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Bakalářská práce

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Partial Conversion of Adjectives into Nouns Without the Use of *the*

Částečná konverze adjektiv v substantiva bez užití *the*

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Poděkování

Ráda bych poděkovala Mgr. et Mgr. Jakobovi Slámovi za jeho trpělivost, vstřícnost a cenné rady při konzultacích a za vedení mé bakalářské práce.

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Abstrakt

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na dosud nepopsaný typ částečné syntaktické konverze adjektiv v substantiva, který se vyskytuje například ve větných konstrukcích jako *I like normal* nebo *weird is cool*. Teoretická část práce představí teoretický rámec konstrukční gramatiky, ze kterého bude práce vycházet, a problematiku konverze, především pak částečné konverze adjektiv v substantiva. Tato část také poukáže na různé možnosti analýzy struktur typu *the rich* a *the obvious* (tj. částečná konverze vs. elipsa) a na to, jak je možné tyto struktury popisovat v konstrukční gramatice. Praktická část práce vychází z korpusů InterCorp, Spoken BNC2014 a COCA; analýza vychází ze sto dvaceti dokladů sledovaného jevu nalezených v těchto korpusech. Analytická část práce se v duchu konstrukční gramatiky zaměří na komplexní popis jevu s ohledem na formální, sémantické a referenční rysy, ale také na kontextové aspekty jeho užití.

Klíčová slova: konverze, adjektivum, konstrukce, konstrukční gramatika

Abstract

This bachelor's thesis focuses on a previously unacknowledged type of partial syntactic conversion of adjectives into nouns, which can be found in sentences such as *I like normal* or *weird is cool*. The theoretical section introduces the theoretical frame of construction grammar the thesis is based on, as well as the problematics of conversion, particularly partial conversion of adjectives into nouns. In addition, the theoretical section also discusses multiple possible ways of analyzing structures such as *the rich* and *the obvious* (i.e. the difference between partial conversion vs. ellipsis) and how to describe these structures in terms of construction grammar. The practical section is based on the InterCorp corpus, Spoken BNC2014 and COCA; the analysis draws upon a hundred and twenty examples of the construction in question. The analytical section of the thesis shall focus on the complex descriptions of the phenomenon with regard to its formal, semantic and referential characteristics, as well as on the contextual aspects related to its practical usage.

Key words: conversion, adjective, construction, Construction Grammar

List of abbreviations

BNC2014	Spoken British National Corpus 2014
COCA	Corpus of Contemporary American English
CxG	Construction Grammar

List of tables

Table 1: Examples of constructions (adapted from Goldberg 2006)	21
Table 2: Frequency of adjectives in the sentence-initial position	32

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	9
2. Theoretical background	10
2.1. The noun	10
2.2. The adjective	10
2.3. Ellipsis	12
2.4. Conversion	14
2.4.1. Full conversion of adjectives into nouns	14
2.4.2. Partial conversion of adjectives into nouns	15
2.5. Construction Grammar	18
2.5.1. Basic theory and principles	18
2.5.2. The construction	20
2.5.3. Coercion	22
3. Material & Search	25
3.1. Material	25
3.1.1. InterCorp	25
3.1.2. Spoken British National Corpus 2014	25
3.1.3. Corpus of Contemporary American English	25
3.2. Search	25
3.2.1. The query	26
3.2.2. Excluded instances	28
4. Analysis	30
4.1. Position in the utterance	30
4.1.1. Initial position	30
4.1.2. Final position	33
4.2. Semantic context	34
4.3. Function	36
4.4. Meaning	38
5. Conclusion	40
Sources	44
References	45

Resumé.....	48
Appendix	50

1. Introduction

Conversion, or the process of changing a word's class without altering its form, is a common phenomenon characteristic of the English language, and underlies a significant part of the English vocabulary (see section 2.4.).

The principal goal of this thesis is to discuss and analyze a previously unacknowledged type of conversion of adjectives into nouns. Generally, linguists recognize two distinct types of adjective-to-noun conversion: full and partial. However, this thesis concerns itself with a potential third type, which, while superficially similar to the regular partial conversion, can be distinguished from it by the lack of the definite article *the* immediately preceding the adjective in question, as in *angry is good, angry gets shit done*.¹ As will be demonstrated in the analytical section, this unusual type of partial adjective-to-noun conversion is more likely to occur in certain syntactic constructions than in others, and possesses specific characteristics which will be elaborated upon.

The following theoretical section will introduce the basic terms and concepts relevant to the subject of the thesis, including a brief overview of the nature and syntactic characteristics of the English noun and adjective as well as the process of conversion itself, explaining possible interpretations of conversion and paying particular attention to the partial conversion of adjectives into nouns. This section will also outline the theoretical framework and principles of Construction Grammar, particularly the nature of its basic unit, the construction, and the process of coercion and explain the relevance of this theory to the topic of the thesis. The practical section of the thesis will then dedicate itself to the analysis of 120 examples containing the relevant phenomenon; the examples will be extracted from the parallel corpus InterCorp, the Spoken BNC2014 corpus and the Corpus of Contemporary American English. Finally, the analytical section shall discuss in further detail the exact nature of the phenomenon as seen through the lens of Construction Grammar, as well as describe the characteristics of this phenomenon.

¹ "The Secret of Spoons." *American Gods*, created by Bryan Fuller & Michael Green. Season 1, episode 2. Produced by Living Dead Guy, 2019.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. The noun

According to the traditional “notional” analysis, a noun is a lexical item that “denotes persons, places or things” (Croft 2000: 66), with “things” covering both concrete physical objects (e.g. *book, London, star*) as well as more abstract or intangible concepts (e.g. *victory, management, politics*); as a result, the general academic consensus is that the primary and inherent function of the word class is reference (Baker 2004: 96). Baker (ibid.) agrees that nouns are “particularly well-suited to the job of referring”, but also argues that this characteristic is merely a corollary of the noun’s fundamental nature.

The noun characteristically forms the head of the noun phrase, either alone or accompanied by one or more dependents, such as pre-head adjectival phrases (e.g. *good news*), relative clauses (*people who work*) and determinatives (*a book*) (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 326). In fact, the English nouns as a whole share a general tendency to co-occur with determinatives – grammatical items which always precede the noun and determine the nouns’ relation to the linguistic or situational context in a discourse. Most commonly, indefinite reference is indicated by the indefinite article *a* or *an*, while the definite article *the* is used to mark definite reference (Quirk et al. 1985: 5.10), although other words can also determine nouns, such as *this, that, each* or *some* (Quirk et al. 1985: 5.12). Most, though not all, English nouns are additionally subject to number contrast, meaning that they inflect for number and therefore can occur in two distinct forms: singular and plural.

A noun phrase can take on a number of syntactic roles; in fact, it can function as any of the clause constituents, appearing variously as a subject, an object, a complement, or even an adverbial. The only function a noun may never take is that of the verb, though it is frequently paired with a copular verb as a predicative complement (e.g. *she is a genius*) (Quirk et al. 1985: 2.25, 5.1; Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 326).

2.2. The adjective

Adjectives are lexical items that are believed by many scholars to function typically as modifiers, attributing various properties, traits, qualities and characteristics to whatever entity or object they refer to (Sasse 2015: 183); however, others reject the notion of the adjective being inherently modifying. Baker (2004: 16) in particular prefers to define the word class negatively, focusing on the traits it lacks by juxtaposing adjectives against both nouns and verbs – unlike nouns, adjectives are not inherently referential, and unlike verbs, they are not inherently

predicative. Though adjectives are frequently used as modifiers, Baker (2004: 191) believes that this feature is derived, as opposed to basic and defining.

In contrast to the noun, the adjectival phrase can appear only in a limited number of syntactic functions: it can be attributive (*a black cat*), or it can act as a subject complement (*she is tall*), an object complement (*I consider him intelligent*) or it can form a verbless adverbial clause (*the girl died young*). Notably, each of these adjectival functions can also be filled by a noun or a noun phrase (*an alley cat; she is a tall woman; I consider him a genius; she died a young girl*), whereas according to Dušková et al. (2009: 6.2), the reverse is not true – while a noun can replace an adjective, an adjective cannot supplant a noun, and cannot occur as a subject or an object of a sentence. However, the phenomenon discussed in this thesis calls this statement into question: in clauses such as *dead is better* (COCA)² or the already mentioned example *angry is good, angry gets shit done*, there are no nouns that could viably be considered candidates for the role of the subject, with this role being fulfilled by the adjectives *dead* and *angry*, respectively, instead. Similarly, in *I like normal* (COCA) the transitive verb *to like* requires a direct object, a position which in this particular instance is filled by the adjective *normal* as opposed to the expected noun or noun phrase.

It is usually impossible to recognize an adjective in isolation as an adjective, as no universal identifying trait applicable to every single adjective can be identified (Quirk et al. 1985: 7.1). However, there do seem to exist a few general characteristics shared by the prototypical members of the word class, which Quirk et al. (1985: 7.2) list as follows: Firstly, an adjective can freely occur in an attributive position, modifying a noun it precedes (e.g. *an ugly painting, red shoes*). Secondly, it can instead occur in a predicative function, serving as the subject complement or object complement (*the house is old, she considered him intelligent*). The third adjectival feature amounts to having the ability to undergo premodification by the adverb *very* (*we were very pleased with the results*). Finally, it is possible to subject the adjective to a process known as gradation, by which the adjective is inflected or paired with a modifying adverb in order to indicate a relative degree of the characteristic it denotes. Depending on the type of inflection or adverb, the resulting form is either called the comparative, which indicates greater or more intense quality or degree relative to some other comparator (e.g. *bigger, more intelligent, less beautiful*), or the superlative, which expresses the greatest or most intense quality or degree relative to all other comparators (e.g. *biggest, most intelligent, least beautiful*). In addition to these four prototypical traits, Aarts (2007: 106) and

² *The Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA) is available online at <<https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>>.

Maling (1983: 266) both suggest an additional fifth criterion, the *un*-prefixation: in order to reverse the meaning of an adjective, the negative prefix *un*- can be added (e.g. *able* – *unable*, *usual* – *unusual*, *likely* – *unlikely*).

It must be noted that none of these characteristics are by any means universal, and not all lexical items which are traditionally held to be adjectives possess all of them; for instance, it is entirely possible for an adjective to commonly occur in a predicative position but never in the attributive one (e.g. *afraid*) or vice versa (e.g. *utter*); indeed, in a number of languages adjectives occur exclusively as modifiers, but never as predicates (Sasse 2015: 183). Furthermore, those adjectives which describe some absolute or extreme quality (e.g. *perfect*, *absolute*, *infinite*) are neither gradable nor subject to premodification by *very* (Quirk et al. 1985: 7.3). Negation via *un*-prefixation also does not apply to a significant number of adjectives which employ a different negative prefix (e.g. *possible* – *impossible*, *accurate* – *inaccurate*, *legal* – *illegal*, *regular* – *irregular*, *political* – *apolitical*, *similar* – *dissimilar*); furthermore, on its own the presence of the *un*- prefix is not always a reliable indicator of an adjective, as the prefix can also be applied to certain verbs in order to negate their meaning (*do* – *undo*, *fold* – *unfold*, *pack* – *unpack*, *clench* – *unclench*). As Plag (2003: 32) points out however, there is a semantic difference between the adjectival use of the *un*- prefix and the verbal one. Deriving an adjective from another by attaching the *un*- prefix to it (e.g. *happy* – *unhappy*, *healthy* – *unhealthy*) results in the negation of the original meaning, and the newly created adjective now functions as the negative counterpart to the adjective from which it has been derived (*unhappy* ‘not happy’, *unhealthy* ‘not healthy’); and this negating interpretation of the *un*- prefix applies exclusively to adjectives (Maling 1983: 266). On the other hand, the derived *un*- verbs “denote reversal or deprivation” (Plag 2003: 32) as opposed to negation. For instance, the verb *undo* is used not in the sense of ‘not do’, but ‘reverse what has already been done’; and *unfold* does not mean ‘not fold’, but ‘open that which has been folded’.

