

**Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education of the
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**The Uzbekistan State World Languages University
English Faculty I**

COURSE PAPER

Theme: The problem of parts of speech

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INTRODUCTION

The course paper under review is dedicated to the study the problems of parts of speech in English which presents a certain interest both for theoretical investigation and for practical usage. We have the full basis to approve that many linguistics have brought the invaluable contribution to studying various properties of the structural models of the sentences with verbs more in detailed see M.Ya.Blokh, M.T.Iriskhulov, A.A.Khudyakov, B.Khaimovich and B.Rogovskaya, J.Lyons's works and etc., that has created necessary theoretical preconditions for more detailed analysis of sentence and the structures with them.

The Subject matter of our course paper is the study the parts of speech.

So, the aim of the course paper is the thorough analysis the problems of parts of speech in English.

The novelty of the work is that the thorough analysis and problems of parts of speech in English.

The theoretical value of the course paper can be useful for those who are interested in the field of English grammar and for those who study in the sphere of linguistics.

As the research material we used the most active the literature devoted to the English grammar and the Structure of the English language. Besides, we studied up to date American, British and other foreign articles on international websites related to the scientific work.

The methods used in the course paper are based on the styles and ways used by famous linguists and famous scientists who worked in this very section of the English grammar.

1.1 Parts of Speech in English

The problem of parts of speech is one that causes great controversies both in general linguistic theory and in the analysis of separate languages. We shall have to examine here briefly a few general questions concerning parts of speech which are of some importance for Modern English.

The term "parts of speech" (as well as the corresponding terms in Russian, German, French, and other languages), though firmly established, is not a very happy one. What is meant by a "part of speech" is a type of word differing from other types in some grammatical point or points. To take the clearest example of all, the verb is a type of word different from all other types in that it alone has the grammatical category of tense. Thus, while it is perfectly reasonable to ask, "What is the past tense of the word *live*?" (the answer of course is, *lived*), it would make no sense to ask, "What is the past tense of the word *city*?" or "What is the past tense of the word *big*?" Those words just have not got any past tense, or any tense whatever, for that matter: the notion of tense cannot be applied to them. Tense is one of the distinctive features characterising the verb as against every other type of word. However, the question is much less simple with reference to some other types of words, and a general definition of the principles on which the classification of parts of speech is based becomes absolutely necessary.

We cannot here go into the controversy over these principles that has lasted a considerable time now, and we will limit ourselves to stating the principles of our classification and pointing out some difficulties inherent in it.

The principles on which the classification is based are three in number, viz. (1) meaning, (2) form, (3) function. Each of these requires some additional explanations.

(1) By meaning we do not mean the individual meaning of each separate word (its lexical meaning) but the meaning common to all the

words of the given class and constituting its essence. Thus, the meaning of the substantive (noun) is "thingness". This applies equally to all and every noun and constitutes the structural meaning of the noun as a type of word. Similarly, the meaning of the verb as a type of word is that of "process", whatever the individual meaning of a separate verb may happen to be. We shall have to dwell on this later in considering every part of speech in detail.

(2) By form we mean the morphological characteristics of a type of word. Thus, the noun is characterised by the category of number (singular and plural), the verb by tense, mood, etc. Several types of words (prepositions, conjunctions, and others) are characterised by invariability.

(3) By function we mean the syntactical properties of a type of word. These are subdivided into two, viz. (a) its method of combining with other words, (b) its function in the sentence; (a) has to deal with phrases, (b) with sentence structure. Taking, as we did previously, the verb as a specimen, we can state that, for example, a verb combines with a following noun (*write letters*) and also with a following adverb (*write quickly*). As to (b), i. e. the syntactical function of a verb in a sentence, it is that of a predicate.

Two additional remarks are necessary before we proceed to the analysis of parts of speech in detail.

In the first place, there is the question about the mutual relation of the criteria. We cannot be sure in advance that all three criteria will always point the same way. Then, again, in some cases, one of them may fail (this especially applies to the criterion of form). Under such circumstances, it may prove necessary to choose between them, i. e. to attach to one of them greater value than to another. We may say, provisionally, that we shall treat them in the order in which they have been enumerated, viz. meaning shall come first, form next, and function last.

