BUSINESS ENGLISH
LESSON 002 - PARTS OF SPEECH

TEACHER: GERRY HANNAN
# About the Course

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When you have completed the materials in this lesson, you will be able to do the following:

- Define the eight parts of speech.
- Recognize how parts of speech function in sentences.
- Compose sentences showing words playing more than one grammatical role.
**PRETEST:**
Study the following sentences (1 to 10) and identify selected parts of Speech. Make a list from 1 to 10 and write the letter a,b,c or d for what you think is the correct part of speech.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The</td>
<td>a. preposition</td>
<td>b. pronoun</td>
<td>c. conjunction</td>
<td>d. adjective</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. customer</td>
<td>a. noun</td>
<td>b. pronoun</td>
<td>c. verb</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>a. noun</td>
<td>b. pronoun</td>
<td>c. interjection</td>
<td>d. adjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. critically</td>
<td>a. adjective</td>
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<td>c. preposition</td>
<td>d. adverb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. evaluated</td>
<td>a. adverb</td>
<td>b. noun</td>
<td>c. verb</td>
<td>d. adverb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. information</td>
<td>a. pronoun</td>
<td>b. adjective</td>
<td>c. verb</td>
<td>d. noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. on</td>
<td>a. preposition</td>
<td>b. conjunction</td>
<td>c. adjective</td>
<td>d. adverb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. company</td>
<td>a. noun</td>
<td>b. adverb</td>
<td>c. pronoun</td>
<td>d. adjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. site</td>
<td>a. pronoun</td>
<td>b. noun</td>
<td>c. adjective</td>
<td>d. verb</td>
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</table>

**ANSWERS:**
1. D
2. A
3. B
4. B
5. D
6. C
7. D
8. A
9. D
10. B
• As you learned in Lesson 1, this course focuses on the study of the fundamentals of grammar, current usage, and appropriate business and professional style.

• Such a study logically begins with the eight parts of speech, the building blocks of our language.

• This Lesson provides a brief overview of the parts of speech.

• In future lessons you will learn about each part of speech in greater detail.
The Eight Parts of Speech

- Why is it important to learn to identify the eight parts of speech?
- Learning the eight parts of speech helps you develop the working vocabulary necessary to discuss and study the language.
- You especially need to recognize the parts of speech in the context of sentences.
- That is because many words function in more than one role.
- Only by analyzing the sentence at hand can you see how a given word functions.
- Your boss is unlikely to ask you to identify the parts of speech in a business document.
- Being able to do so, however, will help you punctuate correctly and choose precise words for clear, powerful writing.
- Using the parts of speech correctly will also help you sound more professional and intelligent on the job.
- In addition, understanding the roles different parts of speech play in written and oral communication will be helpful if you learn another language.
Nouns

• In earlier courses you probably learned that a noun refers to a person, place, or thing.

• In addition, nouns name qualities, feelings, concepts, activities, and measures.

• Nouns can be proper or common.

• Proper nouns are capitalized, and common nouns are not, as you can see in the following list.

• You will learn more about this concept in Lesson 4.
Nouns

- Persons: Amelia, Dr. Villano, Attorney, President
- Places: New York City, Heathrow Airport, University, Island
- Things: Novel, Surfboard, Bicycle, Ipod
- Qualities: Patience, Honesty, Initiative, Enthusiasm
- Feelings: Happiness, Anger, Confusion, Euphoria
- Concepts: Knowledge, Freedom, Friendship, Patriotism
- Activities: Kiteboarding, Dancing, Management, Eating
- Measures: Week, Million, Inch, Kilometer
Nouns

- Nouns are important words in our language.
- Sentences revolve around nouns because these words function both as subjects and as objects of verbs.
- To determine whether a word is really a noun, try using it with the verb is or are.
- Notice that all the nouns listed here would make sense if used in this way:
  - Amelia is young, New York City is in New York, bicycles are popular, kiteboarding is fun, and so on.
- In Lesson 4 you will learn four classes of nouns and rules for making nouns plural.
- In Lesson 5 you will learn how to show that a noun possesses something.
Pronouns

• Pronouns are words used in place of nouns. As noun substitutes, pronouns provide variety and efficiency to your writing. Compare these two versions of the same sentence:

• Without pronouns: Scott gave the book to Kelli so that Kelli could use the book to study.

