pois", "grande personne", etc. These cannot be given English word-for-word equivalents, since when such elements become semantically indivisible they tend to form a new unit: "blackboard", "longboat".

Much the same could be said for adjectives which are of the "affective" type: bon, mauvais, méchant, cher, beau; adjectives which get one personally involved (some are very close to being inherent qualities):

a good doctor	=	un <u>bon</u> médecin
a bad pupil	=	un <u>mauvais</u> élève
the naughty boy	=	le <u>méchant</u> garçon
our dear parents	=	nos <u>chers</u> parents
a beautiful flower	=	une <u>belle</u> fleur.

## (2) Two Adjectives

With two adjectives preceding the noun, the complexity is a little greater. Often, however, one will find a one-to-one correspondence between English and French adjectives that precede, as far as their order is concerned. There are two cases to be distinguished here: when one language has the exact same order as the other, and when both languages have the two adjectives before the noun, but with a different order.

### (a) Same Order

Sometimes it matters little which of the two adjectives comes first and which comes second (directly before the noun), especially if they are co-ordinated, either by a conjunction or by use of a comma. This is so for both languages (Chapter III, section 3.1.2, and Chapter IV, section 3.2.2.(a) and (b)): for English: "two old and beautiful trees", "a large, pretty flower", which can be translated into French as: "deux vieux et beaux arbres", "une grande, jolie fleur".

There are cases, though, where adjectives are not ordinarily capable of changing their places (in certain "fixed" expressions): "sweet and sour chicken"; "he's still on his high and mighty horse". In French, too, we have: "bleu, blanc et rouge" ("red, white and blue"), and "noir et blanc" ("black and white"). The reason for the order, "bleu, blanc et rouge", may be that in the French flag blue is against the post!

If the order of the French adjectives is changed, then, very often, the English will have the corresponding changes; so that, "une jolie, grande fleur" would most likely be given in English as: "a pretty, large flower".

One can also get the same order for instances where the adjectives are non-coordinated. Very often, one of the adjectives will come "more naturally" directly before the noun than the other. Kelly gives us some excellent examples for French: "la même vraie délicatesse", "la moindre petite différence", "la seule autre solution" (Kelly 1970: 786-787). These can quite easily be translated word-for-word into English (with the "same" meaning as the French): "the same genuine gentleness", "the least little difference", and "the only other solution". Other examples in French are "une vieille basse maison", "une longue triste journée" (Grevisse 1964: 333).

#### (b). Different Order

There are a few rare cases, when the adjectives are non-coordinated, where the orders are different in English and French. This is what causes great interference for English students learning French, and vice versa. That is why translating an adjective-with-noun phrase from one language to the other can sometimes cause difficulty, since the order is sometimes "fixed", or rather, "quite rigid", in one or both of the languages. The

phrase, "the only other day", is in French, "le seul autre jour", and it is very odd indeed to hear the other order in English or French. Although not common, one can get two different orders, particularly when a number makes up one of the adjectives, as the following examples show:

"the same two 'saisies lexicales'"  
 "les deux mêmes saisies lexicales" (Guillaume 1971(B): 51)

"the first two years of our marriage"  
 "les deux premières années de notre mariage".

"the other two persons"  
 "les deux autres personnes".

### (3) Adverb Plus Adjective

With this construction there is hardly any possibility of difference, since the adverb will generally precede the adjective in both languages. Note, however, the different positions in the following: "good enough" = "assez bon". In French, too, in predicative position, the adverb "assez" can sometimes come after the adjective--"Quand on est riche assez pour...". This, however, is a regional variance, a "provincialisme" (Grevisse 1964: 802). (There is a difference in that some adverb-plus-adjective constructions follow the noun in French, and come before in English, but these will be considered later in this chapter.)

As was pointed out in section 4.3.2.3., when adverbs of quantity (or those which intensify the adjective), such as "si", "peu", "assez", "très", etc. are used in French, the whole phrase, adverb plus adjective, is often preposed. Such is also the case in English. Note the following pairs:

un <u>très haut</u> degré	=	a <u>very high</u> degree
une <u>assez belle</u> femme	=	a <u>rather beautiful</u> woman
un <u>plus beau</u> tableau	=	a <u>more beautiful</u> picture.



