**Course**: Written Expression

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**Lesson one**: Parts of Speech-theory (nouns, pronouns and adjectives)

**Objectives:**

By the end of the session, students will be able to:

1. understand the function of nouns, pronouns and adjectives.
2. identify the aforementioned word classes within sentences.
3. appropriately use nouns, pronouns and adjective within a sentence

**Definition:**

A *part of speech*, also called a *word class*, is a category or a class to which a word is assigned to based on its function within a sentence. A word can be a noun, pronoun, verb, preposition, conjunction, an adjective, adverb, article and an interjection. Understanding the correct definition and function of words in sentences is the first step to develop one s reading and writing skills.

1. **Nouns:**

A noun names

people (a girl, cousin, man, Alice...)

places (lake, Spain, kitchen, cave, forest, yard...)

things, activities, concepts and ideas (tree, love, running, swimming, love, Rugby, knowledge, discussion, vacation, conversation...).

Nouns can be either *common* (not capitalized) or *proper* (always capitalized). Common nouns name general persons, places, and things, whereas proper nouns name particular persons, places and things.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Common nouns (general) | Proper nouns (particular) |
| city | Los Angeles, London, Algiers |
| boy | Peter, Paul |
| snake | Python, Cobra, |
| student | Julia, Alice, Viki |
| magazine | the Time, the Scientist, Business Today |
| beach | Corona Del Mar |
| phone | Oppo, Nokia... |
| day | Sunday, Thursday |
| month | April, July, December |

Nouns can be *singular* or *plural.*

When you are talking about one person, animal, place, or thing, use a *singular noun*, e.g., a ship, a teacher, a river, an apple, an umbrella.

When you are talking about two or more people, animals, places or things, use *plural nouns*. Most nouns are made plural by adding **-s** at the end, e.g., ships, teachers, rivers, apples, umbrellas

**Adding an 'es' :** In most cases when the noun ends in a buzzing, shushing or hissing sound like beach, buzz or class, the plural form of the noun needs to have an **'es'** added to the end.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Singular Form** | **Plural Form** |
| glass | glasses |
| church | churches |
| bush | bushes |
| buzz | buzzes |
| Fox | foxes |

### **Adding an 'i':** Some words in English that end in 'us' have strong root ties to Latin. Some of those endings need to change from 'us' to 'i' in the plural form. While there is not a definite rule on when 'us' singular nouns need to change to 'i', the table below shows some common examples.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Singular Form** | **Plural Form** |
| octopus | octopi |
| fungus | fungi |
| alumnus | alumni |

### **Nouns ending in 's' or 'z':** Nouns that end in 's' or 'z' most often have an 'es' added to them in the plural form. There are some words, however, that are exceptions to the rule. In the exception cases, the 's' or 'z' needs to be doubled before adding the 'es'. See the table below for examples of the exceptions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Singular Form** | **Plural Form** |
| quiz | quizzes |
| Fez | fezzes |
| Gas | gasses |

### **Nouns ending in 'f' or 'fe':** When the singular form of a noun ends in an 'f' or 'fe', they need to be replaced with 'ves' to make them plural. See the table below for examples.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Singular Form** | **Plural Form** |
| knife | knives |
| wife | wives |
| Life | lives |
| wolf | wolves |
| thief | thieves |
| shelf | shelves |

While most words that end in 'f' do change to 'ves', there are exceptions to the rule such as chef (chefs), reef (reefs), roof (roofs) and safe (safes).

### **Nouns ending in 'on' or 'um':** There are several singular nouns that end in 'on' or 'um' that come from languages other than English. These words can be particularly tricky because the singular form is often confused with the plural form because the plural form is more common.

