

Biliavska A. A.

National Aerospace University “Kharkiv Aviation Institute”

Scientific adviser – Kulikova O. V., PhD in Philology,

Associate Professor of Department of Applied Linguistics

THE MORPHOLOGY OF -LY AND THE CATEGORIAL STATUS OF ‘ADVERBS’ IN ENGLISH

This work explores the morphology of the suffix -ly and its implications for the categorial status of words traditionally labeled as ‘adverbs’ in the English language. While the suffix -ly is commonly associated with adverbs, its usage extends beyond this category, raising questions about the conventional understanding of adverbial morphology. Through a comprehensive analysis of the morphological patterns, syntactic functions, and semantic roles associated with -ly, this thesis aims to shed light on the complex nature of adverbial elements in English.

We may argue that the suffix "-ly" is an inflectional suffix that forms adverbs from adjectives. So, adverbs containing "-ly" are inflected adjectives, and adverbs not containing "-ly" are uninflected adjectives.

The traditional category of adverbs is morphologically non-distinct from the category of adjectives in English. Unlike some languages where adverbs often have a distinct morphological form, in English, many adverbs are formed by adding the suffix "-ly" to adjectives. This morphological process allows adverbs to be derived from adjectives.

For example:

Adjective: quick

Adverb: quickly

However, it's important to note that not all adverbs in English are formed by adding "-ly." Some adverbs have the same form as their corresponding adjectives (e.g., "fast" can be both an adjective and an adverb). Additionally, there are certain irregular adverbs that do not follow the "-ly" pattern (e.g., "well").

This morphological similarity between adjectives and adverbs can sometimes lead to ambiguity or variation in interpretation, and the distinction between the two categories is often more evident in their syntactic and semantic functions within sentences.

In English, many adverbs are indeed formed by adding the suffix "-ly" to adjectives, and those adverbs are morphologically derived from adjectives. For example, "complete" (adjective) becomes "completely" (adverb), and "happy" (adjective) becomes "happily" (adverb).

However, it's also true that not all adverbs follow the "-ly" pattern. Some adverbs have the same form as their corresponding adjectives, and these are often referred to as "flat" adverbs. Examples include "fast," "early," and "hard." In these cases, the adverbial form is identical to the adjective form.

Therefore, adverbs not containing "-ly" are considered uninflected adjectives is a simplification, but it captures the essence of the relationship between adjectives and adverbs in English, particularly in terms of morphology. The distinction between adjectives and adverbs becomes more evident in their syntactic and semantic roles within sentences.

The examination of the morphological patterns, syntactic functions, and semantic roles associated with -ly has led to the recognition that the traditional category of adverbs is morphologically non-distinct from that of adjectives in English. The morphological similarity between adjectives and adverbs, especially in the context of the "-ly" suffix, has been acknowledged as a source of potential ambiguity and variation in interpretation. However, it is emphasized that the true distinction between adjectives and adverbs becomes more apparent when considering their syntactic and semantic roles within sentences.

This study not only advances to our understanding of adverbial morphology but also carries implications for broader linguistic research. Identifying of a unified categorial status challenges conventional linguistic classifications and prompts a reconsideration of language acquisition and language change. By deepening into the complex interplay of morphology, syntax, and semantics, this thesis opens avenues for further research and invites a deeper exploration of the dynamic nature of adjectives and adverbs in the English language.