## 5.2.2. English and French--Noun plus adjective

### (1) Single Adjectives

As can be seen from the chart in the Conclusion to chapter three, the postposition of single adjectives in English is relatively rare as compared with the other kinds of elements (phrases, clauses, etc.). In section 4.3.3.(1), it was noted that postposition was the most "normal" position for all French adjectives (including singles). Nevertheless, there are some adjectives that are postposed in English, so that some similarity occurs between these two languages in this position.

There are a few postposed adjectives in English which are of French influence, some of them going back as far as the Norman Conquest (Jespersen 1954: 378-379). Some of them are "blood royal", "body politic", "the sum total", "from time immemorial". These adjectives are very "close" to the French, both in spelling and in sound, and they are generally postposed in modern French: "le corps politique", "la somme totale".

In English, we normally find adjectives postposed if an indefinite pronoun is used. Willis says this is the only time adjectives by form can occur in the postposed position. One of his examples is "something valuable was stolen from my office" (Willis 1972: 258). Other examples are "something new", "a thing divine", "she heartily despised things English" (Jespersen 1954: 380). This refutes what Willis said, since "thing", "things" are not pronouns (but they are indefinite). Jespersen continues with other examples: "matters political", "like a man distracted". Here we seem to have the opposition: preposed = spatial (inherent); postposed = temporal (accidental). French would also postpose the adjectives here, but would join them to the pronoun with a preposition: "quelque chose de nouveau".

("something new"), "quelque chose de valeur" ("something valuable"); but "poésie divine" ("divine poetry"), and "les choses anglaises" ("things English").

As far as postposition of single adjectivals is concerned, English probably gets its closest to French in the use of participles, both past and present. (See section 3.3.B.(1); and section 4.3.3.4.(c)(i).) Of course, not all of the participles which are postposed in French are postposed in English, but many are. Note the following examples: "for three days running", "for the time being" (Jespersen 1954: 382-383), "the girl swimming is..." (Willis 1972: 257). (It should, of course, be noted that direct translations from one language--keeping same "parts of speech"--are oftentimes impossible; when English uses an adjective--either before or after the noun--French may change to a phrase, clause, or some other completely different arrangement, such as one noun to combine with two separate words of English.) In French one meets participles in postposition quite frequently: "une bière écumante" ("frothing beer"), "le roi régnant" ("the reigning king"), "roche noyée" ("sunken rock"), "enfant perdu" ("lost child"), and "acteur fini" ("a complete actor"--one with finesse).

## (2) Two Adjectives

Although English has somewhat of an aversion for the postposition of single adjectives (with the above exceptions), when two adjectives are coordinated they are quite often postposed (chapter III, section 3.B.(2).). And here it does not matter whether they are participles or not: "the afternoon, hot and humid, wore on"; "the young girl, smiling but anxious, waited for the judges' decision". In French, these same expressions can be

translated as: "l'après-midi, brûlant et humide, s'avavançait (lentement)"; and "la jeune fille, souriante mais inquiète, attendait la décision des juges".

It is interesting to note that even when English has adjectives postposed (note the position of this one!), they can very often be placed before the noun with very little disruption in meaning: "the hot and humid afternoon wore on". In French, however, it is not as easy to do this: "la souriante mais inquiète jeune fille attendait..." would sound stilted and quite unnatural.

### (3) Phrases

#### (a) Prepositional

English and French are very much alike as to their use of prepositional phrases. It is very rare for them to come before the noun in either of the two languages; in the great majority of cases, they are placed directly after the noun (or pronoun) that they qualify. (On rare occasions, they can come before the noun, with terminal juncture--as shown for English in section 3.3.8.3.(b). It can also happen in French: "de mauvaise humeur, l'homme est sorti brusquement". It seems that in these cases it is used for emphasis.)

There is no lack of examples in English and French of prepositional phrases coming after their nouns: "the man in the moon", "Summer of '42", "the Yellow Rose of Texas", "a house in the country"; "un homme de Genève", "les fleurs dans le jardin", "il y a quatre saisons dans l'année", "au sommet de la montagne". It is very rare, however, for a prepositional phrase other than with à and de to be used adjectivally in French (Vinay and Darbelnet 1958: 111,112).