It will also be seen that the theory of parts of speech, though considered

by most scholars to be a part of morphology, cannot do without touching on some syntactical problems, namely on phrases and on syntactical functions of words (point 3 in our list of criteria). We shall regard the theory of parts of speech as essentially a part of morphology, involving, however, some syntactical points.

1. Proceeding in the usual order, we start with the **noun**, or substantive.

Its characteristic features are the following.

(1) Meaning: thingness. Thus, nouns include not only *chair* and *iron*, etc., but also *beauty*, *peace*, *necessity*, *journey*, and everything else presented as a thing, or object.

(2) Form. Nouns have the category of number (singular and plural), though some individual nouns may lack either a singular or a plural form. They also, in the accepted view, have the category of case (common and genitive);

(3) Function. (a) Combining with words to form phrases. A noun combines with a preceding adjective (*large room*), or occasionally with a following adjective (*times immemorial*), with a preceding noun in either the common case (*iron bar*) or the genitive case (*father's room*), with a verb following it (*children play*) or preceding it (*play games*). Occasionally a noun may combine with a following or a preceding adverb (*the man there; the then president*). It also combines with prepositions (*in a house; house of rest*). It is typical of a noun to be preceded by the definite or indefinite article (*the room, a room*). (b) Function in the sentence. A noun may be the subject or the predicative of a sentence, or an object, an attribute, and an adverbial modifier. It can also make part of each of these when preceded by a preposition.

2. Next, we come to the adjective.

(1) Meaning. The adjective expresses property.

(2) Form. Adjectives in Modern English are invariable. Some adjectives

form degrees of comparison (*long, longer, longest*).

(3) Function. (a) Adjectives combine with nouns both preceding and (occasionally) following them (*large room, times immemorial*). They also combine with a preceding adverb (*very large*). Adjectives can be followed by the phrase "preposition + noun" (*free from danger*). Occasionally they combine with a preceding verb (*married young*). (b) In the sentence, an adjective can be either an attribute (*large room*) or a predicative (*is large*). It can also be an objective predicative (*painted the door green*).

3. The pronoun.

(1) The meaning of the pronoun as a separate part of speech is somewhat difficult to define. In fact, some pronouns share essential peculiarities of nouns (e.g. *he*), while others have much in common with adjectives (e. g. *which*). This made some scholars think that pronouns were not a separate part of speech at all and should be distributed between nouns and adjectives. However, this view proved untenable and entailed insurmountable difficulties. Hence it has proved necessary to find a definition of the specific meaning of pronouns, distinguishing them from both nouns and adjectives. From this angle the meaning of pronouns as a part of speech can be stated as follows: pronouns point to the things and properties without naming them. Thus, for example, the pronoun *it* points to a thing without being the name of any particular class of things. The pronoun *its* points to the property of a thing by referring it to another thing. The pronoun *what* can point both to a thing and a property.

(2) Form. As far as form goes pronouns fall into different types. Some of them have the category of number (singular and plural), e. g. *this*, while others have no such category, e. g. *somebody*. Again, some pronouns have the category of case (*he — him, somebody — somebody's*), while others have none (*something*).

(3) Function. (a) Some pronouns combine with verbs (*he speaks, find him*), while others can also combine with a following noun (*this room*). (b) In the

sentence, some pronouns may be the subject (*he, what*) or the object, while others are the attribute (*my*). Pronouns can be predicatives.

1.2 From building means parts of speech

The system of parts of speech is historically variable. New parts of language progress. Old English, for instance, did not know the category of state, the articles, the modals as separate classes of words, though they are recognizable as such in New English.

But no matter how many parts of speech we may find in a language, we see that the vocabulary is not a chaotic mass of separate words. Grammar organizes them into a comparatively small number of lexicogrammatical classes, parts or particles of speech.

Every new lexeme that appears in the vocabulary usually joins one of the existing classes and processes the features of the other lexemes of the same class.

