

Reassessing the existence of a part of speech (Wortart) termed adjective

Dr. Elke Hayashi, Sophia University Tokyo

2nd JALT OLE SIG Conference, October 12th, 2013

Nagoya Chukyo University

Today`s task:

To prove the non-existence of a
Wortart „adjective“ for the
German language of today

The **first time** I talked about the beginning of my findings, was on December 17th, 2010 during a session of a little AG (working group) for the German language established by Japanese German teachers (belonging to the JGG = Japanische Gesellschaft für Germanistik).

The **second time** was at the Linguistenseminar (JGG) on 29. August 2011, where beneath myself only one German professor from Germany were the two only Germans. Then I started to write about this subject, first paper published in 2011, 2nd at the beginning of this year. (References see last dia.)

So, at JALT on Oct. 12th 2013 it was the **third time** to talk about it. *Alle guten Dinge sind drei*, as a saying states in German.

What am I talking about?

This is **a beautiful landscape**.

Translates into German:

Das ist **eine schöne Landschaft**.

In the latter **schöne** must not be called adjective for German.

How can that be as generations of Germans over hundreds of years have learned as every German grammar book postulates:
„schön“ belongs to the Wortart Adjektiv?

What did strike my eye at the beginning of my findings?

Answer: Concepts like

- „adverbial usage of adjective“

(Wermke et. al. 2009)

- „adjective-adverbs“

(Helbig/Buscha 2001)

Question:

Where is the origin of these concepts which are contradictions in themselves?

Answer:

Unadaquate translation of
the Latin original word
adjektivum

Translation of the original Latin words

1) Adverb

ad=verb

„ad“ means „fixed to“, „in connection with“ etc.

Translation of the original Latin words

2) Adjective

quality explaining word



As shown the way of translating
both words is not the same

Adverb is explained on a
grammatical level;

Adjective is explained on the
semantic level

As there is a saying in German:

Neverever compare apples with pears!

One should translate both words in the same way.

So, let`s try a **new translation** for
the Latin word

Adjektiv

ad=object

Object in the **semantic sense**
means any thing in a concrete or
abstract level.

Object in the **grammatical sense** due to Hayashi-Mähner (2011 and 2013) means any noun, might it be a

- Nominativ

- Genitiv

- Dativ

or

- Accusativ

To check whether my idea is correct, I had a look at two languages, which have a much different structure compared to German

Japanese

and

Turkish

Adverbial (1) and adjective (2) sentence structure in Japanese

(1a) Kono michi wa **nagai**.

(1b) Kono michi wa **kirei** (de aru).

(2a) Kore wa **nagaku tsukurareta**
michi (de aru).

(2b) Kore wa **kirei na** michi (de aru).

Adverbial (1) and adjective (2) sentence structure in Turkish

(1) Bu yol **uzun**(dur).

(2) Bu **uzun bir yol**(dur).

	Adverbial use	Adjective use
German	no flection	mandatory flection
Japanese	mandatory flection	no flection
Turkish	no flection	no flection

Table: Using flection for adverbial and/or adjectival relations. Hayashi-Mähner 2013.

BEZUGSWORT-Theorie

BEZUG stands for grammatical relation within a sentence either to a verb or a noun.

(Hayashi-Mähner 2011 und 2013)

Follows strictly the lexical
meaning of the terms **ad-verb**
and ad-jective (**ad-object**)

Therefore:

There do only exist **GRUNDWÖRTER**

These **GRUNDWÖRTER** can be used

- 1) in an **adverbial** sentence structure
- 2) in an **adjective** sentence structure

The proof of the non-existence of a word category (Wortart) Adjective:

Any word which can be used in an adjective sentence structure can in any case without even one exception be used as well in an adverbial sentence structure.

But: A word category (Wortart)
Adverb does of course exist. There
are many words like heute (today),
oft (often) etc. which can only be
used as adverbs and never ever in
an adjective sentence structure.

Thank you for your interest.

And now I am looking forward to your questions/ comments etc. in any of „my“ languages.

hayas-mh@sophia.ac.jp

Papers on which above content is based:

Hayashi-Mähner, Elke (2013): Überdenken der Existenz einer Wortart Adjektiv – Überlegungen zu einer neuen Abgrenzung von „Adverb“ und „Adjektiv“. In: *Sophia European Studies Series*: Vol. 6, Feb. 2013, S. 23-40.

Hayashi-Mähner, Elke (2011): Vermittlung von Satzstrukturen im DaF-Unterricht – Adjektiv und Adverb. In: *Lingua* No. 22, S. 25-41.