### (b) Verbal

Participles generally come after the noun in French, even if used singly; if they have a complement, then there is even more pressure for postposition. In English, too, if a participle is modified, or added to, it is generally placed after the noun. So, there is some degree of similarity here. Note the following examples: "in a state almost amounting to consternation", "like a man not unaccustomed to the forms of courts" (Jespersen 1954: 384), "une voiture, descendant vite la rue, s'est embouti sur un arbre" ("a car, speeding down the street, crashed into a tree"), "la solution, su seulement au professeur, était très difficile" ("the answer, known only to the teacher, was very difficult").

### (4) Clauses

With clauses, both in English and in French, there is absolutely no difference as to position. Adjective clauses must always come after their nouns. In translating from one language to the other, clause position would cause the minimum interference. They are generally introduced by certain relative pronouns. The only major difference between English and French adjective clauses is the order of subject and verb within the clause (after certain conjunctions)--but this is outside the scope of this paper.

### 5.3. Contrasts

So far we have tried to show how English and French place certain adjectives in the same position--before or after the noun. There were certain contrasts even here--particularly when two adjectives preceded. However, the main contrasts are those that have to deal with position change, relative to the noun. It is now to be shown how English sometimes has an adjective before the noun whereas French puts the corresponding one

after--and other variations.

### 5.3.1. English(Before)/French(after).

#### (1) Single Adjectives

There are single adjectives that come before in English and are ambiguous in this position--they are capable of two meanings. The difference (in English) is always resolved by stress. Politzer states that this ambiguity does not exist in French because it is automatically resolved by the position of the adjective, either before or after the noun (Politzer 1971: 96). In English, for example, "the poor professor" can mean either "the professor who is poor", or "the professor who is to be pitied"; "the late professor" can mean either "the professor who is late", or "the professor who died recently". In French there is no ambiguity, since "the poor professor" with the first meaning would be "le professeur pauvre"; and, with the second meaning, would be: "le pauvre professeur". There are many examples like this, where a particular adjective, in French, changes its meaning with position. Some of these adjectives are méchant, simple, grand, ancien, bon. (Appendix B gives a fairly complete list of them.)

In English, one will generally find colours (if used alone) before the noun. ("We painted the room blue": this is a predicative adjective, as shows clearly from German usage.) In French, on the other hand, they come after the noun, except for poetic style ("la blanche colombe"), or if taken figuratively ("...le noir chagrin...") (Grevisse 1964: 332). So that one can generally translate colours directly from English to French or from French to English by simply placing the adjective of colour after and before the noun respectively: "the blue dress", "la robe bleue"; "un

tableau vert", "a green board".

Position words, which in English are called, by some, adverbs (since they indicate place), and, by others, nouns, are put before or after the noun in English, but they are always put after in French. Some of these are, upstairs, downstairs, downtown, inside, outside, etc. One can say equally well in English: "They have a downstairs apartment", or "They have an apartment downstairs". In French, these words (some of them phrases, in French) must come after the noun: "Ils ont un appartement en bas".

One other kind of adjective needs to be mentioned here. The participles have already been noted above (section 5.2.2.(1)), where it was pointed out that some participles are placed in postposition in English as well as in French. The most frequent place for participles in English, however, is before the noun: running water, exciting trip, a written speech, the frightened animal. These would be put into French as: eau courante, voyage palpitant d'intérêt, un discours écrit, and l'animal épeuré.

## (2) Adverb Plus Adjective

Some of these expressions have already been noted (this chapter, section 2.1.(3).), as regards those that sometimes occur in identical positions in English and French--before the noun. Nevertheless, most constructions of adverb plus adjective come after the noun in French and before in English. Note the following examples in French (Gide 1959: 6-15):

"...dans un jardin pas très grand, pas très beau, que..." (p.6)

"une pelouse assez large..." (p.7)

"à l'horizon, pas très distant..." (p.7)

"...au fond du jardin déjà sombre..." (p.8)

"...ces corsages légers et largement ouverts que..." (p.9)

"...au petit doigt mièvrément replié vers la lèvre..." (p.10)

"...à cette enfant si séduisante". (p. 11).  
 "...d'expression si différente que..." (p. 15).