• With pronouns: Scott gave the book to Kelli so that she could use it to study.

• In sentences pronouns may function as subjects of verbs (for example, I, we, they) or as objects of verbs (for example, me, us, them).

• They may act as connectors (for example, that, which, who), and they may show possession (for example, mine, ours, hers, theirs).
Pronouns

• Only a few examples are given today.
• More examples, along with functions and classifications of pronouns, will be presented in Lessons 6 and 7.
• You will also learn to use pronouns properly in these Lessons.
• Please note that words such as *his, my, her, and its* are classified as adjectives when they describe nouns (*his car, my desk, its engine*).
• This concept will be explained more thoroughly in Lessons 6 and 11.
Verbs

- Verbs express an action, an occurrence, or a state of being.
  - *Jason built an excellent Web site.* (Action)
  - *It has many links.* (Occurrence)
  - *He is proud of it.* (State of being)

- Action verbs show the physical or mental action of the subject of a sentence.
- Some action verbs are run, study, work, and dream.
- Linking verbs express a state of being and generally link to the subject words that describe or rename them.
- Some linking verbs are am, is, are, was, were, be, being, and been.
- Other linking verbs express the senses: feels, appears, tastes, sounds, seems, looks.
Verbs

• Verbs will be discussed more fully in Lessons 8 through 10.
• At this point it is important that you be able to recognize verbs so that you can determine whether sentences are complete.
• All complete sentences must have at least one verb; many sentences will have more than one verb.
• Verbs may appear singly or in phrases. When verbs are used in verb phrases, helping verbs are added.
  • *Stacy submitted her application to become a management trainee.*
    • (Action verb)
  • *Her résumé is just one page long.*
    • (Linking verb)
  • *She has been training to become a manager.*
    • (Verb phrase; helping verbs has and been are added)
  • *Stacy feels bad that she will be leaving her current colleagues.*
    (Linking verb and verb phrase; helping verbs will and be are added)
Adjectives

- Words that describe nouns or pronouns are called adjectives.
- They often answer the questions What kind?, How many?, and Which one?
- The adjectives in the following sentences are italicized.
- Observe that the adjectives all answer questions about the nouns they describe.
• Small, independent businesses are becoming numerous.  
  (What kinds of businesses?)

• We have six franchises in four states.  
  (How many franchises? How many states?)

• That chain of health clubs started as a small operation.  
  (Which chain? What kind of operation?)

• He is energetic and forceful, while she is personable and outgoing.  
  (What pronouns do these adjectives describe?)
Adjectives

- Adjectives usually precede the nouns they describe.
- They may, however, follow the words they describe, especially when used with linking verbs, as shown in the first and last of the preceding examples.

Here is a brief list of words used as adjectives:

  - effective
  - green
  - sensitive
  - excellent
  - intelligent
  - small
  - expensive
  - long
  - successful

- Three words (a, an, and the) form a special group of adjectives called articles.

Adjectives will be discussed more thoroughly in Lesson 11.
Adverbs
Words that modify (describe or limit) verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs are adverbs. Adverbs often answer the questions When? How? Where? and To what extent?

• Today we must complete the project.
  (Must complete the project when?)

  Mitch approached the intersection cautiously.
  (Approached how?)

• He seems especially competent.
  (How competent?)

• Did you see the schedule there?
  (Where?)

• The prosecutor did not question him further.
  (Questioned him to what extent?)
Adverbs

• Tip: To remember more easily what an adverb does, think of its two syllables: ad suggests that you will be adding to or amplifying the meaning of a verb. Hence, adverbs often modify verbs.