2.3. Ellipsis

In order to avoid redundancy and reduce repetition in a text or discourse, one might use ellipsis. The term refers to the omission of those words in an utterance which are predictable or obvious from the co-text or extratextual context; it is crucial that these elided elements be precisely recoverable if necessary, and the resulting “complete” sentence must have the exact same meaning as the previous “incomplete” one. In other words, there must be no doubt as to which words are to be recovered, and this word-for-word recoverability is a key trait of ellipsis.

However, as ellipsis relies heavily on context, both linguistic and extralinguistic, sometimes more than one word or phrase can potentially fill the grammatical “gap” in a given sentence (Quirk et al. 1985: 12.33).

Ellipsis requires an antecedent – a word, a phrase or a clause, the presence of which makes the ellipsis interpretable from the context (Gandón-Chapela 2020: 2). The antecedent generally precedes the elided element (e.g. *her house is the oldest (house) in this part of the town*), although it occasionally occurs after it (*although he skipped the first two (tasks), he did do the rest of the tasks*); the latter example also shows that the antecedent may occur in a clause separate from the one containing the elided element (Lobeck 1995: 21). Sometimes the interpretation of the antecedent stems not from the co-text, but from the extralinguistic context; Khullar, Majmundar & Shrivastava (2020: 36) provide an example of a customer in a flower shop pointing towards roses:

(1) A: *I will take two (roses).*

In this instance, no linguistic antecedent precedes the ellipsis; rather, it is dependent on extralinguistic context.

As with many other linguistic phenomena, the precise boundaries of ellipsis are fuzzy and difficult to define (Khullar et al. 2020: 36), and occasionally it can be problematic or even impossible to distinguish between instances of ellipsis and similarly behaving phenomena, specifically pro-form substitution, as shown in the following examples:

(2) *Our house is quite different from his (?house)* (Quirk et al. 1985: 12.39).

(3) *Many buildings were damaged, but few (?buildings) were destroyed* (ibid.).

In example (2), the pronoun *his* can be interpreted in two ways: either as the determiner of the noun *house* and therefore a dependent possessive pronoun, or as an independent possessive pronoun which stands in for the redundant noun phrase *his house*. On the first interpretation, *his* would be an instance of ellipsis, while in the second one it instead becomes a pro-form. Similarly, *few* in example (3) can be understood as either a determinator or as a pro-form with the meaning of *few buildings*. The unclear division between ellipsis and substitution arises because the determinative form and the pro-form of both *his* and *few* happen to be identical (Quirk et al. 1985: 12.39), leading to ellipsis and pro-form substitution becoming indistinguishable from one another.

Noun ellipsis or nominal ellipsis is a type of ellipsis by which the head noun of a noun phrase is omitted due to the existence of an antecedent which makes the presence of the elided element unnecessary. Noun ellipsis can be introduced after a number of elements, including

some adjectives (e.g. *the Red Sea is the saltiest (sea) in the world*), possessives (*let's go to Sam's (place) tonight*), cardinal and ordinal numbers (*we have two keys but we need three (keys); I didn't catch the first bus and had to wait for the second (bus)*) and quantifiers such as *some* (*if you want tea, I can make some (tea) for you*). It is however necessary to distinguish between nominal ellipsis and nominalization or conversion; see section 2.4.2.1.

2.4. Conversion

One of the most common word-forming processes in the English language, conversion occurs when an item which belongs to a particular word class – most commonly a noun, an adjective, or a verb (Lieber 2004: 89) – is transferred to a different word class, acquiring the syntactic functions of the members of this word class without being subjected to an overt change in form (Bauer 2004: 36; Lieber 2004: 89; Valera 1999: 182). In other words, the item in question undergoes what Martsa (2013: 61) calls “an unmarked change”, meaning that it does not acquire a new affix and its phonetic realization remains the same or undergoes only minor alterations, such as stress shift (Plag 2005: 107; Valera 1999: 183). As a result, it is impossible to recognize the word class of the item based on its form alone, making it necessary to examine the item in the surrounding syntactic context. Depending on which attributes of the new word class are adopted by the converted lexical item, it is possible to speak of two different types of conversion: full and partial. Fully converted items adopt both the syntactic and the morphological attributes of the target word class and become its fully-fledged members; in contrast, partial conversion requires that the items acquire the syntactic attributes, but not the morphological ones (Valera 1999: 183).

Although almost any word or word class can be subject to conversion, including adverbs, conjunctions and modal verbs (Dušková et al. 2009: 2.24) and even affixes and interjections (García Velasco 2009: 1166), for the purpose of this thesis only the conversion of adjectives into nouns shall be discussed in greater depth.

2.4.1. Full conversion of adjectives into nouns

An adjective that has been fully converted into a noun – or in other words been “substantivized” (Malchukov 2004: 6) or “nominalized” (Bussmann 1998: 804) – adopts both the syntactic and the morphological properties that are typical of a noun. Most obviously, it newly requires a determiner (*an adult, the criminal*), and it also becomes capable of forming a plural (e.g. *adult – adults, criminal – criminals*). Certain fully converted adjectives actually

occur primarily or even exclusively in their plural form, for instance the words *initials*, *chemicals*, and *sweets* (Dušková et al. 2009: 2.22.1).³ Having become a fully-fledged noun, the converted adjective loses its adjectival properties (see section 2.2.) and consequently no longer possesses the ability to undergo gradation.

2.4.2. Partial conversion of adjectives into nouns

More common than full conversion is partial conversion. Unlike fully converted adjectives, those which have been converted partially do not acquire the morphological characteristics of a noun, only the syntactic ones; as a result, they cannot form a plural, and their nominal status depends on the surrounding syntactic context and the presence of the determiner *the*. In contrast to full conversion, partial adjective-to-noun conversion is subject to certain semantic limitations and has a “rather fixed form and meaning” (Günther 2018: 81).

Partially converted adjectives can be divided into two general categories: those instantiating the Abstract Construction and those instantiating the Human Construction. The Abstract Construction refers to some uncountable, abstract concept (e.g. *the beautiful*, *the dark*, *the occult*) and is always treated as a singular noun phrase (*the occult has always fascinated me*). In contrast, adjectives which represent the Human Construction denote a group or class of people, all of whom share one major characteristic (*the rich*, *the courageous*, *the blind*) (Günther 2018: 82). The majority of instances of the Human Construction are used generically and behave as a plural noun phrase (*the dead have no rights*), although under certain circumstances such a construction may also be used to refer to a contextually defined subgroup of the denoted class (*the injured were being tended to by the nurses*) (ibid.) or even to a single specific person with a distinguishable characteristic (*the accused was found guilty*); in the latter case, the construction is treated as a singular noun phrase instead.

A partially converted adjective does not adopt the morphological characteristics of a noun, instead retaining its adjectival ones (see section 2.2.): most obviously, it may still undergo gradation and can therefore occur in the comparative and superlative form (*the richer*, *the*

³ In addition to the examples listed above, Dušková et al. (2009: 2.22.1) also include the words *eatables* and *valuables* among instances of fully converted adjectives which occur exclusively in the plural form. However, Lieber (2016: 81-84) argues that these nouns, rather than being instances of converted adjectives, have actually been created using the nominalizing suffix *-ables*. Having extensively compared the behaviour of items with *-ables* to other nouns created via conversion, Lieber concludes that it would be incorrect to approach this suffix as a combination of the suffix *-able* and the plural suffix *-s*, as nouns ending in *-ables* rarely, if ever, occur in their singular form, and if they do, then they differ in word class and meaning (e.g. *desirables* (n.) – *desirable* (adj.)) (ibid.).

richest), and it may still acquire adverbial modifiers, including – but not limited to – *very* (*the very rich, the desperately poor, the openly distrustful*) (Günther 2018: 87).

2.4.2.1. Partial conversion versus noun ellipsis

The exact nature of the process of conversion has not yet been fully understood, and as such it has been subject to many different interpretations. When it comes to partial adjective-to-noun conversion in particular, there has been an ongoing debate regarding the potential involvement of ellipsis (see section 2.3.), which is usually suggested as an explanation if a sentence is, or appears to be, missing some obligatory grammatical element (Quirk et al. 1985: 12.34). However, it is debatable whether this explanation can also be applied to the specific type of partial conversion discussed in the thesis, or to partial conversion in general.

Günther (2018: 78), for instance, argues that what is generally perceived as a partially converted adjective is in fact a “nounless noun phrase” – that is, a noun phrase headed by an elided but not actually absent noun, making partial adjective-to-noun conversion an instance of ellipsis as opposed to actual conversion. The ellipsis interpretation postulates that while the phonological representation of the nominal element is silent, the noun itself remains present in the clause; therefore, the seemingly independent adjective actually continues to act as a modifier of the elided noun, keeping its adjectival morpho-syntactic properties (Günther 2018: 87), including – as demonstrated by the following examples – the ability to undergo gradation and exist in its comparative and superlative forms, as well as take on adverbial modifiers:

(4) ... *the wealthier* have an obligation to help *the weaker* and *the poorer*
(Günther 2018: 87).

(5) *New aid to the poorest* is given as grants, not loans (Günther 2018: 88).

(6) ... *quantum theory*, whose characteristic it is to replace the continuous by the discrete, *the smoothly varying* by the fitful (ibid.).

In contrast, Khullar et al. (2020: 37–38) explicitly reject the notion that sentences such as *we should help the poor* contain an instance of nominal ellipsis, stating that in this particular case, *poor* is instead classified as a nominalized adjective with a generic reference meaning *poor people*. Van Craenenbroeck & Merchant (2013: 732) also attempt to precisely define the boundary between nominal ellipsis and nominalized adjectives using the example sentence *the poor deserve our help*, providing a list of simple tests which can be used to prove that the word *poor* featured in the sentence is a nominalized adjective as opposed to an instance of ellipsis. Additionally, they expand on some of the common tests which can be used to differentiate

between the two phenomena, including the need for an antecedent in the case of ellipsis or the restricted range of meanings of nominalized adjectives. According to Van Craenenbroeck & Merchant (ibid.), *poor* does not require an overt nominal antecedent and can be used “out of the blue” without any preceding linguistic context, whereas the opposite can be said for most instances of ellipsis; additionally, the range of its meanings is restricted compared to when it is used as a modifier – whereas the adjective *poor* can be used to mean either ‘lacking in material possessions’ or ‘pitiful, deserving of sympathy’, only the former definition applies to its nominalized counterpart. Furthermore, Van Craenenbroeck & Merchant (ibid.) also state that a nominalized adjective cannot form the comparative or the superlative because of the loss of adjectival morpho-syntactic properties, and is similarly rendered unable to form a plural using plural nominal morphology (i.e. by adding the suffix *-s*). The universal applicability of these two final tests is debatable however. As mentioned in section 2.4.2. and shown in examples (4) and (5), partially converted adjectives preceded by the determiner *the* do in fact still possess adjectival morpho-syntactic properties and can therefore form the comparative and the superlative, which Günther uses to support the ellipsis hypothesis; and the plural form test does not yield a meaningful result in this particular case, because the sentence uses *the poor* in a collective sense, which triggers plural agreement between the subject and the predicate and prevents the adjective *poor* from acquiring the plural suffix *-s* and assuming a plural form (ibid.).

