

Lesson: Expressing quantities (Quantifiers)

Quantifier Definition

Quantifiers are **adjectives or phrases** that serve to answer two possible questions:

1. **How many?** (countable = on peut compter)
2. and **How much?** (uncountable = on ne peut pas compter)

NB: Pour l'explication de countable vs uncountable voir ci-dessous (ou dans le cahier ;-)

For example: **a few, a little, much, many, most, some, any, enough, etc.**, are quantifiers.

How to Use Quantifiers (utilisation)

Quantifiers that Describe Quantity

Words and phrases that describe quantity include **a little, none, a few, etc.** Some of these are used only with:

Countable nouns – These are the nouns that answer the question **How many?** For example: **a few, a number of, several, etc.**

Uncountable nouns – These are the nouns that answer the question **How much?** For example: **a little, a bit of, etc.)**

Some of them are also used **with both (countable nouns AND uncountable nouns)**. These are the ones that answer **both questions (How**

much? AND How many?). For example: **such as no/none, some, a lot of, etc.**

Quantifiers that Express Attitude

The words **few, little** and the phrases (**a phrase = une expression**) – **a few** and **a little** serve to describe the speaker's attitude to the quantity being described. The first two are rather (**= plutôt**) negative, whereas (**= alors que**) the last two are rather positive. For example:

“I have little time” means that the speaker hardly (**= à peine**) has time, whereas **“I have a little time”** means that the speaker has not much (**= pas beaucoup**) time, but s/he has enough (**= assez**).

Simple non? **“few/little”**= peu mais sous entendu “pas assez” alors que **“a few/a little”**= un peu, sous entendu “assez”

Côté prononciation: “few” se prononce comme “new” (mais avec un “f”)

‘Enough’

“Enough” is used to indicate the necessary amount or quantity; it is placed before nouns. For example: **There is enough time, You have enough money, Is there enough food?, etc.**

Comparative Quantifiers

There are ten **comparative** or grade quantifiers: **much, many, more, most, few, fewer, fewest, little, less, and least.**

Much, many, more and most describe (in ascending order) increase; **much** is used only with uncountable nouns, **many** only with plural countable nouns, and **more** and **most** with both.

I have much time. < I have more time. < I have the most time.

I have many apples. < I have more apples. < I have the most apples.

Few, fewer, fewest, little, less and least chart decrease. The first three (in descending order) are used only with countable plural nouns. The last three (in descending order) are used only with uncountable nouns.

He has few friends. > He has fewer friends. > He has the fewest friends.

He has little time. > He has less time. > He has the least time.

Quantifiers Examples

With Uncountable Nouns

- **much** (=beaucoup)
- **a little/little/very little *** (un peu/peu/ très peu)
- **a bit (of)** (un petit peu)
- **a great deal of** (beaucoup de)
- **a large amount of** (beaucoup de)
- **a large quantity of** (une grande quantité de)

With Both

- **all** (100%, tout)
- **enough** (assez)
- **more/most** (plus/ la plupart)
- **less/least** (moins/ le/la/les moins)
- **no/none** (pas de/ aucun(e))
- **not any** (pas de)
- **some** (du/des -quantité indéfinie)
- **any** (n'importe lequel/ pas de)
- **a lot of** (beaucoup de)
- **lots of** (beaucoup de)
- **plenty of** (beaucoup de)

With Countable Nouns

- **many** (beaucoup de)
- **a few/few/very few **** (un peu/peu/très peu)
- **a number (of)** (un certain nombre de)
- **several** (plusieurs)
- **a large number of** (beaucoup de)
- **a great number of** (beaucoup de)
- **a majority of** (une majorité de)

Remarques:

- attention à “a few/few” et “a little/little”
- il y a de nombreuses manières d’exprimer une grande quantité
- pour exprimer une quantité “nulle”, se reporter à ce qui sera expliqué en classe (no stress guys!)