• Some of the most commonly used adverbs follow:

   Carefully - Now - Really - Evenly - Only - Too - Greatly - Rather - Very

   Many, but not all, words ending in ly are adverbs.

   Some exceptions are friendly, costly, and ugly, all of which are adjectives.

   Adverbs will be discussed in greater detail in Lesson 11.
Prepositions

• Prepositions join nouns and pronouns to other words in a sentence.
• As the word itself suggests (pre meaning “before”), a preposition is a word in a position before its object.
• The object of a preposition is a noun or pronoun.
• Prepositions are used in phrases to show a relationship between the object of the preposition and another word in the sentence.
• In the following sentence, notice how the preposition changes the relation of the object (Ms. Laham) to the verb (talked):
1. Brian often talked with Ms. Laham.
2. Brian often talked about Ms. Laham.
3. Brian often talked to Ms. Laham.
• Some of the most frequently used prepositions are at, by, for, from, in, of, to, and with.
• A more complete list of prepositions will be discussed in Lessons 12.
• For now, you should learn to recognize objects of prepositions so that you won’t confuse them with sentence subjects.
• You will learn more about the difference between verb subjects and objects in Lesson 10.
Conjunctions

• Words that connect other words or groups of words are conjunctions.
• The most common conjunctions are: and, but, or, and nor.
• These are called coordinating conjunctions because they join equal (coordinate) parts of sentences.
• Other kinds of conjunctions will be presented in Lesson 13.
• Study the examples of coordinating conjunctions shown here:

  Yukie, Dan, and Kristi are all looking for jobs.
  (The conjunction and joins equal words.)

  You may be interviewed by a personnel officer or by a supervising manager.
  (The conjunction or joins equal groups of words.)
Interjections

- Interjections are words expressing strong feelings.
- Interjections standing alone are followed by exclamation marks.
- When woven into a sentence, they are usually followed by commas.
  - *Wow! Did you see what she wrote in her e-mail message?*  
    (Interjection standing alone)
  - *Well, I guess that means the meeting is over.*  
    (Interjection woven into a sentence)
You need to know the functions of these eight parts of speech in order to understand English and profit from your study of language basics.

The explanation of the parts of speech has been kept simple so far.

This Lesson is meant to serve as an introduction to later, more fully developed Lessons about the different parts of speech.

At this stage you should not expect to be able to identify the functions of all words in all sentences.
BE CAREFUL.....

A word of caution: English is a wonderfully flexible language and many words serve as more than one part of speech. Notice how flexible the word mail is in these sentences:

• Our mail is late today.  
  \(Noun\)—serves as subject of sentence

• This pile of mail must be delivered today.  
  \(Noun\)—serves as object of preposition

• Please read your mail soon.  
  \(Noun\)—serves as object of verb

• Mail the letter today.  
  \(Verb\)—serves as action word in sentence

• The mail system in the United States is efficient.  
  \(Adjective\)—used to describe system, which serves as subject of sentence
• **Blooper 1**: A high school principal quoted in the San Francisco Chronicle: “He had some personal issues his mother and him were working on.”

• **Blooper 2**: From The Wall Street Journal comes a report that Marshall Field’s, the big Chicago retailer, announced it would serve hot chocolate to “tiresome” shoppers.

• **Blooper 3**: Headline in a smalltown newspaper: “Stolen Painting Found by Tree.”

• **Blooper 4**: Letter to the editor of the San Francisco Chronicle: “Me and my siblings are not thugs and gangsters. We all have degrees and are doctors, technology workers, DNA researchers—the people who are defining the future.”