Other sources directly oppose the ellipsis interpretation. As stated by Quirk et al. (1985: 12.35), while partially converted adjectives such as *the poor* presuppose the existence of some semantically general noun, such as *people* or *ones* (e.g. *the poor (people/ones) need help*), if this noun were to be actually inserted into the sentence (*the poor people/ones need help*), it would result in a change from a general meaning to a more specific one. As mentioned in section 2.3., one of the defining characteristics of ellipsis explicitly states that inserting the recovered element must not alter the meaning of the original sentence and that both the original sentence and the one with the inserted element must have the exact same meaning, and Quirk et al. argue that the insertion of the general noun *people* alters the meaning and therefore violates this constraint. However, Günther (2018: 96–98) states that although both the Human and the Abstract Construction prefer to omit the lexical noun (ibid.: 97), neither of them forbids the presence of the lexical noun altogether. The meaning of the Human Construction in particular, Günther claims, remains unaffected by the insertion of the noun *people*, as the noun is general enough that its insertion does not violate the rules of ellipsis:

(7) “*Already*”, complained *The Seaman* after six months of fighting, “*the poor (people) of this country are beginning to feel the effects of the greedy ship-owners’ demands*” (Günther 2018: 96).

Regarding the Abstract Construction, Günther (2018: 98) suggests the mass noun *stuff* as the abstract counterpart to *people*, as *stuff* is similarly mostly devoid of lexical meaning. It also often occurs in sentences which are paralleled by instances of the Abstract Construction, as shown in the following examples:

(8) ...*put religion first, and the social stuff second* (ibid.).

(9) ...*or that religion may in fact be a necessary part of the social (?stuff)* (ibid.).

According to Günther, the above examples demonstrate that the position of the head noun in these constructions remains available to lexical nouns without affecting the meaning, countering Quirk et al.’s argument.

2.5. Construction Grammar

2.5.1. Basic theory and principles

Construction Grammar, commonly abbreviated as CxG, is an umbrella term denoting a family of cognitive approaches to grammar, all of which are based around the same fundamental idea: that language and linguistic knowledge are built upon a large network of overlapping linguistic patterns, known as constructions (Fried 2015: 974). Constructions (see section 2.5.2.) are hypothesized to be the basic units of language (Goldberg 1995: 4); according to CxG, any given utterance represents a combination of multiple different constructions. Constructions exist at every level of language, and in fact the entire language system could be said to be emergent exclusively from the user’s experience with constructions (Diessel 2015: 6; Goldberg 2003: 223; Stefanowitsch 2011: 20), considering that even semantically opaque idioms can be potentially deconstructed into more regular or productive schematic structures (Hilpert 2014: 5-6).

In certain respects, CxG is not too different from the traditional mainstream generative approach (Goldberg 2003: 219), agreeing with its belief that language is a cognitive system in which established structures are combined to create novel ones, allowing the speakers to apply their linguistic knowledge to new situations and experiences (Goldberg 2019: 2). From this point onwards however the two approaches diverge. Unlike the generative approach, which sidelines linguistic irregularities and semantic and discourse functions in favor of analyzing

only the formal aspects of linguistic structures (Goldberg 2003: 219), CxG takes a more holistic stance, perceiving all dimensions of language – be it syntax, semantics, morphology, pragmatics or phonology – as equally important to the creation, shaping and understanding of linguistic expressions (Fried 2015: 974–975). In addition to focusing on the linguistic knowledge itself, CxG also analyses the acquisition, storage and processing of this knowledge, as well as the process of accessing it during real-time comprehension and production (Dąbrowska 2016: 483).

As stated above, the term *Construction Grammar* does not refer to a single monolithic theory, but rather to a group of individual approaches which differ from each other in relatively major aspects, such as their methodological approaches, how usage-based they are or their primary focus; for instance, Goldberg’s cognitive construction grammar mostly works with valency and argument structure, whereas Croft’s approach instead analyses language typology as perceived through the lens of CxG (cf. Croft 2000). Ultimately however, most of these approaches are based around the same underlying principles. Goldberg (2013: 15–16) recognizes and lists these principles as follows: Firstly, all construction grammarians believe that the entirety of all linguistic knowledge is represented by constructions, which are understood as learned conventional pairings of form and meaning; the entirety of an individual’s linguistic knowledge is contained in their mental lexicon of constructions, known as a construct-i-con, and new constructions develop out of existing constructions stored in this mental lexicon (Bybee 2013: 63). Secondly, form and meaning are directly and inseparably linked; as CxG does not recognize syntactic derivation, every single construction has an idiosyncratic meaning, and a change in form will automatically result in a change in meaning and vice versa. For instance, consider the following example sentences:

(10) *Christopher Columbus discovered America.*

(11) *America was discovered by Christopher Columbus.*

Examples (10) and (11) could be argued to be semantically identical, with the only difference between them being that (10) presents the information using the active voice, whereas (11) uses the passive voice instead. However, in accordance with the second principle, construction grammarians argue that active and passive versions of the same proposition are actually instances of two separate constructions; though (10) and (11) appear to express the exact same meaning, their content actually differs from the standpoint of pragmatics. The third principle listed by Goldberg states that constructions, be they words, phrases or morphemes, are organized into a complex network based on taxonomic relations and inheritance links. Finally, according to Goldberg’s fourth principle, there is no set of universal constructions, be it cross-

linguistically or intra-linguistically, and any and all generalizations across languages are merely the result of common cognitive strategies.

2.5.2. The construction

The central notion of CxG is that of the construction. Although the term is not unheard of in different linguistic contexts, in CxG it is understood as a “learned pairing of form and meaning” (Boas 2013: 234). Akin to traditional grammar, CxG adopts the idea that a linguistic form and its meaning and communicative function are closely intertwined (Fried 2015: 974), and a construction therefore represents a union of form and meaning, with form referring to “any combination of syntactic, morphological, or prosodic patterns” and meaning being understood as a combination of “lexical semantics, pragmatics, and discourse structure” (Fried 2015: 975). It is a learned, automatized linguistic pattern which can be further combined with various other complementary linguistic patterns of varying complexity and abstraction to create a linguistic expression. Langacker (1991: 15) describes the construction as a “thoroughly mastered structure, i.e. one that a speaker can activate as a preassembled whole without attending to the specifics of its internal composition”; similarly, Bybee (2013: 51), following the usage-based premise that linguistic structure is formed by the repetition of certain linguistic patterns in language use, characterizes constructions as “chunks” – sequences of words or morphemes that “have been used often enough to be accessed together”, meaning that they can be retrieved from the mental lexicon as a whole with no need for parsing or deconstructing of the chunk into individual parts (Divjak & Caldwell-Harris 2015: 61). However, the terms *chunk* and *construction* should not be treated as interchangeable.

In spite of the seemingly straightforward definition, constructions can range greatly in complexity: a word, a word class, a phrase, a morpheme or a fixed expression can all count as individual constructions, as summarized by Goldberg (2006: 5) in the following table:

Morpheme	e.g. <i>pre-</i> , <i>-ing</i>
Word	e.g. <i>avocado</i> , <i>anaconda</i> , <i>and</i>
Complex word	e.g. <i>daredevil</i> , <i>shoo-in</i>
Complex word (partially filled)	e.g. [N-s] (for regular plurals)
Idiom (filled)	e.g. <i>going great guns</i> , <i>give the Devil his due</i>
Idiom (partially filled)	e.g. <i>jog <someone's> memory</i> , <i>send <someone> to the cleaners</i>
Covariational Conditional	The Xer the Yer (e.g. <i>the more you think about it, the less you understand</i>)
Ditransitive (double object)	Subj V Obj ₁ Obj ₂ (e.g. <i>he gave her a fish taco</i> ; <i>he baked her a muffin</i>)
Passive	Subj aux V _{pp} (PP _{by}) (e.g. <i>the armadillo was hit by a car</i>)

Table 1: Examples of constructions (adapted from Goldberg 2006)

As shown in the table, even abstract grammatical processes, such as the forming of the passive voice, are included as examples of individual constructions. The term *construction* is therefore a broad one, and its abstractness distinguishes it from chunks, which are composed of concrete words or morphemes.

As stated in section 2.5.1., CxG takes into account all linguistic dimensions, from syntax through pragmatics to prosody, and operates on the assumption that constructions exist on all the traditional levels of linguistic description; a construction could be seen as a sign or a symbolic unit which integrates the features of these linguistic dimensions into a single unified whole (Fried 2015: 975). Therefore, it is possible to describe the construction as multidimensional. However, a construction is simultaneously also more than a sum of its individual parts: for a construction to be recognized as such, at least some aspects of either its form or its meaning should not be predictable from its component parts (Goldberg, 1995: 4). To support this claim, Goldberg selects the following sentence as an example:

(12) *Sally baked her sister a cake* (Goldberg 1995: 141).

The usually monotransitive verb *to bake* in this sentence is used ditransitively (see also section 2.5.3.), meaning that it requires both a direct object (*a cake*) and an indirect object (*her sister*), which contributes to the alteration in its meaning. As Goldberg (ibid.) points out, the only possible meaning of this sentence is ‘Sally baked a cake with the intention of giving it to her sister’, not ‘Sally baked the cake so that her sister wouldn’t have to bake it’, or ‘Sally baked the cake as a demonstration of cake-baking’, or ‘Sally baked a cake for herself because her sister wanted her to have one’. The basic, most general meaning of *to bake* is essentially ‘to create

something’, but when the verb appears in the ditransitive construction as in example (1), it instead gains the meaning of ‘to create something with the intention of giving it to someone else’ (ibid.). Kim & Michaelis (2020: 14) discuss another example:

(13) *What is that fly doing in my soup?*

Were this sentence taken at face value, it would be deemed a literal inquiry about the activities of the fly in the soup, whereas, as Kim & Michaelis (ibid.) state, it is actually meant as an exclamation of astonishment and disgust; the meaning is once again unpredictable and cannot be derived from the form alone. From the standpoint of pragmatics, it could also be interpreted as an implicit order (i.e. to force the waitstaff to immediately attend to the speaker and bring a new plate of soup), as opposed to an actual question.

Constructions are organized in intricate, highly structured networks based primarily on their taxonomic relations, as well as their complexity, abstractness and schematicity (Diessel 2015: 297). The construction network, or “construct-i-con” (Goldberg 2003: 219), arises partly from simple constructions, such as individual words and morphemes, being connected to more complex ones, and partly from schematic constructions being created by generalizations over specific constructions. Thus, grammar can be viewed as the cognitive organization of one’s experience with language, and as a structured inventory of constructions (Michaelis 2006: 73).

2.5.3. Coercion

A term of central importance in CxG, coercion refers to a process whereby a particular construction “coerces” a lexical item to behave in such a way as to accommodate the needs of the construction; in other words, there is a mismatch (Lauwers & Willems 2011: 1219) between the meaning of a lexical item and the morphosyntactic context in which the item is embedded, forcing the lexical item to undergo a change in meaning in order to conform to the morphosyntactic context (Michaelis 2004: 25). The new semantic interpretation of the item must be related to the original one (Goldberg 1995: 159).

According to traditional grammar, a double object construction, under which fall sentences such as *he gave her a fish taco* or *he baked her a muffin* (see table 1), is simply based around a ditransitive verb which requires two objects. Meanwhile, from the perspective of CxG the verb is actually combined with a double object construction, which requires two objects, and the construction coerces the verb to take two objects at once. This applies even if the verb in question usually has a different valency frame, such as the typically monotransitive verb

bake, which has been coerced to behave as a ditransitive verb in the example sentence *he baked her a muffin* to suit the needs of the double object construction.