Not all of these expressions would be translated into English with the adverb-plus-adjective construction before the noun; one may sometimes translate quite well by keeping to the French order: "au petit doigt mièvrément replié vers la lèvre", "with her little finger affectedly bent towards her lip". Sometimes, however, English tries to change around the whole construction so as to have the adjective coming before the noun, so as to keep to "natural-sounding" English: "d'expression si différente que..." could be rendered in English as: "with such a different expression that..."

One should also note here that although earlier in this chapter (section 2.1.(3)) the point was made that many constructions with très, si, assez, etc. come before the noun in French, this certainly cannot be generalized, as the above examples demonstrate.

### (3) Hyphenated Expressions

In English, there are many hyphenated adjectival expressions used, most of them coming before the noun. Note the following examples:

the law-school faculty  
 cradle-to-grave needs  
 a soft-spoken type  
 a bitter-tasting cola  
 a two-fisted gesture  
 frozen-custard dessert  
 an eight-year-old girl (Willis 1972: 274-276).

There are many more examples in Jespersen 1954: 336-360.

Note how the French uses various types of phrases to translate the following hyphenated English expressions; all of the French expressions follow the noun:

a foul-mouthed man---un homme mal embouché (adv.+ adj.)  
 four-place logarithms---logarithmes à quatre décimales  
 (prep. phr.)  
 an off-hand speech---un discours impromptu (adjective)  
 a law-abiding citizen---un citoyen respectueux des lois  
 (adj.+ prep. phr.)  
 an under-developed child---un enfant arrêté dans sa  
 croissance (past participle + prep. phr.)  
 a hot-water bottle---une bouillotte (the noun contains  
full notion.)

The hyphen indicates that these are, for their position, unanalysable units. English is capable of adjectivizing long strings of elements (all hyphenated):

"Smiling in a won't-you-pay-up manner"  
 "Their mother had a comfortable as-it-was-in-the-beginning-  
 is-now-and-ever-shall-be feeling about them" --(Jesperson  
 1954: 353).

#### (4) Genitive

There is seldom any problem in English with the genitive, and the translation into French (or vice versa) is usually simply a matter of applying the "rule":

the father's car = la voiture du père  
Susan's glasses = les lunettes de Suzanne.

In English, the possessor generally precedes the thing possessed; in French, it is the reverse. (Both English and French are similar when it is a case of demonstrative and possessive adjectives, but these are not being dealt with in this paper.) English can, however, put the possessor after: "the plays of Shakespeare", "in the opinion of the court". Sometimes, in English, this latter form has to be used in order to make the phrase clear. (Abstractions rarely take the possessive: "the price of meat".) This is necessary when an adjective can be taken to modify either the possessor or the thing possessed. Jespersen has some excellent examples: "the stout



major's wife" (he says this means the wife is stout), and "the wife of the stout major" (the major is stout). Similarly he has "twelve peacocks' feathers" to mean just twelve feathers; if twelve peacocks is meant, one has to say "the feathers of twelve peacocks" (Jespersen 1954: 299). In French, this situation is resolved by placing the adjective before (in this case) the desired noun, so that we have:

the <u>stout</u> major's wife	=	la <u>grosse</u> femme du commandant
the wife of the <u>stout</u> major	=	la femme du <u>gros</u> commandant.

Another way we can say the former, in English, is "the major's stout wife". Another example is "a small department meeting": other similar items are found in Section 3.3.A.2.(b).

### 5.3.2. English(After)/French(Before)

This situation is non-existent, where an adjective placed after the noun in English is placed before in French. The reverse situation is, however, frequently the case. So far, we have discussed three basic position variations between the two languages: English(Before)/French(Before); English(After)/French(After); and English(Before)/French(After). English has been considered twice in preposition, French twice in postposition. Since the case noted in the heading above is fictional, this indicates an English preference for preposed adjectives, and French for postposition. It could almost be said that when one is considering where to place an adjective in French, there is a two-to-one chance of it being placed after the noun. (This correlates with Weinrich's 35/65 ratio of preposed to postposed adjective position.)