In most cases new lexemes are formed on the basis of already existing ones, e.g. the word *steamer* was formed on the basis of the word *steam*, the word *motor-car* on the basis of the words *motor-* and *car*.

Now the new lexeme may either remain in the class to which the basic lexeme belongs, as in the examples above, or pass to another lexicogrammatical class, like the noun *follower* derived from the verb *follow*.

In the latter case, i.e. when the new lexeme passes to another part of speech, it, naturally, acquires all the features characterizing the lexemes of that part of speech. The world *follower* is distinguished as an English noun from a verb:

1. By the general meaning of "substance" (and not of tense, person, etc)
2. By its stem-building suffix – *er*: *teacher*.
3. By having opposites of number and case (and not of tense, person).
4. By its power of attaching articles, prepositions, adjectives (and not adverbs)

5. By its functions in the sentence.

But outwardly the words follow – follower are distinguished only by the suffix –er which is therefore often considered to be the only means of lexeme building in this case.

This view is supported by the fact that in such languages as Latin, Greek, Russian, etc..., different lexemes have, as a rule, different stems even if their roots are the same.

Cf. Лак, лак – об – ый, лак – Иру – но.

Бел – ый, бел – и – ть , бел – изн – а.

In the examples above the suffixes –ов, –иру, –и, –изн, are at the same time stem – building and lexeme – building suffixes. Thus “stem – building” and lexeme – building have come to be looked upon as synonyms.

In English stem – building and lexeme – building often denote different phenomena. Not infrequently the stem of two (or more) lexemes belonging to different parts of speech have the same form in English. The nouns love, eye, doctor, and the verbs love, eye, doctor do not differ as to the forms of their stems. So one cannot speak of stem – building (the Latin stem – building suffix – or is found both in the noun doctor in the verb doctor). At the same time doctor n. and doctor v belong to different lexemes since they belong to different parts of speech and the verb lexeme is clearly derived from the noun lexemes. What then is the means of lexeme – building in this case? A.I Smirnitsy has shown¹ that it is the paradigm.

Taken as a whole the paradigm one lexeme shows it to be noun . While the paradigm of the other clearly characterizes it as a verb .

¹Иностранные языки в школе 1953 N5 p24

This away of lexeme – building, very common in Modern English, has got the name of conversion².

A.I.Smirnitsky defines conversion as a types of word – building in which the paradigm is the only means of word building³.

We quite agree that the paradigms of doctor (n) and doctor (v) characterize them as two separate lexemes belonging to different parts of speech and speech and thus the change of paradigm is really a means of lexeme building. But do these lexemes differ from each other only in their paradigms? Hardly so.

Out of the five features that may characterize a lexeme as a belonging to a certain parts of speech they lack only one: stem building elements.

Thus the two lexemes are characterized by the remaining for features

	Doctor(n)	Doctor(v)
1.General lexica grammatical meaning	Denotes a substance	Denotes an action

	Doctor(n)	Doctor(v)
1.Paradigm	Has number and case opossums.	Has opossums of tense, person mood, etc
2.Combinability	Attaches articles prepositions, etc	Attaches adverbs etc
3. Function	Subject, object	Predicate

² Some linguists use in this case the term functional change, a misapplied term, conveying the idea that we deal here not with the creation of a new lexeme but with a change of the function of the same lexeme.

³ “Иностраннный языки в школе” 1953. N 5 p24

Consequently, the creation of the verb doctor on basis of the noun doctor has been achieved not only by means of changing the paradigm but also by changing the general lexica – grammatical meaning, combinability and function. All these changes have brought about the creation of a new lexeme i.e. all of them serve as lexeme building means.

Moreover the paradigm in Modern English is very often much less significant than the other features:

1. There are very many lexemes in English (both nouns and adjectives and lexemes of other of speech) which consist of only one word. E.g. meat, bread, hatred, dead, deaf, alive must, etc
2. English paradigms (save those of the verb) are mostly poor, and forms of different words very often coincide. Even in our example the noun forms doctor, doctors, coincide with the verb forms doctor, doctors.