Another example of a construction is the caused-motion construction. As the term implies, the basic meaning of this construction is ‘to cause something to be somewhere by moving it’, as in *he put it there*. Similarly to the double object construction, caused-motion construction is also capable of “overriding” the typical valency of the verb, coercing the verb into a causative interpretation:

(14) *He sneezed his tooth across the table* (Goldberg 2006: 6).

(15) *They laughed the poor guy out of the room* (Goldberg 1995: 152).

Both *sneeze* and *laugh* typically behave intransitively (i.e. *she sneezed, we laughed*), but due to the influence of the caused-motion construction which combines each of these verbs with an adverbial of place (*across the table, out of the room*), both verbs are forced to adopt a different valency and become complex-transitive.

Verbs are not the only items to be affected by coercion. Consider the following uses of the nouns *mug* and *backpack*:

(16) *You broke her mug.*

(17) *Bring your backpack tomorrow.*

However, Sláma (2020: 448) shows both of these nouns in different contexts, specifically combined with an *of*-phrase:

(18) *He'd return with a mug of tea.*

(19) *I know this individual had a backpack of explosives.*

In examples (16) and (17), *mug* and *backpack* simply denote a physical object with no other connotations, but in (18) and (19), both nouns have been combined with an *of*-phrase (*of tea, of explosives*), and the presence of this particular complement forces both nouns to adopt the container interpretation.

Similarly, Hilpert (2014: 17) mentions the individuation construction, where usually uncountable nouns are coerced into the plural:

(18) *Three beers please!*

The noun *beer* is usually a mass noun, and therefore only occurs in the singular; however, the individuation construction reinterprets the noun to mean ‘a unit (e.g. a glass) of beer’, as

opposed to referring to the alcoholic drink itself, therefore allowing for the existence of the plural form *beers*.

3. Material & Search

The previous sections have introduced the theoretical background and terms relevant to the topic of this study – partially converted adjectives unpreceded by the determiner *the*. The following chapters will elaborate on the data employed in the analysis of the phenomenon and discuss the process of extracting the data.

3.1. Material

The thesis and its research draw upon a corpus-based selection of 120 examples of partially converted adjectives that are not paired with the definite determiner *the*. The examples have been selected from multiple corpora, namely the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), the parallel corpus InterCorp, and the Spoken British National Corpus 2014. In the case of InterCorp, the examples have been extracted using the KonText query interface.

3.1.1. InterCorp

Part of the Czech National Corpus project, InterCorp is a parallel synchronic corpus which contains samples from fiction, magazines, official EU documents and the Bible, as well as a significantly large subsection of film subtitles.⁴

The study analyses data taken from the newest version of the corpus, InterCorp v13, which has been accessed via the open-source corpus query interface KonText.

3.1.3. Corpus of Contemporary American English

The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) remains the most widely used corpus of contemporary American English, with over one billion words of text from across multiple genres, including fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, academic texts, as well as TV and film subtitles, internet blogs and web pages.⁵

3.1.2. Spoken British National Corpus 2014

The Spoken British National Corpus 2014 (BNC2014) is an online collection of transcripts of over twelve hundred conversations in contemporary British English (cf. Love et al. 2017). The conversations were recorded in informal settings between the years 2012 and 2016 and took place among friends and family members, therefore offering the users an

⁴ The InterCorp corpus is available at <<https://intercorp.korpus.cz/>>.

⁵ The Corpus of Contemporary American English is available at <<https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>>.

unparalleled selection of authentic contemporary spoken British English.⁶ Though relatively small in size, the informality of its content makes BNC2014 a valuable resource, considering the borderline colloquial nature of partially converted adjectives without *the*.

3.2. Search

The aim of this study is to analyze the phenomenon of partially converted adjectives unaccompanied by the determiner *the* using examples taken from the corpora introduced above. In order to locate and extract the examples from the corpora, it was necessary to search each corpus using a query which explicitly excluded the presence of the determiner *the* before the adjective; additional corrections and adjustments which have been made to the individual queries will be detailed in the following sections. Afterwards, the remaining results were sorted manually.

3.2.1. The query

The primary task of the query is to find instances of adjectives that are not preceded by the determiner *the*. Additionally, two types of queries were used to find these instances: the first query required the adjective to be positioned at the beginning of the utterance and followed by a verb, while the second query placed the adjective at the end of the utterance immediately after a verb. Besides these restrictions, sometimes further adjustments had to be made to the query in order to narrow down the search and allow for manual sorting.

3.2.1.1. InterCorp

In the case of InterCorp, adjectives located at the beginning of an utterance were found using the following query:

```
<s>[tag="J.*" & lemma!="many|such|several|most|few|much"] [tag="V.*" & tag!="VBG"]
```

The words *many*, *such*, *several*, *most*, *few* and *much*, which are marked as adjectives by the corpus, had to be excluded from the query, as in most cases they functioned as determiners or pronouns (e.g. *Many have gone unrecorded...*; *Such was their prestige...*). The present participle also had to be excluded from the position of the verb in order to avoid examples in

⁶ The Spoken British National Corpus is available at <<http://corpora.lancs.ac.uk/bnc2014/>>.

which it functions as either an adjective (*wild yowling noises of pipes and strings*) or a noun (*furious barking alternating with whining could be heard*).

The second query searched for adjectives located at the very end of an utterance which were immediately preceded by a verb:

```
[tag="V.*" &
lemma!="be|become|smell|look|grow|get|go|taste|sound|feel|seem|fall|stay|turn|r
emain|set|consider|prove"] [tag="J.*"] </s>
```

As shown in the query, a number of common copular verbs, including *smell*, *feel*, *stay* or *turn*, had to be excluded in order to limit the presence of adjectives used as complements (*look happy*, *grow strong*) and instances of passive voice (*got caught*).

3.2.1.2. BNC2014

The queries used in Spoken BNC2014 had a similar structure, with the first also looking for sentences beginning with an adjective without *the* which is immediately followed by a verb:

```
<u> [pos="J.*"] [pos="V.*"] []* </u>
```

Because of the relatively small size of BNC2014, this particular query yielded 681 results, allowing for a quick manual search.

Determiner-less adjectives located at the end of utterances were found using the following query:

```
<u> []* [pos="V.*" &
lemma!="be|become|smell|look|grow|get|go|taste|sound|feel|stay|seem|fall|stay|t
urn"] [pos="J.*"] </u>
```

Similarly to InterCorp, the second query also required the exclusion of common copular verbs such as *be*, *become* or *get*, limiting the number of instances where adjectives were used as complements.

3.2.1.3. COCA

An attempt was made to search the COCA corpus using the following query, which once again searches for standalone adjectives placed at the very beginning of an utterance:

```
. ADJ VERB
```

However, this query produced 325 hits, none of which were instances of the phenomenon sought after, as they included phrases such as *easier said than done*, *easy come easy go*, or *delicious served with warm corn sticks*. Therefore the query was made to be more general and to only search for adjectives followed by some form of the verb *be*:

. ADJ BE

The query used to look for adjectives in the final position did not differ much from those used in both InterCorp and BNC2014:

VERB ADJ .

As expected, the first 100 resulting utterances were examples of complements or passive constructions in the vein of *look good*, *come true* or *get hurt*. Expanding the number of hits to 1,000 produced more examples of complements still, and as COCA unfortunately does not allow access to more than 1,000 hits without a license, no examples of adjectives without *the* located at the end of an utterance could be directly extracted from this corpus. The three examples of this structure found in the appendix were extracted during unrelated previous searches of the corpus, and the example *simple is different from easy* has been found indirectly while looking for adjectives at the beginning of an utterance.

3.2.2. Excluded instances

Although the corpora listed above have provided a number of instances of the studied phenomenon, an even greater number has been excluded. As stated above, the restrictions placed on the queries (see sections 3.2.1.1, 3.2.1.2 and 3.2.1.3) are not sufficient to remove all unwanted constructions, necessitating manual sorting.

The two most often excluded types of adjectives were those describing colors (e.g. *I like green*) and those which denoted languages (e.g. *she spoke broken French*); while these adjectives are indeed frequently used as modifiers (e.g. *a green carpet*; *a French physician*), in instances such as these they are generally agreed to be nouns. Instances which were also excluded include utterances which followed the *X is X* (or *X means X*) pattern, such as *wet is wet*, *dead is dead*, *scary is scary* or *free means free*, as these simply repeat the adjective instead of placing it into a new context. Another type of excluded instances were those which explicitly discussed the meaning or use of the adjective on a metalevel (e.g. *stupid meant a lack of intelligence* (InterCorp), *dead means he's gone away* (COCA)).

Finally, a few more instances had to be excluded from the analysis on the basis of certain dictionaries, specifically the Cambridge Dictionary,⁷ according to which the given adjective is actually a noun as opposed to an adjective:

*“Like that yeah, yes yeah yes that’s true” “That will cause **upset**” “Mmm yes but I’ve told you to” (BNC2014)*

*Paradoxically, being deaf doesn’t make quietness any less attractive, but rather the reverse. Aural experience is made up of quiet, sounds and noise. **Quiet** is neutral, the stand-by state. (InterCorp)*

⁷ The Cambridge Dictionary is available online at <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>>. Last accessed 31 May 2021.

4. Analysis

The data extracted from the corpora have led to certain conclusions regarding the general characteristics and tendencies of the phenomenon.

4.1. Position in the utterance

4.1.1. Initial position

First of all, there is the typical position of these adjectives in an utterance. The majority of the examples – 100 out of 120 – are found at the beginning of the sentence, filling the role of the subject, as in:

(IC37)⁸ *“What is your preferred version of the Bible?” “The King James, of course. It’s the most modern, the work of great scholars. **Modern** is good. All right, John, hit us with the short form.”*

(IC52) *By the way, thanks for your help. **Pregnant** wasn’t bad enough. I had to get engaged.*

(BNC1) *“Be short yeah enough for me and the right size” “**Petite** is for small people, not for skinny people as well”*

(COCA3) *You see, even at Ground Zero, things return to normal. **Normal** is not profound.*

(COCA6) *Why is he acting so stupid? Tom Tom is a superhero. Superheroes are a fad. **Stupid** is forever.*

Even comparative forms of adjectives can be found in this position, as shown in the following two examples:

(IC9) *As I enter the last six months of my tenure in this place, I can see that is just what is happening. **Worse** is better! It is better from my point of view, because the sooner people realise just how damaging the EU is to their incomes, their livelihoods and food production, then we will be better off out.*

(IC53) *“I promise I’ll be better.” “**Better** isn’t good enough. I don’t think you’ll ever be good enough.”*

⁸ All 120 examples can be found in the appendix sorted according to their corpus of origin, and will be referred to using the abbreviation of their corpus followed by a number. The abbreviations are IC for InterCorp, BNC for Spoken BNC2014 and COCA for the Corpus of Contemporary American English. For example, IC37 means the 37th example of the phenomenon extracted from InterCorp.