### 5.4. Other Considerations

#### 5.4.1. Noun Modifying Noun

It has already been shown that, in English, it is quite common for one noun to modify another (section 3.3.A.2.(b)), "a beautiful evening dress", etc. We can even get the pattern: noun + noun + noun, where the first two nouns are used as adjectives (section 3.3.A.2.(c)), "an iron garden fence"; sometimes this kind of phrase will also be ambiguous. This can never be done in French, and they have various means to "get around" it, the most common probably being the use of the prepositions à, de, and en:

a tea cup	=	une tasse <u>à</u> thé
business card	=	carte <u>d'</u> adresse
linen sheets	=	draps <u>en</u> toile de fil

French sometimes uses an adjective where English uses a noun:

a <u>wire</u> rope	=	un câble <u>métallique</u>
<u>flower</u> show	=	exposition <u>horticole</u>

#### 5.4.2. Stylistics

Style has not been considered so far in this paper, as it is mostly related to personal preference. However, when one adjective can go before or after the noun, it does show the possibilities that the language allows, and the flexibility and variety permitted within the language. It is very difficult, if not at all impossible, to see any significant difference between "I'll see you next Monday" and "I'll see you Monday next"; between "It happened last November" and "It happened November last". It is not a matter of style when French uses "prochain" ("next") and "dernier" ("last"). "La semaine prochaine" means "the week that will follow this one", whereas "la prochaine semaine" refers to "one week following another one"--no

reference to present time. English would have to use the definite article or a different lexical item to get this difference across: "next week" for the former, and "the next week" or "the following week" (for the latter). Likewise, "dernier novembre" and "novembre dernier" are never a matter of style in French.

#### 5.4.3. Change of Meaning with Position

A substantial change of meaning with position change is not as prevalent in English as it is in French. (For examples in English, see section 3.3.E.(3), or Schibsbye 1970: 145-147; for French, see section 4.3.6.(3), or Appendix B.) So we would conclude from this that adjective position, in English, is more "fixed" than it is in French. For example, \*"a boy good" is just not said in English, whereas French can have either "un bon garçon" or "un garçon bon", with change of meaning, of course. In order for English to be able to express these two meanings, a different lexical item has to be used: "a good boy" will translate the former phrase, and "a kind boy", the latter.

There are also, in French, those adjectives which add an "affective" quality when preposed from their "normal" postposed position. French can have either "un vin excellent" or "un excellent vin"; "un gâteau délicieux" or "un délicieux gâteau". English cannot normally have "a cake delicious". The difference between "un gâteau délicieux" and "un délicieux gâteau" would either have to be explained in English, or a difference made in the stress on the adjective. The adjective placed before the noun in French is non-contrastive; it is equivalent to the unstressed adjective in English. Note the difference in:

your charming daughter = votre charmante fille  
 your charming daughter = votre fille charmante.

#### 5.4.4. Special Items.

There are a number of different items in English and French which could be classed as "special". Some of these have article and adjective change of order from English to French, and vice versa. One of these changes is with the expression "such a(n) + noun" = "un tel (or si) + noun". Note the following examples:

<u>such a town</u>	=	<u>une telle ville</u>
<u>such a story</u>	=	<u>une telle histoire</u>
<u>such a long walk</u>	=	<u>une si longue marche.</u>

In these examples, one will notice that "such a(n)" and "un(e) tel(le)" or "un(e) si" are not separated. In similar constructions, in English, however, the article is sometimes shifted to the position immediately in front of the noun, whereas, in French, the article stays at the beginning of the phrase:

too dear a hat = un trop cher chapeau.

Note the similarity and difference between English and French in the following:

all my money	=	tout mon argent
my late mother	=	feu ma mère.

In the last example, in French, however, "feu" may come directly before the noun, and then it has the normal agreement:

my late mother = ma feue mère.

There is no possible variation in the word order of the English phrase.

This last English phrase could also mean "my mother who is late" in a situation where one could meet her at the door and say, "Oh, my late mother, come in!" Neither one of the French expressions given above could possibly have this meaning. With the meaning of "recently dead", French and English may have identical word order:

all your late family = toute votre feu famille  
 your three late brothers = vos trois feus frères,

with the French having the option of putting "feu" at the beginning: "feu vos trois frères", the normal position.