The best example of this is the word 'media'. Media is a term used to describe news outlets and devices that present information. The word 'media', however, is the plural form of 'medium'. In these cases, the 'on' or 'um' is changed to 'a'. See the table below for more examples.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Singular Form** | **Plural Form** |
| medium | media |
| phenomenon | phenomena |
| bacterium | bacteria |
| criterion | criteria |

### **Nouns ending in 'o':** Many nouns that end in 'o' need an es to make them plural. These words have two categories of exceptions. There are words that only add the 's' and there is another category that is considered correct with an 's' or 'es'. The tables below show the different categories of 'o' nouns.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Nouns that need 'es'** | |
| Singular Form | Plural Form |
| potato | potatoes |
| tomato | tomatoes |
| domino | dominoes |
| mosquito | mosquitoes |

Nouns that end in an 'o' that is preceded by a vowel only add an 's' to make them plural.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Nouns that need 's'** | |
| Singular Form | Plural Form |
| kangaroo | kangaroos |
| studio | studios |
| video | videos |

**Hyphenated** nouns (names that are formed by joining several short word with hyphens “-”) form plurals by adding *-s* or *-es* to the main word in the phrase:

mother-in-law mothers-in-law

sergeant-at-arms sergeants-at-arms

Some nouns form plurals in other ways, such as by changing the spelling of the plural form. These are sometimes called irregular forms of plural

foot feet

child children

criterion criteria

1. **Pronouns:**

A pronoun is a word that takes the place of or refers to a noun. The word or words that the pronoun refers to are known as the antecedent(s) of the pronoun.

Example: Farida said that she did not understand the question. (she is the pronoun, and Farida is its antecedent)

Pronouns can be divided into several categories. The most common categories are personal pronouns, relative pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and reflexive pronouns.

**Personal pronouns:** Personal pronouns are those that refer to a person. Personal pronouns are divided into three forms, depending on how they are used in a sentence. These forms are subjective (pronoun used as a subject), objective (pronoun used as an object), or possessive (the pronoun indicates possession/ownership).

*Subjective pronouns*: I, we, you, he, she, it, they

*Objective pronouns*: me, us, you, him, her, it, them

*Possessive pronouns*: my (mine), our (ours), your (yours), his (his), their (theirs), her (hers), its (its)

The following examples demonstrate the uses of these three types of personal pronouns:

I frequently listen to music when I drive. (subjective pronoun; the pronoun is used as a subject)

They enjoy decorating their home. (subjective pronoun)

Dave is starting to annoy you. (objective pronoun; the pronoun is the object of the sentence)

He gave the same gift to him. (objective pronoun)

That is my sweater. (possessive pronoun; the pronoun shows ownership or possession)

He borrowed her keys. (possessive pronoun)

The keys are hers. (possessive pronoun)

**Reflexive pronouns:** Reflexive form adds -self or -selves to the pronoun and is used to indicate action performed to or on the antecedent. The words myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves and themselves are called reflexive pronouns.  
Examples:

Maryam has hurt herself.  
Don’t cut yourself.

**Demonstrative Pronouns:** Demonstrative pronouns are used to point out or specify certain people, places, or things. The words this, these, that and those are called demonstrative pronouns.  
Examples:

This is my car.  
These are my flowers.

**Relative Pronouns:** A relative [pronoun](https://www.gingersoftware.com/content/grammar-rules/pronouns-2/) is a pronoun that is used to refer to [nouns](https://www.gingersoftware.com/content/grammar-rules/nouns/) mentioned previously, whether they are people, places, things, animals or ideas. Relative pronouns can be used to join two sentences. The following examples illustrate the use of relative pronouns:

*Relative pronouns*

who Used as a subject in reference to people

whom Used as an object in reference to people

which Used as a subject in reference to things

that Used as a subject or an object in reference to people or things

whoever Used as a subject in reference to an uncertain number of people

whichever Used as a subject in reference to an uncertain number of things

The following examples illustrate the use of relative pronouns:

Who made the phone call? (Who is used as the subject)

The phone call was made by whom? (Whom is used as the object)

Which tastes better to you? (Which is used as a subject referring to things)

I don’t like that! (That is used as the object referring to a thing)

1. **Adjectives**

An adjective is a word that modifies (or describes) a noun or a pronoun. Although adjectives usually come before the nouns they describe, they can also follow the noun.

Examples

The glistening ocean sparkled in the sunset.

The coffee tasted bitter

Adjectives have different endings:

some adjectives end in -ful or –less, e.g., careful, colourful, harmful, faithful, hopeful, careless, colourless, harmless, faithless, hopeless.

some adjectives end in –y, e.g., a noisy room, a rainy day, a dirty carpet.

some adjectives end in –ive, e.g., a creative person, an active hour, talkative person.

some adjectives end in –ing, e.g., a smiling face, loving parents, a caring doctor.