

Determiners - Part I

Determiners are words like the, my, this, some, either, every and each. Determiners are not adjectives, but they come at the beginning of noun phrases.

Examples are:

My house

His friend

That tree

This girl

Each man

Every boy

Enough trouble

Determiners can be classified into two main groups:

Group A determiners

Group B determiners

Group A determiners

Group A determiners are of three kinds:

Articles: a, an, the

Possessives: my, your, his, her, their, our, your, whose, one's

Demonstratives: that, this, these, those

Group A determiners are used to identify things. We cannot put two group A determiners together. We can, for example, say *the cat, my cat* or *this cat*, but not *the my cat, my this cat* or *the this cat*.

If we have to put a possessive and an article or a demonstrative together we use the structure *a/this ... of mine/yours* etc.

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He is a friend of mine. (NOT He is a my friend.)

Group B determiners

There are several different kinds of Group B determiners. Most of these are quantifiers. They say how much or many we are thinking / talking about.

Examples are:

Some, any, no

Each, every, either, neither

Much, many, more, most; little, less, least; few, fewer, fewest; enough

All, both, half

What, whatever, which, whichever

One, two, three etc.

Some group B determiners are used with singular nouns. Examples are: each, every, either, neither etc.

Some group B determiners are used with plural nouns. Examples are: many and few

Some are used with uncountable nouns. Examples are: much and less

There are also a few determiners that can be used with more than one kind of noun.

Example: which