### 5.5. Conclusion

The task of comparing and contrasting syntax and lexicon has proved to be more complex than that of phonology. The object of their analysis is more complex and less easy to isolate (Debyser 1971: 8). If one glances at the bibliographies which are available on contrastive studies, there will be a preponderance of articles and books on phonology, but only a small amount is written on contrastive syntax. With phonology, one is dealing with the limited, "finite" means--the sounds of the language; with syntax, one is attempting to isolate and describe the "infinite" use.

Although some linguists have been very vocal in their attempts to keep "meaning" out of contrastive studies, yet this is very difficult when one is dealing with syntax, since syntax and meaning are so intricately interwoven. There has been no effort to get rid of meaning (le sens) in this study. In fact, most of the similarities and contrasts made in this chapter have been very much connected to "meaning". The most important reason for position change, from before to after the noun, or vice versa, is one of meaning--in both English and French.

Not all of the possible questions that this topic involves have been covered satisfactorily in this short essay. And some of the areas have only received a very brief comment. Much more could be said. Nevertheless, it is hoped that some of the problems and points which have been raised in this essay, and the ensuing discussion about them, will be of some benefit to those who have the privilege of teaching or learning either of these two languages as a second one.

The research that has gone into the writing of this paper has made the writer just a little more sensitive about his own language. The more a teacher understands his own language and how its structures compare and contrast with the target language, the more facility he should have in teaching it to others. It should help him to prevent errors from occurring, and to remedy them, perhaps more efficiently, when they do occur. So that, in the final analysis, it will be the student who will have some of the trial-and-error taken out of language learning.

## SUMMARY

It was the aim of this present study to examine how the epithet adjective compares and contrasts in English and French as to its position in relation with the noun.

Since both of these languages have developed from the "original" parent language, PIE, it was deemed useful and, indeed, necessary to begin in Chapter One with a brief survey of the adjective position in a few other Indo-European languages, in order to put English and French adjective position in perspective. We found that, of the eight languages examined, only one had the adjective coming after the noun, as its normal position--Albanian. This "exception" we asserted to be the result of an influence exterior to the Indo-European phylum--that of Semitic izafet.

In Chapter Two, we saw the difference in the facility that each language had for nominalizing the adjective. It was found that French had a greater capacity for this, because of the help it gets from having gender. English lack of gender and number for adjectives restricts its ability to nominalize.

Chapters Three and Four were basically confined to analysing the position of the adjective in English (Chapter Three) and in French (Chapter Four). We concentrated in both languages on the epithet adjective--in its positions before and after the noun. And not only the "pure" true adjectives were dealt with, but phrases, clauses, and other kinds of adjectival expressions.

Besides the comparisons and contrasts that were inherent in Chapters Three and Four, Chapter Five brought others to light. It showed not only the similarities that English and French have (same order, same position), but the contrasts that exist (different order, different position).

In some cases, the two languages were quite close: use of participles, for example. In others, they were quite different: the ease by which English can use a noun to modify another noun.

English, then, seems to be more like other Indo-European languages in that its adjective position is normally before with respect to the noun. French seems to have "strayed", in that it has developed a syntactic phenomenon not found in the other IE languages we examined--that of placing the adjective after the noun. This may be due to historical influences. (An historical contrastive study might tell us the facts at some future time.)

It is quite certain that much has been left unsaid in this short essay. It was position of the adjective that was stressed in every chapter except Chapter Two, where position did not apply. Meaning was our guiding principle. Another study could easily be done parallel with this one, using stress as the guiding principle--since stress is frequently decisive in English and may be an important aspect of adjective position in French. Much more needs to be done in such a young science as linguistics before it acquires a comparable fund of "facts" to that of most other (older) sciences.