• **Blooper 5**: In a Washington Post article: “What drains out is an intensely sweet juice that is fermented into a pricey wine found on the desert lists of the finest restaurants.”
Spot The Blooper 2

• Blooper 6: The aviation magazine Air Classics referred to baseball as “America’s national past time.”
• Blooper 7: From the Web site of Ipsos, a company that conducts online consumer surveys: “Here are just a few highlights to peak your interest.”
• Blooper 8: In a column in The Denver Post, columnist Julia Martinez discussed a proposed history of Denver for which the city’s mayor “is supposed to write the forward.”
• Blooper 9: When the great American opera singer Beverly Sills died, The New York Times said that she made her debut in 1969 “at the most scared of all Italian opera houses, La Scala.”
• Blooper 10: An editorial in The New York Times about the state of the schools in Washington, DC: “The imbalance is particularly disturbing, given that the District’s children fair worse at school than children in other big cities.”
Reinforcement Exercise A.
Let’s see can we complete these statements:

Names for persons, places, things, qualities, feelings, concepts, activities, and measures are:

A. Verbs  B. Adjectives  C. Nouns  D. Pronouns

Words that substitute for nouns are:

A. Adverbs  B. Adjectives  C. Interjections  D. Pronouns

The part of speech that answers the questions What kind? and How many? is a(n):

A. Adverb  B. Adjective  C. Preposition  D. Conjunction

Words such as slowly, very, and tomorrow that answer the questions How? and When? are:

A. Adverbs  B. Adjectives  C. Nouns  D. Conjunctions

I, you, they, hers, and he are examples of:

A. Pronouns  B. Nouns  C. Adverbs  D. Adjectives

ANSWERS: C,D,B,A,A
Reinforcement Exercise A.
Let’s see can we complete these statements:

Wow, well, and oh are examples of:

a. Pronouns B. Prepositions C. Interjections D. Adjectives

And, or, nor, and but are:

A. Adverbs B. Prepositions C. Interjections D. Conjunctions

Words such as by, in, and of that join noun or pronoun objects to other words in sentences are:

A. Adverbs B. Prepositions C. Conjunctions D. Adjectives

Words that express an action, an occurrence, or a state of being are:

A. Verbs B. Nouns C. Interjections D. Adverbs

The, a, and an are a special group of adjectives called

A. Joiners B. Articles C. Limiters D. Descriptors

ANSWERS: C,D,B,A,B
Reinforcement Exercise B.
In each of the following groups of sentences, the same word is used as different parts of speech. For each sentence can you tell the part of speech for the italicized word.

1. Max had to *dress* quickly to make it to work on time.
2. Does your company have a *dress* code?
3. She decided to wear a suit instead of a *dress* to the interview.
4. Doug prefers a casual *work* environment.
5. Susan arrives at *work* early each morning.
6. The entire department will *work* overtime to finish the project.
7. Volunteers do important *work* in the community.
8. Advertisements promised instruction from a *master* teacher.
9. Few students can *master* Web design in a short course.
10. Warren Buffet is a *master* in the field of investing.

**ANSWERS.**
1. NOUN.
2. ADJECTIVE
3. NOUN
4. INDIRECT NOUN
5. ADJECTIVE
6. VERB
7. NOUN
8. ADJECTIVE
9. VERB
10. NOUN
REINFORCEMENT EXERCISE: C.
A word can often function as more than one part of speech, depending on how it is used in a sentence. This speaking exercise will give you an opportunity to use the same word in different ways.

- Say a complete sentence using the word contract as the part of speech indicated.
  1. (noun) - 2. (verb) - 3. (adjective)

Say a complete sentence using the word set as the part of speech indicated:

  1. (noun) - 2. (verb) - 3. (adjective)

Say a complete sentence using the word desert as the part of speech indicated:

  1. (noun) - 2. (verb) - 3. (adjective)

Say a complete sentence using the word dessert as the part of speech indicated:

  1. (nouns) 2. (verb) 3. (adjective)

REMEMBER -

1. NOUN = PERSON, PLACE, THING
2. VERB = DESCRIBES ACTION
3. ADJECTIVE = WORD NAMING AN ATTRIBUTE OF A NOUN
REINFORCEMENT EXERCISE: D.

