

Word Classes in English Political Studies (Advanced Level)

**** Advanced Tips on Qualifiers ****

1. Inversion of Qualifiers

Anastrophe (from the Greek ἀναστροφή = "a turning back or about"), also called inversion, is a figure of speech where the normal word order is changed.

Here follows some among the most common examples in domain-specific English where the normal word order "1. modifier-2. modified" is changed into "1. modified-2. modifier":

- Attorney-General¹ →→ compare "civil attorney" and "criminal attorney"
- Consul-general
- Consulate-general
- governor general²
- director-general
- Directorate general
- heir apparent, heiress apparent³
- heir presumptive⁴
- president elect⁵
- body politic⁶

¹ Plural forms: "Attorneys-General" and "Attorney-Generals"
(see <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/attorney-general?q=attorney+general>)

² Plural forms: "governors general" and "governor generals"
(see <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/governor-general?q=governor+general>)

³ An **heir apparent** (plural form: "heirs apparent") is a person who is first in line of succession and cannot be displaced from inheriting by the birth of another person. **Italian equivalent:** "erede legittimo".

⁴ An **heir presumptive** (plural form: "heirs presumptive"), by contrast, is someone who is first in line to inherit a title but who can be displaced by the birth of a more eligible heir. **Italian equivalent:** "erede presunto".

⁵ An "officer-**elect**" refers to a person who has been elected to a position but has not yet been installed. For example, a President who has been elected but not yet installed would be referred to as a *President-elect*.

Analogously, the term **-designate** (e.g. Prime Minister-designate) is used in systems without direct elections of executive politicians, such as in parliamentary systems.

- fee simple⁷
- court martial →→ compare "martial law"
- air conditioning

L'anastrofe del sintagma aggettivo-sostantivo è frequente in espressioni di origine romanza del linguaggio legale e politico: *Governor General*, *poet laureate*, *treasure trove* (gold or silver of unknown ownership found hidden on land):

- *malice prepense* (= premeditazione, lett. male premeditato)
- *court martial*, mentre *martial law* segue l'ordine dell'inglese moderno
- *heir presumptive* (= erede presunto)
- *heir apparent* (= erede legittimo), mentre *apparent defect* (= vizio apparente) segue l'ordine dell'inglese moderno
- *Attorney General* (= Procuratore Generale), ma: *civil/criminal/defence attorney*

- *fee simple* (= proprietà assoluta), *fee tail* (= proprietà con limitazioni circa la successione), ma: *entrance fee* (= tassa di iscrizione), *consular fees* (diritti consolari), *legal fees* (= spese legali)
- *letters patent* (= lettere patenti, decreti di un sovrano, brevetto).

Per ragioni di carattere semantico, alcuni aggettivi si usano dopo il nome:

- *an interview with the director designate* (i.e., *appointed to a job but not yet having officially started it*)
- *the President elect* (i.e., *for a position but not yet occupying it*).

Alcuni aggettivi hanno un significato diverso a seconda se precedono o seguono un sostantivo:

- *the President concerned* (i.e., *who has been mentioned*)
- *the concerned President* (i.e., *who is worried*)
- *I am concerned about the present situation*
- *of the twenty people present I knew only one*
- *Behave like responsible citizens*
- *the Minister responsible for environmental issues*
- *the people involved, the issues involved* (i.e., *concerned*)
- *an involved explanation/style of writing* (i.e., *complicated in thought or form*)
- *use the proper tool for the job*
- *Italy proper*
- *the degree course proper* (i.e., *in its true form*)

⁶ It stands for "the political body of society". **Italian equivalents:** "corpo elettorale", "nazione", "popolo".

⁷ In English law, a **fee simple** (or **fee simple absolute**) is an estate in land, a form of freehold ownership. It is a way that real estate may be owned in common law countries, and is the highest possible ownership interest that can be held in real property. **Italian equivalent:** "proprietà assoluta".

2. Order of Qualifiers

Aggettivi

L'ordine degli aggettivi è generalmente in relazione alla loro natura e funzione.

I *fact adjectives*, quelli che aggiungono un'informazione oggettiva su qualche cosa (*classifying, descriptive, color, qualitative adjectives*): *new, large, round, cold, windy, financial, civil, wooden, rectangular*, precedono immediatamente il sostantivo modificato.

Gli *opinion adjectives*, quelli che aggiungono una nostra opinione: *beautiful, delicious, good, bad, nice* (general opinion adjectives), *comfortable, clean, dirty* (specific opinion adjectives), possono collocarsi a maggiore distanza dal nome prima dei *fact adjectives*:

	OPINION	FACT	
an	intelligent	middle aged	manager
a	nice	big	house

Quando ci sono più *fact adjectives*, si usano generalmente queste sequenze:

How BIG?	How OLD?	WHAT COLOUR?	WHERE FROM?	WHAT IS IT MADE OF?	
a small		black		plastic bag	
SIZE	SHAPE	AGE	COLOUR	NATIONALITY	MATERIAL
a large	round				wooden table

Generalmente, gli aggettivi che indicano forma e ampiezza sono più vicini al sostantivo di quelli che indicano misura e lunghezza:

- *a large circular pool*
- *a long narrow street.*

In ogni caso le informazioni più specifiche e oggettive precedono immediatamente il sostantivo e quelle più generiche o soggettive si dispongono di norma secondo un ordine del tipo esemplificato negli schemi:

- *The Italian political system*
- *Today the few remaining nationalized industries are managed by government-appointed boards*
- *European Space Agency (ESA)*
- *Gross National Product (GNP).*

(excerpts from AA.VV., 1996: *Text and Tools. Inglese per le Scienze Economiche, Sociali, Politiche e Giuridiche*, Bologna, Monduzzi Editore)