All of the sentence-initial adjectives invariably function as the subject of the utterance, with the vast majority of them (92 out of 100) being immediately followed by the copular verb *be*, which can also be seen in the above examples. The remaining 8 instances employ other verbs: for instance, example (BNC5) contains the modal verb *might*, and the remaining examples use different lexical verbs: *get*, *cut*, *outrank*, *go*, *have* and *take*:

(IC19) *You're too damn nice. **Nice** gets you nothing in this town. You've got to be a killer to get ahead.*

(IC20) *"Yeah, I'm hoping, but right now it's looking doubtful." "**Doubtful** doesn't cut it. We're closing in on this guy."*

(IC29) *"Who's funnier, Tom Green or George Carlin?" "Well that's a freak example. You know in our society **young** outranks old. Tall outranks short. Cute outranks smart. I just... If we got involved... someone's going to get hurt. And because I'm older... I have to be the responsible one."*

(IC35) *"Excuse me, ma'am, can you tell me where the bathroom is, please?" "Through the back... Pretty. But **pretty** only goes skin-deep. Ugly is to the bone. Leave them be."*

(IC83) *There are two kinds of people in this world. Commie bastards... and the Commie bastards' enemies. **Neutral** has no place here.*

(BNC5) *Chilli flavoured not essentially spicy then not essentially. **Spicy** might be warming.*

(COCA5) *You see, even at Ground Zero, things return to normal. Normal is not profound. Normal is hard. **Normal** takes work.*

The subject complement which follows after the copular verb *be* often tends to take the form of another adjective, which happens in 49 cases, including:

(IC5) *"Well, I do have some cow hearts pickling in the basement," he said, pretending to consider it. "But I hate to use inferior ingredients. **Fresh** is always better!" Bronwyn began to cry in earnest.*

(BNC3) *"Simple life at the moment but it's quite nice." – "**Simple** is good as well."*

(COCA3) *You see, even at Ground Zero, things return to normal. **Normal** is not profound. Normal is hard. Normal takes work.*

Some general observations can be made regarding the types of adjectives which occur in the subject position and the position of the subject complement. Several adjectives occur in the subject position more often than others, as shown in the following table:

Adjective	Number of separate occurrences
normal	5
crazy	5
simple	4
dead	4
new	3
Other adjectives	1-2 max.

Table 2: Frequency of adjectives without *the* in the sentence-initial position

Similarly, the position of the subject complement also appears to attract certain adjectives more than others, with the adjective *good* (17 instances) and its comparative *better* (7) being the most common ones by far. This is connected to the often evaluative nature of these utterances, as explained below. The non-adjectival copulas in the remaining 25 examples are not as unified and include noun phrases and subordinate clauses. Some instances of a noun phrase functioning as a subject complement include:

(IC13) “*I didn’t do anything wrong.*” “*Nothing illegal. **Wrong** is a different matter. Get out! You took advantage of the fact that we were gone!*”

(IC68) “*That’s correct, but then you’d still be dead.*” “**Dead** is an improvement on a lot of things I can think of, buddy boy.” “*Sounds like he’s slept with my ex.*”

(COCA1) *Each of us, all of us, has a purpose. It is God given and it is unique just like their autism, just like your neurotypicalism. **Typical** is a facade. I am not typical. Neither are you.*

A noteworthy example is (IC42), which counts as an instance of what is sometimes known as the ‘X is the new Y’ construction (Dancygier & Sweetser: 154):

(IC42) *Why not be hysterical? **Hysterical** is the new calm. My wife dies, boom, I go out and I adopt a kid from Neptune. Should I just chill, or should I be hysterical?*

There are also two utterances which follow the ‘X is not Y’s strong suit’ pattern:

(IC64) *That was on her second birthday. We were trying to get her to blow out the candles. She’s got her hand in the cake. **Neat** is not her strong suit. Ohh. You have great-looking kids, George.*

(IC78) *Play nice. **Nice** is not Hansen’s strong suit. Honest mistake.*

Enough (or rather *not enough*) can also be found in multiple utterances, although only once on its own:

(IC14) *“Be nice, girls.” “**Nice** is not enough. If I was friends with everyone because they’re nice, I’d have Noah’s fucking Ark in my phone book.”*

In three separate instances, *enough* occurs after an adjective, such as *good* or *bad*, and always in a negative context, which is also connected to the evaluative purpose of a few utterances:

(IC13) *“The good news is she got custody illegally, so she’s vulnerable.” “**Vulnerable** isn’t good enough. I say let Davey have his fun. Then lose her.”*

(IC52) *By the way, thanks for your help. **Pregnant** wasn’t bad enough. I had to get engaged.*

(IC53) *“I promise I’ll be better.” “**Better** isn’t good enough. I don’t think you’ll ever be good enough.”*

There are also occasional subordinate clauses, which often elaborate on the meaning of the adjective in the given context:

(IC81) *He’s got an airtight alibi. **Airtight** is where all the fun begins. Guy’s got two felony convictions.*

4.1.2. Final position

Out of 120 examples, 20 instances of the phenomenon are located at the end of the utterance as opposed to at the beginning, including:

(IC23) *Do you know what moral is? Let me tell you. Moral is for the people that own it, for the rich. And who’s always right? The rich, and the poor are screwed. Shall I show you my **moral**?*

(IC56) *“She’s just mellow. Mellow’s good.” “I don’t want **mellow** now. I want lively now, mellow later.” “I think it’s fine.”*

(IC85) *But you turned out to be more complicated than your reputation. And I like **complicated**.*

(BNC6) *What too spicy? I never do **spicy**.*

(BNC7) *“and it was a bring and share thing and everyone brought and we” “but you knew who was bringing **savoury** and who was bringing sweet” “Yeah you could make it work, couldn’t you?”*

As seen in the above examples, if they occur in the end-position, the adjectives often, but not always, fill the role of the direct object, and can be preceded by various monotransitive or ditransitive lexical verbs, including *show*, *bring*, *want* or *like*. However, there are two utterances in which these adjectives do not function as a direct object, but instead as a postmodifier (IC79) and a prepositional complement of the adjective *different* (COCA11):

(IC79) *“It’s just- it’s-” “Sick? Let me tell you something about **sick**. Sick is just a question of community standards. And even just two people like you and me, we can be a community.”*

(COCA11) *It doesn’t matter if the problem is clearly stated, and the solution is relatively straightforward. Simple is different from **easy**. How do you motivate billions of people to change what they want, to change their goals and aspirations, to change their daily behavioural patterns?*

A variety of adjectives can appear at the end of the sentence, although none of them occur more than twice in the 20 separate instances. This is in contrast to adjectives such as *normal* or *nice*, which occur repeatedly at the beginning of the sentence in multiple unrelated utterances.

4.2. Semantic context

An antecedent of the adjective is often, but not always, present somewhere in the preceding context, and generally behaves as a “typical” adjective, meaning that it appears in a modifying or complementary function. Some of the examples which contain an antecedent include:

(IC26) *“It is different. I like it.” – “It works out better. **Different** is good.”*

(IC42) *Why not be hysterical? **Hysterical** is the new calm. My wife dies, boom, I go out and I adopt a kid from Neptune. Should I just chill, or should I be hysterical?*

(IC85) *But you turned out to be more complicated than your reputation. And I like **complicated**.*

(BNC3) *“Simple life at the moment but it’s quite nice.” – “**Simple** is good as well.”*

(COCA22) *“It was ironic,” Bancroft says. Yes, I think ironic is a good term for it. **Ironic** is nice, and that’s all I want to say.*

Example (COCA1) is somewhat ambiguous in this regard, as the possible antecedent is not an adjective, but rather a noun with a common root:

(COCA1) *Each of us, all of us, has a purpose. It is God given and it is unique just like their autism, just like your neurotypicalism. **Typical** is a facade. I am not typical. Neither are you.*

Additionally, it appears that the antecedent in question can occasionally take the form of an adjective whose meaning is either synonymous or antonymous to the adjective without *the*:

(IC36) *“Excuse me, ma’am, can you tell me where the bathroom is, please?”
“Through the back... Pretty. But pretty only goes skin-deep. **Ugly** is to the bone. Leave them be.”*

(COCA23) *When you’re somebody like myself, in order to get around and be attractive, you have to develop something, you have to learn something, and you have to do something. So you become a bit more interesting. And when you get older, you get by on that. Anyway, I don’t happen to like **pretty**.*

(COCA24) *“I come from a family that collects lace and antique linens, so I was completely overwhelmed by how beautiful these spring clothes are,” says Moloney, who loved everything she wore for T&C’s; shoot. “As a Californian, I love the idea of the West, but I’m very much a girl – I like **pretty**.”*

However, considering the relatively high number of examples which do not have an antecedent, its presence does not appear to be strictly necessary, although that does not mean that the adjective is used “out of the blue” – there is always a clear semantic connection to the context, which is demonstrated in utterances such as:

(IC5) *“Well, I do have some cow hearts pickling in the basement,” he said, pretending to consider it. “But I hate to use inferior ingredients. **Fresh** is always better!”*

(IC83) *There are two kinds of people in this world. Commie bastards... and the Commie bastards' enemies. **Neutral** has no place here. You have to choose sides.*

(COCA20) *Let's have a similar chart examining the purchasing trends of different ages over the same amount of time. **New** is good,⁹ but lately new hasn't been great. I don't remember seeing computer sales going through the roof every time a new bell or whistle comes out...*

Although the number of examples is too small to determine whether it is the adjectives in the initial or the final position that are more context-dependent or more likely to have an antecedent, in 76 out of the 120 examples the adjective without *the* is preceded by an adjective identical in form; and only 8 of the 76 examples are utterances where the adjective without *the* is located at the end of the sentence.

4.3. Function

A noteworthy characteristic of adjectives used without the determiner *the* is the frequency with which they occur in utterances that are somehow evaluative in meaning or that compare two different concepts. For example, it has already been mentioned that the adjective *good* or its comparative *better* occur as a subject complement in 24 different utterances, resulting in multiple utterances which follow the 'X is good' or 'X is (not) better (than Y)' pattern:

(IC9) *As I enter the last six months of my tenure in this place, I can see that is just what is happening. **Worse is better!** It is better from my point of view, because the sooner people realise just how damaging the EU is to their incomes, their livelihoods and food production, then we will be better off out.*

(IC26) *"It is different. I like it." "It works out better. **Different is good.** You've got to stay clear of the materialistic bitches that are your age."*

(IC74) *"The next time we're together, I'll arrange to get called away." "Okay. But don't make it too obvious." "**Obvious is good.** Time to man up. Colonel Young, come in."*

(BNC3) *"Simple life at the moment but it's quite nice." – "**Simple is good** as well."*

⁹ "The new" is found in some dictionaries, including the Cambridge Dictionary, as a noun; however, the adjective *new*, without the determiner *the*, is not mentioned in the dictionary as being anything but an adjective.