Thus, unlike stem – building elements,(prefixes, suffixes, stress, etc) which characterize each of a lexeme as belonging to a given part of speech, the paradigm in English distinguish only some of the words of a lexeme, whereas the general lexica – grammatical meaning, combinability and function characterize every word of every lexeme as belonging to a certain part of speech and must, therefore be considered the most universal features of a part of speech.

So conversion might be defined negatively as a way of lexeme – building without stem building elements.

The positive definition would be more lengthy: existing ones by means of changing the paradigm, the lexica – grammatical meaning, the combinability and the function or only the last three features.

This definition covers not only cases like the one discussed above (doctor n →doctor v) but also changes of the type break v.→ break n..., smooth a →smooth v, native a → native n..., down adv →down prep..., etc. In cases like down adv →

down v. the basic lexeme has no paradigm, and the derived lexeme has a developed paradigm. In down adv → down prep, both lexemes are without paradigms and are distinguished only by their lexica – grammatical meanings combinability and functions.

Some linguists do not regard the substantivization of adjectives (native a → native n) and the adverbialization of nouns (home n → home adv) as types of conversion on account of their slow progress, as distinct from the instantaneous nature of changes like doctor n → doctor v. The so-called partial substantivization of adjectives can be used as an argument in favor of such views. The adjective native was first partially substantivized, then fully. But we may also have partial substantivization in cases like to smoke → a smoke (in to have a smoke) where the change was instantaneous.

Anyhow, in case of full substantivization the results do not differ from those of other kinds of conversion. We might call changes of the types doctor n → doctor v. the verbalization of nouns, break v → break n. the substantivization of verbs better a → better n – the verbalization of adjectives, etc.

Summing up, we may say that lexeme building is closely connected with the division of lexemes into parts of speech, the characteristic features of the latter discharging the function of lexemes – building. When no reference to the history of derivation is made, and no emphasis is laid on the fact that doctor n. is the basic lexeme and doctor v. has been derived by conversion, we can simply say that doctor n and doctor v are related by conversion.

1.3 Type of grammatical meaning of parts of speech

Every language contains thousands upon thousands of lexemes. When describing them it is possible either to analyse every lexeme separately or to unite them into classes with more or less common features. Linguists make use of both approaches. A dictionary usually describes individual lexemes, a grammar book mostly deals with classes of lexemes traditionally called parts of speech.

Though grammarians have been studying parts of speech for over two thousand years, the criteria used for classifying lexemes are not yet agreed upon. Hence there is a good deal of subjectivity in defining the classes of lexemes and we consequently, find different classifications. Still parts of speech are not altogether an invention of grammarians: what really lies at the bottom of this division of material reality. The bulk of the class denoting substances is made up of words denoting material objects such as table, window, milk etc. the verbal of the class of lexemes meaning processes is constituted by lexemes denoting concrete actions, such as those writing, reading, speaking, etc.

The lexemes of a part of speech are first of all united by their content, i. e., by their meaning. Now, this general meaning of a part of speech cannot be grammatical because the members of one lexeme have different grammatical meanings: boy's (singular number, possessive case) boys (plural common case). Nevertheless, the meaning of a part of speech is closely connected with certain typical grammatical meanings.

The general meaning of part of speech cannot be lexical. If all the words of part of speech had the same lexical meaning, they would constitute one lexeme. But the meaning of part of speech is closely connected with the lexical meanings of its constituent lexemes. It is always an abstraction from those meanings.

Lexemes united by the general lexicon-grammatical meaning of “substance” are called nouns. Those having the general lexicon-grammatical meaning of “action” are called verbs, etc., etc

The definition “substance”, “action”, “quality” are conventional. It is easy to see the notion of “substance” in nouns like water or steel. But a certain stretch of imagination is necessary to discern the “substance” in nouns like hatred silence, (a) swim, or the “action” in the verbs belong, resemble, contain and the like.

