Parts of Speech

Linguists group the words of a language into classes (sets) which show similar syntactic behavior, and often a typical semantic type. These word classes are otherwise called syntactic or *grammatic categories,* but more commonly still by the traditional name *parts of Speech* **(POS).**

Three important parts of speech are *noun*, *verb,* and *adjective. Nouns* typically refer to people, animals, concepts, and things. The *verb* is used to express the action in a sentence. *Adjectives* describe properties of nouns. The most basic test for words belonging to the same class is the *substitution test.*

Words that accompany nouns: Determiners and adjectives

Determiners describe the reference of a noun. A sub- type of determiners is *articles.* The article indicates that we're talking about someone or something that we already know about or can uniquely determine. We say the *tree* if we have already made reference to the tree or if the reference is clear from context such as when we are standing next to a tree, and it is clear we are referring to it. The article a (or an) indicates that the person or thing we are talking about was not previously mentioned. If we say a *tree,* then we are indicating that we have not mentioned this tree before, and its identity cannot be inferred from context. Other determiners include the *demonstratives,* such as *this* and *that.*

Adjectives are used to describe properties of nouns. Here are some adjectives: a *red* rose, this long journey, many *intelligent* children, a very *trendy magazine.*

Other parts of speech: Adverbs, prepositions, and particles

Adverbs modify a verb in the same way that adjectives modify nouns. Adverbs specify place, time, manner, or degree:
For example:

a. She often travels to Las Vegas.

b. She started her career off very *impressively.*

Prepositions are mainly small words that prototypically express spatial relationships:

For example: *in* the glass, on the table, *over* their heads, about an interesting idea, *concerning* your recent invention
PARTICLE: Most prepositions do double duty as particles. *Particles* are a subclass of prepositions that can enter strong bonds with verbs in the formation of so-called phrasal *verbs.* A phrasal verb is a separate lexical entry with syntactic and semantic properties different from the verb it was formed from. Here are some examples:

a. The plane took off at Chennai.

b. Don't give *in* to him.

c. It is time to take *on* new responsibilities.

d. He was put off by so much rudeness.

Conjunctions and complementizers

The remaining important word categories are coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. *Coordinating conjunctions* 'conjoin' or *coordinate* two words or phrases of (usually) the same category:

- husband *and* wife [nouns]
- She bought or leased the car. [verbs]
- The green triangle and the blue square [noun phrases]
- She bought her car, *but* she also considered leasing it. [sentences]

One function of coordinating conjunctions is to link two sentences (or *clauses)* as shown in the last example. This can also be done by *subordinating conjunctions.* In the examples below, the subordinating conjunction is shown in italics.

a. She said *that* he would be late. [proposition]

b. She complained *because* he was late. [reason]

c. I won't wait *if* he is late. [condition]

d. She thanked him *although* he was late. [concession]

e. She left *before* he arrived. [temporal]

Phrase Structure

1. **Noun Phrase**
2. **Verb Phrase**
3. **Adjective Phrase**
4. **Prepositional phrases.**