(IC75) *Clearly, you are a crazy lady, but clearly, again, these are nice. Wait a minute. You said “good”. “Really quite good”, you said. **Good** is better than nice. You’re not changing your mind, are you?*

(IC76) *No. The results are lovely. **Lovely** is better than good. But what fascinates me is, what is it you want from it all?*

(COCA2) *She’s not your mom, Jeff. Let’s go. Stay with me. **Dead** is better. Stay with me. You all set? Let’s go.*

(COCA18) *“He’s good though, isn’t he? A real professional. And he’s always lucky. **Lucky** is better than good.” “Look, Pulat Romanevich. We’ve known each other quite a while, so I’m going to level with you. This guy is not right for the job.”*

Of course, there are other adjectives besides *good* or *bad* which can make the utterance an evaluative one:

(IC73) *Teach me how to be normal. **Normal** is also overrated. You must have faith in who you are.*

(IC77) *“Hey, I’m in control. Definitely in control. **Drunk** is not cool.” “Hi, Dad. You are grounded.”*

(COCA15) *I told her I was going crazy. “Don’t worry about it,” she says, carefully drying her eyes with her fingers. “**Crazy**’s all right.¹⁰ Crazy is a way to cope.” She wore eyeliner, a thin black line along her eyelashes, but now it was muddy.*

(COCA21) *Let’s have a similar chart examining the purchasing trends of different ages over the same amount of time. New is good, but lately **new** hasn’t been great. I don’t remember seeing computer sales going through the roof every time a new bell or whistle comes out...*

(COCA22) *“It was ironic,” Bancroft says. Yes, I think ironic is a good term for it. **Ironic** is nice, and that’s all I want to say. Bancroft has other problems, like making sure that his heroine had the right look.*

Adjectives located at the end of the utterance follow after a variety of lexical verbs which do not express any evaluative meaning; however, they can also occur in evaluative

¹⁰ According to the Cambridge Dictionary, *all right* is considered to be an adjective in contexts like instance (COCA15) where it appears as a subject complement.

contexts if they follow after verbs such as *like* or *love* which express individual preferences of the speaker:

(IC85) *But you turned out to be more complicated than your reputation. And I like **complicated**. We've been looking for you, your Highness.*

(BNC11) *"I loved it" "oh you liked it did you" "I love **spicy**" "Mmm I might've been like crying afterwards"*

4.4. Meaning

Finally, adjectives without *the* also require a different semantic interpretation than their more "traditional" counterparts. Adjectives are usually used to denote some particular quality or trait (see section 2.2.); for example, the sentence *that dog is cute* means 'that dog is appealing in a dainty way'. However, consider the following example, which also contains the adjective *cute*:

(IC2) *Aaargh. Cute. That did it. The style definitely had to go. Mr. Nicholas had promised to make her look sexy, not cute. **Cute** was for little girls and poodles.*

In (IC2), the adjective *cute* is positioned in a manner that makes it impossible to interpret the adjective as 'appealing in a dainty way' like in *that dog is cute*. Instead, the adjective appears to be referring to a more general, abstract state of 'cuteness' or to the state of 'possessing qualities that are considered cute'. A more fitting reiteration of (IC2) would therefore be 'cuteness was for little girls and poodles' or 'possessing qualities that are considered cute was for little girls and poodles'. Something similar occurs in examples (IC4) and (IC5):

*Why isn't he undressing? **Hairy** is nice.*

*"Well, I do have some cow hearts pickling in the basement," he said, pretending to consider it. "But I hate to use inferior ingredients. **Fresh** is always better!"*

The adjectives *hairy* and *fresh* are usually used in the senses of 'covered in hair' and 'recently made, produced or obtained', respectively; but once again, these interpretations would be too concrete in this case. Instead, both adjectives refer to 'the state of possessing qualities of X', leading to possible reiterations such as 'hairiness is nice' and 'possessing the quality of being fresh is always better'.

A slightly different reiteration is required for the adjective *dead* in the following sentences:

(IC68) “*That’s correct, but then you’d still be dead.*” “**Dead** is an improvement on a lot of things I can think of, buddy boy.”

(COCA2) *She’s not your mom, Jeff. Let’s go. Stay with me. Dead is better.*

Here, the two instances of the adjective *dead* are not used to denote ‘qualities which are considered typical of being dead’, but are instead meant in the general, abstract sense of ‘being in the state of being dead’, of the state of ‘not being alive’.

The following example demonstrates the contrast between an adjective without the and its “typical” counterpart:

(IC49) *It’s named Paraiso but it’s just a simple place. Simple is okay.*

The adjective *simple* occurs twice in (IC49), but each of the two adjectives carries a different interpretation. In *it’s just a simple place*, *simple* is meant in the sense of ‘plain, basic, humble’, and therefore the first sentence could be reiterated as ‘it’s just a humble place’; however, this interpretation cannot be meaningfully applied to the other instance of *simple*. Instead, it appears adjectives without *the* appear to denote ‘the quality of being ADJ’, or the abstract general sense of ‘being in the state of being ADJ’; therefore, a more fitting reiteration of *simple is okay* would be ‘simplicity is okay’.

5. Conclusion

The analysis of partially converted adjectives without *the* has resulted in several general observations regarding the nature of the phenomenon. However, this study only searched for adjectives placed either at the beginning of the utterance or at its end, which must be taken into account when considering the results of this study.

According to the data extracted from the corpora, partially converted adjectives unaccompanied by the determiner *the* show a distinct tendency to occur at the very beginning of an utterance, which applies to 100 examples out of 120. If placed at the beginning, these adjectives also always fill the role of the subject (as opposed to, for instance, a fronted object). Some potential examples had to be excluded from the study because of their ambiguous syntax, including the following:

Death is cruelty against the unsuspecting. But that's not what I perceive as cruel.

Cruel is when you can't die even if you want to. Give me some of your love which you give Jonathan.

In the above example, it could be argued that the adjective *cruel* is actually a fronted subject complement and therefore does not count as an instance of the phenomenon. The remaining 20 adjectives are found at the very end of an utterance, where they most often function as a direct object.

If adjectives without *the* are positioned at the beginning of an utterance, they also tend to be followed by some form of the verb *be*, although it is also possible to employ lexical verbs or even modal verbs, e.g. *might*. The subject position appears to attract certain adjectives more than others: adjectives such as *normal*, *crazy*, *nice*, *simple* and *dead* have each appeared in the position of the subject in more than three different examples. Meanwhile, the position of the subject complement can be filled not only by adjectives, but also noun phrases or subordinate clauses; the most common adjective which fills the role of the copula is *good*, followed closely by its comparative *better*. Adjectives without *the* which appear at the end of the utterance are typically preceded by a monotransitive or ditransitive lexical verb, unless they function as a prepositional object. In contrast to the adjectives at the beginning of the utterance, which often appear in this position in multiple separate examples, adjectives located at the end of the utterance appear to be slightly more varied and do not occur in more than one or two separate examples; however, the number of examples this study draws upon is too small to make any definitive statements.

It is common, but not necessary, that the adjective without *the* is preceded by an identical adjective, which appears somewhere in the context before and generally behaves as a “typical” adjective, i.e. it occurs in the function of a modifier or a complement, which can be found in 77 of the 120 instances. However, this is not a requirement, as a fairly large number of examples appear on its own without this preceding adjective; they are always context bound however, and have clear semantic links to the text.

A noticeable characteristic of adjectives unaccompanied by *the* is their tendency to occur in evaluative contexts, or statements which in some way comment on the worth of whatever concept the adjective denotes. For instance, the adjective *good* and its comparative *better* both appear rather often in the role of the subject complement, resulting in a number of instances of the pattern ‘X is good’ or ‘X is better (than Y)’, e.g. *obvious is good, lovely is better than good*. Obviously, other adjectives besides *good* and *bad* can be used for evaluative purposes, such as in *normal is overrated, drunk is not cool*; and adjectives without *the* placed at the end of the utterance can be preceded by verbs expressing personal preference (*like, love*) to achieve a similar effect. 57 cases of initial-position adjectives and 6 cases of end-position adjectives appear in an evaluative context of some sort, making for 63 cases out of 120; in other words, a little over 50% of all listed examples are evaluative, although the sample is far too small to make any generalizations about the nature of the studied phenomenon. The remaining examples instead appear to be of a descriptive character, elaborating on the meaning of the adjective within the specific context and how the adjective fits into said context, such as in (IC18):

You don't understand the naked. Naked is intimacy. I am here with you. There is no shame.

The question remains whether partially converted adjectives unpreceded by the definite article are indeed examples of conversion, or whether they are actually examples of ellipsis as suggested by Günther (cf. 2018). Examples such as *worse is better* or *better isn't good enough*, where adjectives in their comparative form function as the subject of the sentence, show that these adjectives have retained their morphological properties, implying partial conversion. Additionally, in all 100 examples in which they occupy the position of the subject, the adjectives are followed by a 3rd person singular form of a verb, as if they denoted a singular entity, akin to examples of the Abstract Construction (e.g. *the occult has always fascinated me – neutral has no place here*). It could be argued that at least some adjectives without *the* are meant to denote abstract concepts, qualities or traits, e.g. *neutral has no place here* = ‘neutrality has no place here’. Additionally, the ellipsis interpretation requires that the elided words be

recoverable word for word, a criterium which is not applicable to many of the examples discussed by the thesis; take for instance example (COCA19):

*There is a constant need for caution in the selection of blood pressure measuring devices. **New** is not always better. Just as in the selection of medication for elevated blood pressure, evidence should guide our decisions.*

There is no other instance of the adjective *new* in the context before the adjective without *the* and it is unclear which words exactly are to be recovered, as no options appear to fit into the context without altering the meaning. It appears that the adjective *new* is supposed to denote the concept of ‘newness’ in general, the abstract state or sense of ‘being recently created, discovered or made’, as opposed to anything more concrete. However, some of the other examples actually lend themselves well to the ellipsis interpretation, such as example (COCA8):

*No, never be sorry. You know that. **Sorry** is a sign of weakness, Charles... and that is one thing we cannot afford to be.*

The adjective *sorry* could be easily interpreted to mean ‘being sorry’, due to the presence of the verb *be* in the previous sentence, and inserting the gerund *being* does not alter the meaning of the sentence, which is one of the conditions of ellipsis (see section 2.3.):

*No, never be sorry. You know that. **Being sorry** is a sign of weakness, Charles... and that is one thing we cannot afford to be.*

It would appear that asking whether these adjectives are examples of conversion or of ellipsis is pointless, as neither explanation can be applied to every single example. Therefore, this thesis suggests that instead of conversion or ellipsis, the adjectives in these examples have instead been subjected to coercion (see section 2.5.3.). In other words, they have been forced by a construction to adopt the role of the noun in the sentence; this construction allows them to occupy positions generally reserved for nouns, namely the subject, and also changes their meaning to a more abstract or general one. This evaluative construction takes the following form:

NP + BE + ADJ

In the case an adjective occurs in the position of the subject, which is typically filled by a noun phrase, the construction coerces the adjective to assume the syntactic ‘role’ of the noun phrase. The result bears superficial similarities to partial conversion: the adjective acquires nominal

syntactical characteristics while retaining its adjectival morphological ones. Therefore, it can still undergo conversion, as shown in examples *better isn't good enough* or *worse is better*, and it also cannot take a plural form and is instead always treated as a singular entity or concept; as already mentioned, all the sentence-initial instances of these adjectives are always followed by a 3rd person singular form of the verb. At the same time, the adjective has not actually undergone partial conversion, and the phenomenon counts neither as a Human Construction nor as an Abstract Construction, leading to the lack of the definite article *the*. Furthermore, coercion affects not only the syntactical features of the adjective, but also alters its meaning, as discussed in section 4.4.

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Resumé

Hlavním cílem této bakalářské práce bylo popsat dosud opomíjený druh částečně konvertovaných adjektiv, který se, na rozdíl od typických částečně konvertovaných adjektiv, vyskytuje samostatně bez určitého členu *the*. Práce se zaměřila na 120 příkladů daného jevu vybraných z několika korpusů, které byly následně zanalyzovány z pohledu konstrukční gramatiky.

V teoretické části práce jsou představeny všechny základní pojmy a koncepty relevantní v rámci tématu práce, část druhá obsahuje samotnou analýzu příkladů. Teoretická část se mimo jiného krátce zabývá syntakticko-morfologickými vlastnostmi podstatných a přídavných jmen, a také elipsou, jevem, při kterém dochází k vypuštění lexikálních jednotek, které jsou zřejmé z kontextu. Dále se teoretická část zabývá konverzí, pro angličtinu charakteristickým slovo tvorným procesem, při kterém dané slovo změní svůj slovní druh, aniž by se jakýmkoli způsobem změnila jeho forma, a k určení jeho slovního druhu je tedy nutné znát širší větný kontext (Dušková et al. 2009: 2.2); tyto dva jevy jsou následně vzájemně porovnány.