The general lexicon-grammatical meaning is the intrinsic property of a part of speech. Connected with it are some properties that find, so to say, outward expression. Lexicon-grammatical morphemes are once of these properties. The stems of nouns lexemes often include the morphemes –er, -ist, -ness, -ship, -ment (worker, Marxist firmness, friendship, management). The stems of verb lexemes includes the morphemes -ize, -iffy, -be, -en, -en (industrialize, electrify, becloud, enrich, darken). Adjective stems stems often have the suffixes, -full, -ish, -oust, -ive (careful, fearless, boyish, continuous, evasive) . Thus the presence of a certain lexicon-grammatical morpheme in the stem of a lexeme- often stamps it as belonging: to a definite part of speech. Many of these morphemes are regularly used to form lexemes of one class from those all other class. For instance, the suffix –ness often forms noun stems from adjective stems. Dark-darkness, sweet-sweetness, thick-thickness, full-fullness, etc. the absence of the suffix in dark as contrasted with –ness of darkness looks like a zero morpheme characterizing dark as an adjective.

Other stem-building elements are of comparatively little significance as distinctive features of parts of speech. For example: A slow steady movement that seemed to be independent.

Stem structure is of little help too, because there are stems of various kinds within almost every part of speech: simple (snow, know, now, down),

derivative (belief, believe below, before), compound (get up, at all, one hundred and twenty, in order to).

Certainly English nouns have many more compound stems than other parts of speech, and composite stems are most typical of the English verb. But this as a case for statistics. As a classification criterion it is of little use.

A part of speech is characterized by its grammatical categories manifested in the opossums and paradigms of its lexemes. Nouns have the categories of number and case. Verbs possess the categories of tense, voice, mood, etc. Adjectives have the category of the degrees of comparison. That is why then paradigms of lexemes belonging to different parts of speech are different. The paradigms of a verb lexemes is long: write, writes, wrote, shall write, will write, am writing, is writing, was writing, were writing, etc. The paradigm of a noun lexeme is much shorter: sister, sisters. The paradigm of an adjective lexeme is still shorter: cold, colder, coldest. The paradigm of an adverb like always, is the shortest as the lexeme consists of one word.

It must be borne in mind, however, that not all the lexemes of a part of speech have the same paradigms.

Cf. 1. Student book information.

The first lexeme has opossums of two grammatical categories: number and case. The second lexeme has only one oppose me – that of number. It has no case opossum. In other words, it is outside the both categories: it has opossums at all. We may say that the number oppose me with its opposite grammatical meanings of “singularity” and “plurality” is neutralized.

In nouns like information, bread, milk, etc. owing to their lexical meanings which can hardly be associated with the notions of “oneness” or “more- than oneness” (cf. the uncommonness of “two milks” three information etc).

Sometimes only the form of an opossum is neutralized in certain surroundings.

Ex: Lanny knew that all he had to do was to lower his eyes or look away- any gesture of defeat would have done- and the man would tell him to go.

We may define neutralization as the reduction of an oppose me to one of its members under certain circumstances. This member may be called the member of neutralization. Usually it is the unmarked member of oppose me. In number opossums, for instance, the member of neutralization is mostly the unmarked “singular”. However, sometimes the marked “plural” because the member of neutralization, as in the case of trousers, tongs, sweets, etc. The category of number is by no means an exception as regards the neutralization of its opossums. We may recognize the neutralization of the case opossums in nouns like book, hand, thought, etc. of the category of degrees of comparison in adjectives like deaf, blind, wooden, etc. of the category of aspect in verbs like to believe, to resemble, etc.

Ex: A spasm of trembling shot through his body and he became conscious of the fact that he was breathing hard.

But there are no grounds to speak of the neutralization of the gender oppose me in the adjective blind (cf. слоеной- слоеная -слоеной) because no adjective lexemes have gender opossums in English.

The influence of the category of number is obliquely felt even in a case like milk. The word milk is closer to the “singular” member than to the “plural” one.

Ex: And here I am, Lanny thought, fighting the same battle in the twentieth century.