Read the following sentence and, taking into account the function of each word within the sentence, identify the part of speech of each word shown:

*The e-mail message contained a virus, but it was quickly deleted.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE</th>
<th>ADJECTIVE</th>
<th>BUT</th>
<th>CONJUNCTION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-MAIL</td>
<td>ADJECTIVE</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>PRONOUN</td>
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<tr>
<td>MESSAGE</td>
<td>NOUN</td>
<td>WAS</td>
<td>VERB</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONTAINED</td>
<td>VERB</td>
<td>QUICKLY</td>
<td>ADVERB</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIRUS</td>
<td>NOUN</td>
<td>DELETED</td>
<td>VERB</td>
</tr>
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REMEMBER:
1. ADJECTIVE = ATTRIBUTE OF NOUN.
2. NOUN = PERSON, PLACE OR THING.
3. VERB = DESCRIBES AN ACTION.
4. CONJUNCTION = CONNECTS CLAUSES.
5. PRONOUN = REPLACES A NOUN.
6. ADVERB: MODIFIES ADJECTIVE, OR OTHER ADVERB.
REINFORCEMENT EXERCISE : E.
In each of the following sentences, identify the verb. Each sentence contains only one verb. As an added challenge, try to identify whether the verb is action or linking.

Many colleges now offer free lectures on YouTube.
Google Earth provides satellite images of geographic areas around the world.
The hotel manager selected four trainees from many applicants.
Her outgoing voice mail message sounds professional.
Please deliver the computers and printers before April 4.
The manager and the human resources director studied all job descriptions carefully.
Words are the most powerful drug in the world.
Antonia felt bad that too much month was left at the end of her money.
She dreams about a bright future.
I am very pleased about your new job!

REMEMBER.
A Verb is a word used to describe an action, state, or occurrence, and forming the main part of the predicate of a sentence, such as hear, become, happen.
Reinforcement Exercise: F
FAQs About Business English Review. Can you pick the correct answer?

Those research statistics are available on the - (a. internet b. Internet c. InterNet)
Experts suggest that users check their - at regular intervals. (A. Email b. E-mail c. email d. e-mail)
We are considering subscribing to an - databank to aid research. (a. on-line b. online c. on line)
Our - has been completely updated. (a. Web site b. website c. web site d. web-site)
All computer files must be backed up - to prevent possible loss. (a. everyday b. every day c. every-day)
Backing up files is an - occurrence in most organizations. (a. everyday b. every day c. every-day)
Which of the following is an acronym? (a. U.S.A. b. IRS c. PIN d. RSVP)
Which of the following is an abbreviation? (a. laser b. scuba c. radar d. DVD)
Your statement during the interview has - my curiosity. (a. piqued b. peaked c. peeked)
When you receive the announcement, please - it to me. (a. foreword b. forward c. for-ward)
1. In one complete sentence, explain why it is important to understand the parts of speech for this course and later on the job.

2. In one complete sentence, explain the difference between nouns and verbs. Which do you think is more important to a writer?

SOME OF YOU WILL BE ASKED TO READ OUT YOUR SENTENCES.
Paul eagerly waited for the moment when he would become a college graduate.

1. Paul A. Pronoun/B. Interjection/C. Noun/D. Adjective
2. Eagerly A. Adverb/B. Adjective/C. Verb/D. Conjunction
3. Waited A. Adverb/B. Verb/C. Preposition/D. Adjective
4. For A. Conjunction/B. Pronoun/C. Preposition/D. Interjection
5. The A. Adverb/B. Conjunction/C. Interjection/D. Adjective
7. He A. Pronoun/B. Verb/C. Noun/D. Adjective
8. A A. Adverb/B. Adjective/C. Proposition/D. Interjection
9. College A. Adjective/B. Adverb/C. Noun/D. Verb
10. Graduate A. Adverb/B. Verb/C. Pronoun/D. Noun

Answers:
1. C
2. A
3. B
4. C
5. D
6. B
7. A
8. B
9. A
10. D
In our next Lesson we will discuss:

Sentences: Elements, Varieties, Patterns, Types, Faults.

Thank You For Your Attention.