Protože byl jev analyzován z hlediska konstrukční gramatiky, v teoretické části je tomuto gramatickému přístupu a jeho základním principům věnována větší pozornost. Jedná se o odvětví kognitivních gramatických přístupů, které pohlíží na jazyk jako na hierarchicky uspořádaný mentální lexikon konstrukcí, základních jednotek různé komplexnosti a abstraktnosti. Konstrukcemi lze nazvat jak jednotlivá konkrétní slova či morfémy, tak i tak abstraktní gramatické procesy, jako je například tvoření trpného rodu, a tyto konstrukce lze navzájem libovolně kombinovat, čímž vzniká promluva. Relevantním konceptem je zde takzvaná koerce (*coercion*); podle konstrukčních gramatiků je totiž konstrukce schopná “přinutit” jazykové jednotky změnit své syntakticko-morfologické rysy a chování tak, aby byly splněny podmínky pro existenci této konstrukce. Koerce vede například ke změnám ve valenci slovesa nebo počitatelnosti substantiv, a v neposlední řadě také může přimět adjektiva, aby v rámci dané věty přijala roli a syntaktické vlastnosti substantiva, aniž by byla vyžadována přítomnost určitého členu *the*.

Výzkum těchto adjektiv spočíval v analýze příkladů nalezených ve třech různých korpusech: paralelním korpusu InterCorp v13, korpusu současné mluvené britské angličtiny Spoken BNC2014 a korpusu současné americké angličtiny COCA. Z těchto korpusů bylo pomocí specifických dotazů vyhledáno a ručně vytríděno celkem 120 příkladů daného jevu, které byly následně prozkoumány; prostudována byla například pozice těchto adjektiv ve větě, kde se většina příkladů nacházela na úplném začátku věty v pozici podmětu a jen poměrně málo

z nich se nacházelo na konci věty, například v roli přímého předmětu. Dále bylo zjišťováno, s jakým slovesem se tento typ adjektiv nejčastěji vyskytuje ve větě; výsledky zde ukázaly, že tato adjektiva se až na vzácné výjimky vyskytují ve spojení se slovesem *be*, nachází-li se na začátku věty, nebo s lexikálním slovesem, nachází-li se na konci. Studie se také zabývala druhem či typem adjektiv, která se v těchto pozicích nejčastěji nalézají; jistá adjektiva, mezi jinými například *normal*, *nice* nebo *crazy*, mají sklony vyskytovat se v pozici podmětu, zatímco na pozici předmětu se naopak žádná adjektiva nevyskytují výrazně častěji. Bylo také zjištěno, že se před těmito adjektivy často nachází antecedent, ačkoliv jeho přítomnost není nezbytně nutná a tato adjektiva se mohou vyskytovat i bez něj; tento antecedent se chová jako „typické“ adjektivum. V neposlední řadě byla také zjištěna tendence těchto adjektiv vyskytovat se v evaluativním nebo jinak hodnotícím kontextu, jako například *dead is better* nebo *obvious is good*.

Studie se pokusila zodpovědět na otázku, zda lze adjektiva bez určitého členu *the* považovat za částečnou konverzi či elipsu. Tato adjektiva se zdánlivě podobají „typickým“ částečně konvertovaným adjektivům, protože se sice syntakticky chovají jako substantiva a mohou se tedy objevovat například na pozici podmětu, zároveň si ale zachovávají morfologické vlastnosti adjektiv a mohou tedy být nadále stupňována (*better isn't good enough*). U mnoha příkladů těchto adjektiv nelze s jistotou tvrdit, že se jedná o elipsu, protože není možné jednoznačně doplnit vynechaná slova; na druhou stranu ale existují příklady, u kterých vynechaný kontext doplnit lze, aniž by se změnil význam dané promluvy, a zdánlivě tedy není možné na tuto otázku nalézt jednoznačnou odpověď. Studie však nepovažuje tento typ adjektiv ani za případy konverze, ani elipsy, ale za koerci, kdy určitá konstrukce přinutí tato původně „typická“ adjektiva přijmout syntaktické vlastnosti substantiv a umožňuje jim tak vyskytovat se na pozicích typických pro substantiva, například na pozici podmětu. Tato abstraktní konstrukce bývá evaluativního charakteru a často se vyskytuje v následující podobě:

NP + BE + ADJ

Tato konstrukce nemění jen syntaktické vlastnosti adjektiv, ale i jejich význam, který se stává všeobecnějším a abstraktnějším; například ve větě *dead is better* není adjektivum *dead* myšleno ve významu ‘being dead is better’, ale označuje přímo samotný ‘stav mrtvosti’, i.e. ‘being in the state of being dead is better’. Protože se tedy u těchto adjektiv nejedná o částečnou konverzi, tato adjektiva nepřijímají určitý člen *the*.

Appendix

InterCorp	
Number of example	Example
IC1	At other times, though, Marianne focuses on Lesje’s Ukrainian name. It doesn’t seem to bother her the way it would probably bother her parents; instead she finds it intriguing, though a little funny. “Why should you worry? Ethnic is big these days. Change your last name and you’ll get a Multiculturalism grant.”
IC2	Aaargh. Cute. That did it. The style definitely had to go. Mr. Nicholas had promised to make her look sexy, not cute. Cute was for little girls and poodles. Well, at least Ian had actually noticed her new cut, she thought, trying for a positive spin.
IC3	Are you ready to get on your knees and beg? I’m finished. It’s hopeless. Hopeless? Hopeless is what they sing songs about... write poems about.
IC4	Why isn’t he undressing? Hairy is nice. I came to see you on behalf of Mrs. Seligová.
IC5	“Well, I do have some cow hearts pickling in the basement,” he said, pretending to consider it. “But I hate to use inferior ingredients. Fresh is always better!” Bronwyn began to cry in earnest.
IC6	It doesn’t matter, Sam... and you’re not sterile. Sterile is someone who can’t love, who can’t give anything, who is locked up and closed up and sold out. That’s all that matters and that’s not you, Sam.
IC7	It was the beginning of a ghastly time for all of them, and Alice couldn’t imagine a time when life would seem normal to them again. Normal was Johnny coming home at night after work, going off to college in the fall, being valedictorian of his class, and playing on the football team.
IC8	Ruth in water, him in grass and air. He is not a water animal. Wet is cold to him. Having dunked, he prefers to sit on the tile edge dipping his feet and imagining that high-school girls behind him are admiring the muscle-play of his broad back.
IC9	As I enter the last six months of my tenure in this place, I can see that is just what is happening. Worse is better! It is better from my point of

	view, because the sooner people realise just how damaging the EU is to their incomes, their livelihoods and food production, then we will be better off out.
IC10	“You’re giving them what they want.” “They want to keep me silent. Stupid is almost as good. Will you go now, please? Just go home.”
IC11	The past is gone. Sentimental is stupid. It’s smart to make money.
IC12	“The good news is she got custody illegally, so she’s vulnerable.” “ Vulnerable isn’t good enough. I say let Davey have his fun. Then lose her.”
IC13	“I didn’t do anything wrong.” “Nothing illegal. Wrong is a different matter. Get out! You took advantage of the fact that we were gone!”
IC14	“Be nice, girls.” “ Nice is not enough. If I was friends with everyone because they’re nice, I’d have Noah’s fucking Ark in my phone book.”
IC15	“Then what am I like?” “You’re nice.” “What do you mean?” “ Nice is good for a woman.” “Cut the cards! Women who stand out have difficult lives.”
IC16	“Smells like ice cream. Vanilla ice cream. Vanilla is white. First it’s cold. Then it’s sweet. Sweet is good.” “Victoria?” “Yeah?” “Sometimes, I worry about that boy.”
IC17	You don’t have to be polite with me. Polite isn’t my thing. I’m sure Sam told you that.
IC18	You don’t understand the naked. Naked is intimacy. I am here with you. There is no shame.
IC19	You’re too damn nice. Nice gets you nothing in this town. You’ve got to be a killer to get ahead.
IC20	“Yeah, I’m hoping, but right now it’s looking doubtful.” “ Doubtful doesn’t cut it. We’re closing in on this guy.”
IC21	I’m scared too. Scared is not the issue. Everything is so serious suddenly.
IC22	Do you know what moral is? Let me tell you. Moral is for the people that own it, for the rich. And who’s always right? The rich, and the poor are screwed.
IC23	And who’s always right? The rich, and the poor are screwed. Shall I show you my moral ? Won’t you be sorry?

IC24	“He’s a friend of Andrew's who’s always been polite. It’s the best I could do on such short notice, okay?” “Well, you know what? Polite is not gonna do it. We've got to find somebody who is really gonna make Gary jealous.”
IC25	Fine, you broke up. You broke up. Fine. You know, sad. Sad is, instead of putting \$1,000 into your mortgage every month, you waste it on rent. That’s what sad is.
IC26	“It is different. I like it.” “It works out better. Different is good. You’ve got to stay clear of the materialistic bitches that are your age.”
IC27	“You think I’ll be all right?” “I think you’re pretty safe.” “I better be. Ugly is not a problem for this guy. My man would stick his dick in a he-monkey.”
IC28	They look good next to each other. Help me with this, Melanie. Gorgeous isn’t everything. This one, this one... two more.
IC29	“Who's funnier, Tom Green or George Carlin?” “Well that’s a freak example. You know in our society young outranks old. Tall outranks short. Cute outranks smart. I just... If we got involved... someone’s going to get hurt. And because I’m older... I have to be the responsible one.
IC30	“Who’s funnier, Tom Green or George Carlin?” “Well that’s a freak example. You know in our society young outranks old . Tall outranks short. Cute outranks smart. I just... If we got involved... someone’s going to get hurt. And because I’m older... I have to be the responsible one.
IC31	You know in our society young outranks old. Tall outranks short. Cute outranks smart. I just... If we got involved... someone’s going to get hurt. And because I’m older... I have to be the responsible one.
IC32	You know in our society young outranks old. Tall outranks short . Cute outranks smart. I just... If we got involved... someone’s going to get hurt. And because I’m older... I have to be the responsible one.
IC33	You know in our society young outranks old. Tall outranks short. Cute outranks smart. I just... If we got involved... someone’s going to get hurt. And because I’m older... I have to be the responsible one.
IC34	You know in our society young outranks old. Tall outranks short. Cute outranks smart . I just... If we got involved... someone’s going to get hurt. And because I’m older... I have to be the responsible one.