Thus, the word milk can be said to have an oblique “singular” meaning. It is oblique because it is acquired not as a result of direct opposition, but through

association and analogy with words having “plural” opposites. Similarly book can be said to have an oblique common case meaning by analogy with words like boy, cook which have an actually meaning of “common case” owing to the opossums boy-boy’s, cook- cook’s.

Likewise the verbs creeps, comes have an oblique meaning of “active voice” by analogy with the first members in such opossums as keeps –is kept, makes-is made. Oblique grammatical meanings can also be regarded as potential meanings that can be actualized if necessary. Ordinarily the word room, for instance, has but an oblique meaning of common case with no possessive case opposite, but Galsworthy uses the room’s atmosphere. We find the same actualization of a potential number meaning in there was no room for the separate bitterness.

The actualization of potential “voice” meaning is observed in a sentence like the bed had not been slept.

Taking into consideration that oblique grammatical meanings unite numbers of lexemes into more or less homogeneous groups, we may also treat them as lexicon- grammatical meanings for example, nouns like, milk, water, steel, self-possession are united by the oblique meaning of singular number into one lexicon- grammatical group of uncountable.

Now coming back to the nouns student book information we can say that all of them have the meanings of singular number and common case. Only in the noun book the case meaning and in the noun information both of them are oblique or potential, or lexica-grammatical ones.

Another important feature of a part of speech is its combinability i.e. the ability to form certain combination of words. As stated, we distinguish lexical grammatical and lexica- grammatical combinability.

When speaking of the combinability of parts of speech, lexicogrammatical meanings are to be considered first. In this sense combinability is the power of a lexicogrammatical class of words to form combinations of definite patterns with words of certain classes irrespective of their lexical or grammatical meanings.

Owing to the lexicogrammatical meanings of nouns (“substance”) and preposition (“relation (of substances)”) these two parts of speech often go together in speech. The model to(from, at) school characterizes both nouns and prepositions as distinct from adverbs which do not usually form combination of the types “to loudly”, form loudly. The same is true about articles(a book, the book but not a below the speak), adjectives (pleasant silence but not pleasant silently), etc.

As already mentioned, a characteristic feature of articles is their unilateral right-hand combinability with nouns .Unilateral right-hand connection, but with different classes of words, are also typical of particles (even, john, even yesterday, even beautiful). Bilateral connection are typical of conjunctions and prepositions. The connection of nouns and verbs in speech are variable, but right-hand connections are more numerous with verbs.

Ex: The train hooted shrilly and slowly jogged out of the siding. On its way to Bloemfontein, and then Johannesburg, and then farther north.

Thus the combinability of a word, its connections in speech help to show to what part of speech it belongs.

The impossibility of forming combinations with certain classes of lexemes may serve as valuable negative criteria in the classification of lexemes. Thus the fact that the adjective can form no combinations of the preposition + adjective pattern or are verbs cannot attach an article help to distinguish them from other parts of speech.

All this and the desire to avoid, as far as possible the confusion of the two basic units of grammar the word and the sentence, must necessarily reduce the role of the sentence criterion in defining part of speech. This is why we play it last, though some linguists. Give it the first place sentence. A noun is mostly used as a subject or an object, a verb usually functions as a predicate, an adjective- as an attribute, etc.

Thus a part of speech is a class of lexemes characterized by 1) its lexicogrammatical meaning, 2) its lexicogrammatical morphemes (stem-build elements), 3) its grammatical categories or its paradigms, 4) its combinability and 5) its functions in a sentence.

All these features distinguish, for instance, the lexeme represented by the word teacher from that represented by the word teacher and stamp the words of the first lexeme is nouns, those of the other lexeme as verbs.

But very often or even parts of speech lack some of these features. The noun lexeme information lacks feature 3. The adjective lexeme deaf lacks both feature 2 and feature 3. So do the adverbs back seldom, very, the prepositions with of at, etc.

Feature 1, 4 and 5 are the most general properties of parts of speech.

Many linguistics point out the difference between such parts of speech as say, nouns or verb, on the one hand, and preposition or conjunctions, on the other.

