

■ Adverbs of Degree

● What are Adverbs of Degree?

Adverbs of degree are combined with words that express attributes and states, primarily *i*-adjectives and *na*-adjectives, and their basic function is to express the intensity of attributes and states.

(1) *Kono hon wa hijōni omoshiroi* ‘This book is extremely interesting.’

(2) *Tashō kiken’na basho* ‘a somewhat dangerous place.’

In addition, they may also be combined with nouns and adverbs of manner that express characteristics and states.

(3) *Kanojo wa sōtō {bijin/yarite/ōmono} da* ‘she is quite a {beauty/go-getter/big shot}.’

(4) *Kare wa hijōni {otona/shinshi/kodomo} da* ‘he is quite {mature/a gentleman/immature}.’

(5) *Sakuban wa wariiai gussuri nemureta* ‘I was able to sleep relatively soundly.’

When the adverb is combined with a noun, it sometimes requires *no* in between as in:

(6) *{Kanari/Nakanaka/Aru teido/Sōtō} no bijin da* ‘She is {quite/quite/somewhat/quite} a beauty.’

Adverbs are not combined with words that express all-or-nothing attributes or characteristics:

(7) **Hijōni {hitoshii/manmarui/onajida/muryōda}* ‘Extremely {equal/perfectly round/the same/free of charge}.’

In addition, adverbs of degree may be combined with verbs of emotion and sensations, such as *kirau* ‘dislike’, *nikumu* ‘hate’, *yorokobu* ‘rejoice’, *kanashimu* ‘be saddened’, *odoroku* ‘be surprised’, *komaru* ‘be in a bind’, *kandō suru* ‘be touched’, and verbs that express gradual change, such as *futoru* ‘gain weight’, *yaseru* ‘lose weight’, *nobiru* ‘stretch’, *hirogaru* ‘widen’, *susumu* ‘advance’, and *atatamaru* ‘warm up’.

(8) *Tarō wa wagako no tanjō o taisō yorokonnda* ‘Tarō rejoiced greatly at the birth of his child.’

(9) *Daietto no kekka daibu yaseta* ‘Thanks to the diet, I lost considerable weight.’

● Various Adverbs of Degree

Examples of adverbs of degree are *hijōni*, *taihen*, *totemo*, *taisō*, *kiwamete*, *hanahada*, *nakanaka*, *zuibun*, *kanari*, *daibu*, *sōtō*, *wariiai*, *kekkō*, *aru teido*, *tashō*, *sukoshi*, *chotto*, *motto*, *zutto*, *yoru*, *sarani*, *harukani*, *issō*, *mottomo*, *ichiban*. *Amari*, *sahodo*, *son’nani*, *taishite*, *chittomo*, *sukoshimo*, and *zenzen* are examples that are combined with the negative form.

(10) *Kyō wa amari atsuku nai* ‘It is not too hot today.’

Of the adverbs of degree listed above, *zuibun*, *kanari*, *daibu*, *sōtō*, *wariiai*, *kekkō*, *aru teido*, *tashō*, *sukoshi*, *chotto*, and ones that are combined with the negative form, can also express quantities.

(11) *Kyō wa kanari tabeta* ‘I ate quite a lot today.’

(12) *Mikan ga sukoshi nokotteiru* ‘Still some mandarin oranges are left.’

Many of the adverbs of degree that express quantities are combined with nouns that express time and space.

(13) *Sukoshi {ue/hidari/oku/mae} da* ‘It is a little bit {higher/to the left/farther back/to the front}.’

Some adverbs of degree are always involved in comparison.

(14) *Tarō wa Jirō yori zutto se ga takai* ‘Taro is much taller than Jiro.’

(15) *Tarō wa kurasu no naka de ichiban se ga takai* ‘Taro is the tallest in the class.’

Adverbs of degree that express quantities can also appear in sentences of comparison and express the difference between one state and the other.

(16) *Tarō wa Jirō yori sukoshi se ga takai* ‘Taro is a little taller than Jiro.’

Adverbs of degree, especially ones that express higher degree, tend to lose their effect from frequent use, and people look for new ways of expressing the magnitude. Thus, there is a large turnover of expressions. To this day, younger people constantly create new expressions, while many expressions go out of fashion.

→ 様態副詞 Adverbs of Manner (2-B), 陳述副詞 Declarative Adverbs (2-B)

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