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Level: First Year

Lesson 01: Language and Parts of Speech

Definition of language:

Peter V. Oviogun and Pal S. Veerdee (2020) define Language as a way of communication between members of society that takes the form of sound symbols generated by human speech instruments. The second definition of language is a communication system that employs arbitrary vowel symbols (speech sounds). Furthermore, Language refers to the signals we use to communicate. Humans are not the only creature with a complex communication system. Language is a systematic technique for transmitting ideas or emotions by agreed-upon signs, sounds, gestures, or signs with intelligible meanings. This definition of language encompasses all objects utilized as a means of communication, both verbal and nonverbal. Nonverbal signs include the sound of a bell, a car bell, morse, limb motions (gestures), and so on.

Parts of Speech:

Words are categorized into parts of speech according to how they are used in sentences. They are the basic building blocks of grammar, classifying words according to their functions and roles in sentences.

Noun: Name of a person, place, thing or ideas

People e.g. farmer, mechanic, father, Professor Haskins, editors, Marcia

Places e.g. ocean, Canada, porch, Spain, classroom

Things e.g. scissors, giraffe, pen, smiles, tugboat, skateboard, triangle, drill, area, cube, curve

Ideas e.g. love, inspiration, courage, anxiety, eagerness, happiness.

All nouns are either **common or proper nouns**:

A common noun names any person, place, or thing. Examples are: basketball, video, wizard, coin, woman, and coach.

A proper noun names a particular person, place, or thing and begins with a capital letter.

Examples are: Winston Churchill, Babe Ruth, Mr. Richard Turner, and Chicago.

Pronoun: Word used in place of a noun.

Pronouns are words you substitute for specific nouns when the reader or listener already knows which specific noun you're referring to. (examples: he, she, it, they, we).

Types of pronouns: Pronouns fall into the following categories:

- **Subjective:** *I, he, she, we*
- **Objective:** *me, him, her, us*
- **Possessive:** *mine, yours, theirs*
- **Demonstrative:** *this, that, these*

-Example: You might say, "Jennifer was supposed to be here at eight," then follow it with "She's always late; next time I'll tell her to be here a half hour earlier."

Instead of saying Jennifer's name three times in a row, you substituted she and her, and your sentences remained grammatically correct.

Adjective: Word that describes or limits a noun or pronoun. An adjective modifies (qualifies or limits the meaning of) a noun or a pronoun. It answers the questions, What kind? Which one(s)? How many? How much?

- Carrie read an interesting story. (What kind of story?)
- The recent article has that information. (Which article?)
- Wendy paid fifty dollars for the jacket. (How many dollars?)
- Much space was devoted to her artwork. (How much space?)

→ An adjective can come before or after the noun or pronoun it describes

Example : -She bought a blue dress.

-Her eyes are so mesmerizing

The Verb: Word expressing action or state of being. Verbs are words that describe specific actions, whether physical or mental. (write, kiss, is, feels).

Examples:

-Go! Be amazing!

-Run as fast as you can.

-The coach congratulated every participant who put in the work and competed.

Action vs. non-action verbs

Verbs that refer to literal actions are known as action verbs.

- He runs every morning.
- The verb *runs* is an action verb describing what *he* does.
- Not all verbs refer to literal actions, though. Verbs that refer to feelings or states of being, like *to love* and *to be*, are known as non-action verbs.

- She seems happy.

The verb *seems* is a non -action verb, describing a state of being rather than an action.

Adverb: Word used to modify the meaning of a verb, adjective, or another adverb.

-An adverb is a word that describes an adjective, a verb, or another adverb(always, once, quickly, too, there).. Look for -ly endings (*carefully, happily*), though not all adverbs follow this pattern (*soon, often*).

-I entered the room **quietly**.

Quietly describes how you entered (verb) the room.

-A cheetah is **always** faster than a lion.

Always describes how frequently a cheetah is faster (adjective) than a lion.

Here are some other examples of adverbs and what they can describe:

- **Time**: *yesterday, always, soon*
- **Place**: *here, outside, everywhere*
- **Manner**: *quietly, quickly, gracefully*
- **Degree**: *very, extremely, almost*

Preposition: Word used to show the relation between two or more things (to, at, under, into, between). Prepositions tell you the relationships between other words in a sentence.

- I left my bike leaning against the garage.

Against is the preposition because it tells us *where* you left your bike.

- She put the pizza in the oven.

Without the preposition *in*, we don't know where the pizza is.

- The man swam under the bridge. (Under connects the idea of swam and bridge.)
- She walked down the aisle. (Down connects walked and aisle.)
- Julie walked around the campus and toward town. (Around connects walked and campus .Toward connects walked and town.)

Here are some examples of what prepositions are used for:

- **Direction**: *to, into, toward*
- **Location**: *in, on, under*
- **Time**: *at, before, during*
- **Cause/Reason**: *because of, due to*

Conjunction: Word used to join a word or group of words with another word or group of words. Conjunctions make it possible to build complex sentences that express multiple ideas.

Example I like marinara sauce. I like alfredo sauce. I don't like puttanesca sauce. ➡

I like marinara sauce **and** alfredo sauce, **but** I don't like puttanesca sauce.

The 3 types of conjunctions

Here are the three types of conjunctions, with some examples of each:

- **Coordinating**: *and, but, or, yet* (I like pizza **and** pasta.)
- **Subordinating**: *because, although, if* (She stayed home **because** she was sick.)
- **Correlative**: *either/or, neither/nor* (**Either** you apologize, **or** I'm leaving.)

Interjection: An exclamation.

An **interjection** is a word or phrase that expresses a strong emotion, command, reaction, or sudden feeling. It is often used as an exclamation and is typically followed by a comma or exclamation mark. Interjections can stand alone or be inserted into a sentence.

- Wow! That was an incredible performance.
- Oops! I left my keys at home.
- We won the game. Hooray!
- She studied all night and, phew, finally passed the exam.
- Well, I guess we should leave now.

Interjections add emotion and personality to writing, but you should generally avoid them in formal writing.

Activity: Underline each **noun**, circle each **verb**, and box each **adjective** in the following sentences.

1. The young boy played with his puppy in the garden.
2. Our teacher wrote the answers on the whiteboard.
3. The bright sunshine warmed the children at the park.
4. My father bought a new car yesterday.
5. The happy artist painted a beautiful portrait.
6. Several students studied for the difficult test.
7. The cat chased the tiny mouse across the floor.

NOTE: this lesson was created through the use of the following sources:

<https://www.grammarly.com/blog/parts-of-speech/the-8-parts-of-speech/>

AN INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS BY Loreto Todd

Oviogun, P. V., & Veerdee, P. S. (2020). Definition of language and linguistics: basic competence. *Macrolinguistics and Microlinguistics*, 1(1), 1–12.