V.V.Vinogradov thinks that only noun, the adjective, the pronoun, the numeral, the verb, the adverb, and the category of site in the Russian language may be considered parts of speech, as these words “can fulfill naming function or be indicative equivalents of names”⁴. Besides parts of speech V.V.Vinogradov

⁴ В.В.Винаградов Русский язык. М. 1997,р.р41-44

distinguishes 4 particles of speech: 1)particles proper, 2)linking particles, 3) preposition, 4) conjunctions.

Ex: Celia was pretty and a good companion.

One many infer that particles of speech are denied the naming function, to which we object. There is certainly some difference between the nature of such words as table and often. One names an object, the other – a relation. But both “can fulfill the naming function”. Nouns like relation, attitude, verbs like belong, refer name relation too, but in a always peculiar to these parts of speech. Preposition and conjunctions name the relation of the word of reality in their own way.

E. Nita makes no distinction between nouns and prepositions as to their naming function when he writes that words such as boy, fish, ken, walk, good, bad, against and with are signal for various objects, qualities, processes, states and relationships of natural and cultural phenomena⁵.

H. Sweet distinguishes full words and empty words. Producing the sentence The earth is round, he writes: “we call such words as the and is from-words because they are words in from only”⁶

Our opinion is that both the and is are words in content as well as in form. The impossibility of substituting an for the in the sentence above is due to the content, not the form of an. When replacing is by another link verb (seems, looks) we change the content of the sentence.

Many authors speak of function words D. Brown, O. Baily⁷ call “auxiliary verbs prepositions and articles” function words. Vzhigadlo, I.Ivanoiva, L lofic⁸ name prepositions conjunctions, particles and articles as functional parts of

⁵ В.В.ВНаградов Русский язык. М. 1947 p.p4144

⁶ E.A Nita Morphology. Ann Arbor 1946 p 138

⁷ Form in Modern English NY,1958

⁸ Op cit., p16

speech distinct from notional parts of speech. C. Fries⁹ points out 4. classes of words called part of speech and 15 groups of words called functional words.

The demarcation line between function words and all other words is not words and all other words is not very clear. Now it passes between parts of speech, now it is down inside a parts of speech.

Alongside of preposition , auxiliary verbs are mentioned. Alongside of functional parts of speech, grammarians speak of the functional use of certain classes of words for instance verbs¹⁰

The criteria for singling out function words are rather vague. After enumerating some of separating the words of these 15 groups from the other and for calling them function words is the fact that in order to res to certain structure signals one must know these words as items. And again: There are no formal contrasts by which we can ineptly the words of these lists. They must be remembered as items¹¹.

The difference between the function words and the other is not so much a matter of form as of content. The lexical meanings of function words are not so bright, distinct, tangible as these of other words. If most words of a language are notional, function words may be called semi – notionally.

As to form, a semi - notional words may coincide with a notional one. Take, for example the form grows in the two sentences: He grows in the two old. The first grows expresses an action. What does he do? He grows roses. In the second case the notion of action is very weak. He grows old can make but a facetious answer to what does he do? The linking function of grows comes to the fore. Grows links a word indicating a person (he) with a word denoting a property of that person (old). In this function it resembles (and is often inter chainable

⁹ The structure of English. London 1961 p 160

¹⁰ В.Жигало and others, op cit.,, p 89-90

¹¹ Е.У.Шендельс “Иностранные языки”

with) a few other verbs with faded lexical meanings and clear linking properties (become, turn, get). The fading of the lexical meaning in grows is connected with changes in its combinability. As a linking word it acquires obligatory connection, whereas grows as a notional word has variable combinability. The semi-notional grows forms connections with adjectives, ad links, with which the notional grows is not combinable. The fading of the lexical meaning affects the isolatability of words. Semi-notional words rarely or never became sentences.

A similar distinction can be drawn between notional and semi-notional lexemes within a part of speech and between notional parts of speech.