APPENDIX A

FRENCH ADJECTIVES WHICH CHANGE MEANING WHEN NOMINALIZED

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. abandonné = forsaken             | (a) un(e) abandonné(e) = a stray person<br>(b) les abandonnés = homeless children |
| 2. abattant = depressing            | un abattant = flap (of counter, envelope)   |
| 3. abécédaire = alphabetical        | (a) un abécédaire = spelling book<br>(b) " " " = primer (of science, etc.)        |
| 4. accidenté = eventful             | (a) un(e) accidenté(e) = victim<br>(b) les accidentés = casualties, injured       |
| 5. accusé = prominent, bold         | l'accusé = the accused, the defendant   |
| 6. actif = active, brisk, agile     | un actif = assets; credit   |
| 7. affidé = trusty, confidential    | un(e) affidé(e) = secret agent; spy   |
| 8. agréé = approved                 | un agréé = solicitor, attorney  |
| 9. allié = allied                   | un(e) allié(e) = relation (by marriage)   |
| 10. annulaire = annular; ringshaped | l'annulaire = the ring finger; the third finger                                   |
| 11. blanc(he) = white               | (a) une blanche = a white (billiard ball)<br>(b) une blanche = a minim            |
| 12. bon = good, honest, capable     | (a) le bon = order, ticket, voucher<br>(b) mon bon (familiar) = my dear fellow    |

13. causeur (causeuse) = talkative, chatty

une causeuse = small sofa, or settee

14. commode = suitable, convenient

une commode = chest of drawers

15. courant = running

le courant = current, stream

16. élastique = elastic

un élastique = rubber; an elastic band

17. étendu = extensive, wide, outspread

l'étendue = extent; area; the stretch(of water)

18. fort = strong

(a) le fort = the strong part  
(b) " " = strong man  
(c) " " = fort; stronghold

19. galant = gay, galant

un galant = lover; ladies' man

20. grand = great; tall

(a) les grands = the old  
(b) le trois grands = the Big Three

21. ignorant = ignorant; illiterate

un ignorant = ignorant

22. incendié = burning

un(e) incendié(e) = a sufferer (by fire)

23. incrédule = incredulous

un(e) incrédule = an infidel, an unbeliever

24. naufragé = shipwrecked

un(e) naufragé(e) = castaway

25. officieux = officious; over-obliging

un(e) officieux(euse) = a busybody

26. paroissien = parochial

un paroissien = prayer-book

27. petit = small, little

(a) un petit = little boy  
(b) une petite = little girl  
(c) les petits (des animaux) = the young (of animals)

28. piquant = pricking, stinging; pungent; tart

le piquant = the point, pith (of story)

29. poissard = low, vulgar

la poissarde = the fishwife

30. pommé = rounded

un pommé = cider

31. pratique = practical, useful

un pratique = unqualified pilot

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 32. premier = first                        | le premier = the first floor                                      |
| 33. prochain = next; nearest               | un prochain = a neighbour; a fellow being                         |
| 34. rélégué = relegated; isolated          | un rélégué = convict (sentenced to transportation)                |
| 35. soupirant = sighing                    | un soupirant = suitor; admirer                                    |
| 36. tremblant = trembling; shaky           | un tremblant = tremolo stop (of organ)                            |
| 37. uniforme = uniform; unvarying          | un uniforme = a uniform   |
| 38. vert = green                           | une verte = an absinthe   |
| 39. volant = flying; loose                 | un volant = shuttlecock, steering wheel                           |
| 40. voyant = gaudy, loud, garish (colour). | (a) un voyant = mark; signal<br>(b) " " " = aperture (of transit) |

APPENDIX BADJECTIVES WHICH VARY IN MEANING ACCORDING TO  
WHETHER THEY COME BEFORE OR AFTER THE NOUN

<u>Adjective</u>	<u>Meaning before</u>	<u>Meaning after</u>
ancien	former	old
bon	good	kind
brave	worthy	courageous
certain	some, certain	certain, sure positive
cher	dear (beloved)	expensive
dernier	last (of a series)	last (just past)
grand	famous	tall
méchant	wretched	vicious
même	same	very
nul	not one, no, not any	of no worth
pauvre	unfortunate	penniless
propre	own	clean
seul	sole	alone
simple	mere	plain
vrai	real	true
honnête	polite	honest
malhonnête	dishonest	rude

(taken from Morle and Jammes 1960: 25, 31, 32, 33).

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