IC35	<p>“Excuse me, ma’am, can you tell me where the bathroom is, please?” “Through the back... Pretty. But pretty only goes skin-deep. Ugly is to the bone. Leave them be.”</p>
IC36	<p>“Excuse me, ma’am, can you tell me where the bathroom is, please?” “Through the back... Pretty. But pretty only goes skin-deep. Ugly is to the bone. Leave them be.</p>
IC37	<p>“What is your preferred version of the Bible?” “The King James, of course. It’s the most modern, the work of great scholars. Modern is good. All right, John, hit us with the short form.”</p>
IC38	<p>Some of our veteran couples can be, uh, intense. Intense is okay. Well, generally, you build up to that level for both your sakes.</p>
IC39	<p>“Good morning. Everything okay?” “Peachy.” “Peachy’s good. I like peaches. You want coffee?”</p>
IC40	<p>“They’re really tiny. But tiny’s not a bad thing, right?” “No. Tiny’s good.” “We came out here in the middle of the night for a stupid egg?”</p>
IC41	<p>“They’re really tiny. But tiny’s not a bad thing, right?” “No. Tiny’s good.” “We came out here in the middle of the night for a stupid egg?”</p>
IC42	<p>Why not be hysterical? Hysterical is the new calm. My wife dies, boom, I go out and I adopt a kid from Neptune. Should I just chill, or should I be hysterical?</p>
IC43	<p>You know what normal is to me, Richie? I ain’t seen normal since I was six years old. Normal is seeing the police right up to my house dragging my little 12-year-old cousin out, tying him to a pole, shoving a shotgun in his mouth so hard they bust his teeth.</p>
IC44	<p>You look pretty steady to me. I’m a United States Marine, Agent Gibbs. Steady is how I’m built. Steady is what my son needs right now. Steady... is all I’ve got.</p>
IC45	<p>You look pretty steady to me. I’m a United States Marine, Agent Gibbs. Steady is how I’m built. Steady is what my son needs right now. Steady... is all I’ve got.</p>
IC46	<p>Maybe I should get back together with Naomi. She was nice. Nice is good. She loved me. Why do I fall in love with every woman I see who shows me the least bit of attention?</p>
IC47	<p>Hey, forget it. Sad is mine. Go find your own pretend emotion.</p>

IC48	But he's gonna have to be tall. Tall is important. No, no, no, no, no, he's not. No, no. Average.
IC49	It's named Paraiso but it's just a simple place. Simple is okay. I'm still sure that we would have better lives there... than what we left behind.
IC50	"Sure, why not? Let's stick together. Like Smith and Jones." "Thank you, ma'am. Dead 's a good alibi." "Who's next? All right, next."
IC51	"Been working on that outside shot?" "Mm-hm." "Passing?" "Good." "Dribbling?" "Really good." " Good 's not going to get you a scholarship." "I meant, it's great. It's great, Dad."
IC52	By the way, thanks for your help. Pregnant wasn't bad enough. I had to get engaged.
IC53	"I promise I'll be better." " Better isn't good enough. I don't think you'll ever be good enough."
IC54	"Anyone ever told you to go slow when we first enter the chute?" " Slow is for pussies. Get in there."
IC55	"She's just mellow. Mellow 's good." "I don't want mellow now. I want lively now, mellow later."
IC56	"She's just mellow. Mellow's good." "I don't want mellow now. I want lively now, mellow later." "I think it's fine."
IC57	"She's just mellow. Mellow's good." "I don't want mellow now. I want lively now, mellow later." "I think it's fine."
IC58	"She's just mellow. Mellow's good." "I don't want mellow now. I want lively now, mellow later." "I think it's fine."
IC59	Of course you love him, he's Christian and he's rich. Not to mention: kind, thoughtful and forward-thinking. And handsome. Handsome is good. But ask your auntie why she married me.
IC60	"Aren't you concerned?" "Terrified, but a girl's gotta do what a girl's gotta do." "That's the spirit. Relentless is our goal. What do you expect from the guy who stole a crippled kid 's bicycle?"
IC61	These people are weird. Weird is good. Weird is weird. Come on.
IC62	I have one rule, Chuck. Simple is safe. I'll tell you as little as possible about what I do.

IC63	<p>“Frank, you’re not being helpful.”</p> <p>“Helpful is not sacrificing more American lives in a hopeless situation, John. This guy has been in country less than a day. What does he know?”</p>
IC64	<p>That was on her second birthday. We were trying to get her to blow out the candles. She’s got her hand in the cake. Neat is not her strong suit. Ohh. You have great-looking kids, George.</p>
IC65	<p>I hope that was part of a careful plan in there. Careful’s for lawyers and accountants, right? I think it’s very interesting of her.</p>
IC66	<p>It’s very creepy. I don’t know what it means either. Dead is clear. That’s the worker who’s passed away, so they’re dead.</p>
IC67	<p>No, he should think of his grandfather as consistent and reliable. Consistent is boring. His other grandparents are consistent.</p>
IC68	<p>That’s correct, but then you’d still be dead.</p> <p>Dead is an improvement on a lot of things I can think of, buddy boy. Sounds like he’s slept with my ex.</p>
IC69	<p>“I bought her a nice dress.” “Nice? Pilgrims wore sexier outfits.”</p> <p>“She’s 13, okay? Sexy isn’t on the menu.”</p> <p>“Okay, is this about the dress?”</p>
IC70	<p>You’re a cruel man, Jack Sparrow. Cruel is a matter of perspective. Is it, Will? Look at me!</p>
IC71	<p>You don’t think there’s something weird going on? Weird isn’t a crime. If it were, I’d happily put every one of you kids in jail.</p>
IC72	<p>“He was my crash course from having sex.” “Good morning. Sexy is fashionable again. We have had visits... of our local success writer Henry McCanthy.”</p>
IC73	<p>Teach me how to be normal. Normal is also overrated. You must have faith in who you are.</p>
IC74	<p>“The next time we’re together, I’ll arrange to get called away.” “Okay. But don’t make it too obvious.” “Obvious is good. Time to man up. Colonel Young, come in.”</p>
IC75	<p>Clearly, you are a crazy lady, but clearly, again, these are nice. Wait a minute. You said “good”. “Really quite good”, you said. Good is better than nice. You’re not changing your mind, are you?</p>
IC76	<p>No. The results are lovely. Lovely is better than good. But what fascinates me is, what is it you want from it all?</p>

IC77	Hey, I'm in control. Definitely in control. Drunk is not cool. Hi, Dad. You are grounded.
IC78	Play nice. Nice is not Hansen's strong suit. Honest mistake.
IC79	"It's just- it's-" "Sick? Let me tell you something about sick . Sick is just a question of community standards. And even just two people like you and me, we can be a community."
IC80	"It's just- it's-" "Sick? Let me tell you something about sick. Sick is just a question of community standards. And even just two people like you and me, we can be a community."
IC81	He's got an airtight alibi. Airtight is where all the fun begins. Guy's got two felony convictions.
IC82	To be big... is pretty risky. Small is beautiful as our poet says... Come along, your turn on the turntable.
IC83	There are two kinds of people in this world. Commie bastards... and the Commie bastards' enemies. Neutral has no place here. You have to choose sides.
IC84	"And at least they didn't call you inscrutable. Or wily." "What would that signify?" "Oh, full of devilish low cunning. We like to avoid devilish . Also diabolical. The defence will settle for stolid."
IC85	But you turned out to be more complicated than your reputation. And I like complicated . We've been looking for you, your Highness.

BNC2014	
Number of example	Example
BNC1	Be short yeah enough for me and the right size Petite is for small people, not for skinny people as well No I know that
BNC2	What too spicy? I never do spicy Spicy is my favorite, can't be too spicy Is that one for me? Is that Chinese noodles?
BNC3	Simple life at the moment but it's quite nice Simple is good as well

	You don't need to be doing and drinking
BNC4	To allow the citrus fruits to mellow Mellow is my fave, that was really nice actually Pale straw in colour yeah it was wasn't it?
BNC5	Chilli flavoured not essentially spicy then not essentially Spicy might be warming I might throw these flapjacks out
BNC6	What, too spicy? I never do spicy Spicy is my favorite, can't be too spicy
BNC7	and it was a bring and share thing and everyone brought and we but you knew who was bringing savoury and who was bringing sweet Yeah you could make it work, couldn't you?
BNC8	and it was a bring and share thing and everyone brought and we but you knew who was bringing savoury and who was bringing sweet Yeah you could make it work, couldn't you
BNC9	Next to here a mackies? Yeah I don't want sweet , I want savoury. Better oh do you want snacks?
BNC10	Next to here a mackies? Yeah I don't want sweet, I want savoury Better oh do you want snacks?
BNC11	I loved it oh you liked it did you I love spicy Mmm I might've been like crying afterwards

COCA	
Number of example	Example
COCA1	Each of us, all of us, has a purpose. It is God given and it is unique just like their autism, just like your neurotypicalism. Typical is a facade. I am not typical. Neither are you.

COCA2	She's not your mom, Jeff. Let's go. Stay with me. Dead is better. Stay with me. You all set? Let's go.
COCA3	You see, even at Ground Zero, things return to normal. Normal is not profound. Normal is hard. Normal takes work. This is one of the hardest lessons of September 11th.
COCA4	You see, even at Ground Zero, things return to normal. Normal is not profound. Normal is hard. Normal takes work. This is one of the hardest lessons of September 11th.
COCA5	You see, even at Ground Zero, things return to normal. Normal is not profound. Normal is hard. Normal takes work. This is one of the hardest lessons of September 11th.
COCA6	Why is he acting so stupid? Tom Tom is a superhero. Superheroes are a fad. Stupid is forever. Duh. Hey, there's another meatball down on the ground.
COCA7	That was unbelievable! I should've done this long ago. Mm. Happy is a good look on you. Eh, doesn't take much. Fast car, beautiful girl.
COCA8	No, never be sorry. You know that. Sorry is a sign of weakness, Charles... and that is one thing we cannot afford to be.
COCA9	Ain't nobody ever felt sorry for me. And I never felt sorry for nobody. Sorry is something I can do without. What's his name?
COCA10	It doesn't matter if the problem is clearly stated, and the solution is relatively straightforward. Simple is different from easy. How do you motivate billions of people to change what they want, to change their goals and aspirations, to change their daily behavioural patterns?
COCA11	It doesn't matter if the problem is clearly stated, and the solution is relatively straightforward. Simple is different from easy . How do you motivate billions of people to change what they want, to change their goals and aspirations, to change their daily behavioural patterns?
COCA12	Now, before you dismiss this as piffle, let's not forget it made it this far from a citizen to a governmental body in a large city. In a large state. Crazy is like a mould. The longer you look away, the bigger it gets.
COCA13	Too bad, kid, but you're not playing this for anybody. Crazy is safer when it goes unrecorded. Real songs. Not very politically correct by today's standards, but that was a different time.

COCA14	I don't argue. Crazy is clearly my comfort zone. It is my DMZ.
COCA15	I told her I was going crazy. "Don't worry about it," she says, carefully drying her eyes with her fingers. " Crazy's all right. Crazy is a way to cope." She wore eyeliner, a thin black line along her eyelashes, but now it was muddy.
COCA16	I told her I was going crazy. "Don't worry about it," she says, carefully drying her eyes with her fingers. "Crazy's all right. Crazy is a way to cope." She wore eyeliner, a thin black line along her eyelashes, but now it was muddy.
COCA17	Took you down pretty good. You were lucky. Lucky is good. Granting my freedom changes nothing, Mitchell.
COCA18	"He's good though, isn't he? A real professional. And he's always lucky. Lucky is better than good." "Look, Pulat Romanevich. We've known each other quite a while, so I'm going to level with you. This guy is not right for the job."
COCA19	There is a constant need for caution in the selection of blood pressure measuring devices. New is not always better. Just as in the selection of medication for elevated blood pressure, evidence should guide our decisions.
COCA20	Let's have a similar chart examining the purchasing trends of different ages over the same amount of time. New is good, but lately new hasn't been great. I don't remember seeing computer sales going through the roof every time a new bell or whistle comes out...
COCA21	Let's have a similar chart examining the purchasing trends of different ages over the same amount of time. New is good, but lately new hasn't been great. I don't remember seeing computer sales going through the roof every time a new bell or whistle comes out...
COCA22	"It was ironic," Bancroft says. Yes, I think ironic is a good term for it. Ironic is nice, and that's all I want to say. Bancroft has other problems, like making sure that his heroine had the right look.
COCA23	When you're somebody like myself, in order to get around and be attractive, you have to develop something, you have to learn something, and you have to do something. So you become a bit more interesting. And when you get older, you get by on that. Anyway, I don't happen to like pretty .
COCA24	"I come from a family that collects lace and antique linens, so I was completely overwhelmed by how beautiful these spring clothes are," says Moloney, who loved everything she wore for T&C's;

	shoot. “As a Californian, I love the idea of the West, but I’m very much a girl – I like pretty .”
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