Preposition, conjunctions, articles and particles may be regarded as semi-notional parts of speech when contrasted within the notional parts of speech. What unites the semi-notional parts of speech is as follows:

- a) Their very general and comparatively weak lexical meanings meaning, precluding the use of substitutes.
- b) Their practically negative floatability;
- c) Their obligatory unilateral (articles, particles) or bilateral (prepositions, conjunctions) combinability;
- d) Their functions of linking (conjunctions, prepositions of specifying (articles, particles) words.

Naturally, the system of English parts of speech presented above is not the only one. Some of the above-mentioned properties of parts of speech and neglect the other we may obtain a different list. Thus if we regard the grammatical categories of a part of speech as dominant feature and underestimate the lexical-grammatical meaning, combinability and syntactical function, we are prone to unite adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, interjection and particles into one class as H. Sweet and O. Jespersen do. H. Sweet finds the following classes of words in Modern

English; nouns, adjectives, numerals, verbs and particles¹². O. Jespersen names substantives adjectives, adverbs, verbs, pronouns and particles¹³. In both cases the particles denote the jumble of words of different classes that are united by the absence of grammatical categories. In we classify notional words in accordance with their distribution in speech (which is essentially the same as their combinability) and neglect or underestimate the conclusion that there exist only four classes of words; nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs. In modern structural linguistics these classes are usually denoted by the letters N.A.V and D respectively. Since the distribution of John and he is similar in many cases.

Ex; Yes, this was also the end of CAPE TOWN and its bustling and exciting stream of life.

Both words are thought to belong to the same class N spit of the differences in their lexica-grammatical meanings and paradigms.

¹² H. Sweet, op cit., y, 1, p 56.

¹³ O. Jespersen Essentials of English Grammar p 16

CONCLUSION

The problem of parts of speech is one that causes great controversies both in general linguistic theory and in the analysis of separate languages. We shall have to examine here briefly a few general questions concerning parts of speech which are of some importance for Modern English.

The term "parts of speech" (as well as the corresponding terms in Russian, German, French, and other languages), though firmly established, is not a very happy one. What is meant by a "part of speech" is a type of word differing from other types in some grammatical point or points. To take the clearest example of all, the verb is a type of word different from all other types in that it alone has the grammatical category of tense. Thus, while it is perfectly reasonable to ask, "What is the past tense of the word *live*?" (the answer of course is, *lived*), it would make no sense to ask, "What is the past tense of the word *city*?" or "What is the past tense of the word *big*?" Those words just have not got any past tense, or any tense whatever, for that matter: the notion of tense cannot be applied to them. Tense is one of the distinctive features characterising the verb as against every other type of word. However, the question is much less simple with reference to some other types of words, and a general definition of the principles on which the classification of parts of speech is based becomes absolutely necessary.

We cannot here go into the controversy over these principles that has lasted a considerable time now, and we will limit ourselves to stating the principles of our classification and pointing out some difficulties inherent in it.

The principles on which the classification is based are three in number, viz. (1) meaning, (2) form, (3) function. Each of these requires some additional explanations.

(3) By meaning we do not mean the individual meaning of each separate word (its lexical meaning) but the meaning common to all the words of the

given class and constituting its essence. Thus, the meaning of the substantive (noun) is "thingness". This applies equally to all and every noun and constitutes the structural meaning of the noun as a type of word. Similarly, the meaning of the verb as a type of word is that of "process", whatever the individual meaning of a separate verb may happen to be. We shall have to dwell on this later in considering every part of speech in detail.

(4) By **form** we mean the morphological characteristics of a type of word. Thus, the noun is characterised by the category of number (singular and plural), the verb by tense, mood, etc. Several types of words (prepositions, conjunctions, and others) are characterised by invariability.

(3) By function we mean the syntactical properties of a type of word. These are subdivided into two, viz. (a) its method of combining with other words, (b) its function in the sentence; (a) has to deal with phrases, (b) with sentence structure. Taking, as we did previously, the verb as a specimen, we can state that, for example, a verb combines with a following noun (*write letters*) and also with a following adverb (*write quickly*). As to (b), i. e. the syntactical function of a verb in a sentence, it is that of a predicate.

For conclusion, it is important to note that to study problems of parts of speech in English needs further and further investigation.

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