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PARTS OF SPEECH

OBJECTIVES

When you have completed the materials in this chapter, 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 sentence and identify selected parts of speech. For each word listed underline the correct part of speech. Compare your answers with those at the bottom of the page.

The **customer** and I **critically evaluated** information **on** the company Web site.

- | | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. customer | a. noun | b. pronoun | c. verb | d. adjective |
| 2. and | a. preposition | b. conjunction | c. adjective | d. adverb |
| 3. critically | a. adjective | b. conjunction | c. preposition | d. adverb |
| 4. evaluated | a. adverb | b. noun | c. verb | d. adverb |
| 5. on | a. preposition | b. conjunction | c. adjective | d. adverb |

1. a 2. b 3. d 4. c 5. a

As you learned in Chapter 1, this book 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 chapter provides a brief overview of the parts of speech. The following chapters will deal with these topics more thoroughly.

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's because many words function in more than one role. Only by analyzing the sentence at hand can you see how a given word functions. It's unlikely that your boss will 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. 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 elementary school you probably learned that a **noun** refers to a person, place, or thing. In addition, nouns name qualities, feelings, concepts, activities, and measures.

Persons:	Stephanie, Dr. Edelstein, teacher, accountant
Places:	Chicago, island, Italy, college
Things:	novel, surfboard, bicycle, horse
Qualities:	patience, honesty, initiative, enthusiasm
Feelings:	happiness, anger, confusion, sadness
Concepts:	knowledge, freedom, friendship, travel
Activities:	snowboarding, dancing, management, eating
Measures:	day, week, inch, kilometer, million

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: *Stephanie is young, Chicago is in Illinois, horses are beautiful, dancing is fun*, and so on. In Chapter 4 you will learn four classes of nouns and rules for making nouns plural. In Chapter 5 you'll 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. 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.

CAREER TIP

"Whatever your program in college, be sure to include courses in writing and speaking.

Managers must constantly write instructions, reports, memos, letters, and survey conclusions. If this comes hard to you, it will hold you back."

—James A. Newman and Alexander Roy in *Climbing the Corporate Matterhorn*



HOT LINK

To help build your vocabulary, check out Merriam-Webster's



Word of the Day feature at <http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/mwwod.pl>. Each day editors define a new word, use it creatively, and provide fascinating word lore.

SPOT THE BLOOPER

A high school principal quoted in the *San Francisco*

Chronicle: "He had some personal issues his mother and him were working on."



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*). Only a few examples are given here. More examples, along with functions and classifications of pronouns, will be presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

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 Chapters 6 and 11.

STUDY TIP



To test whether a word is truly a verb, try using it with a noun or pronoun, such as *Kim eats, she seems, or it is. He food* doesn't make sense because *food* is not a verb.

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 action of a sentence. Some action verbs are *runs, studies, works, and fixes*. Verbs that express a state of being generally link to the subject words that describe or rename it. 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 will be discussed more fully in Chapters 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 sentences have at least one verb; many sentences will have more than one verb. Verbs may appear singly or in phrases.

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)

Stacy *feels* bad that she *will be leaving* her current colleagues. (Linking verb and verb phrase)

SPOT THE BLOOPER



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.

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 *deliberate*. (What pronouns do these adjectives describe?)

Adjectives usually precede nouns. They may, however, follow the words they describe, especially when used with linking verbs, as shown in the first and last 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 Chapter 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?*)

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 Chapter 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 (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. Tokuyama*) to the verb (*talked*):

Brian often talked *with* Ms. Tokuyama.

Brian often talked *about* Ms. Tokuyama.

Brian often talked *to* Ms. Tokuyama.

Some of the most frequently used prepositions are *at*, *by*, *for*, *from*, *in*, *of*, *to*, and *with*. A more complete list of prepositions can be found in Chapter 12. Learn to recognize objects of prepositions so that you won't confuse them with sentence subjects.

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 Chapter 13. Study the examples of coordinating conjunctions shown here:

Yukie, Dan, *and* Kristi are all looking for jobs. (Joins equal words.)

You may be interviewed by a human resources officer *or* by a supervising manager. (Joins equal groups of words.)

STUDY TIP

To remember more easily what an *ad-verb* 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.



SPOT THE BLOOPER

This headline appeared in a small-town newspaper: “Stolen Painting Found by Tree.”





Answered by Dr. Guffey

Business and professional people are very concerned about appropriate and professional English usage, grammar, and style. This concern is evident in the number and kinds of questions called and e-mailed to grammar hotline services across the country. Among the users of these services are business supervisors, managers, executives, professionals, secretaries, clerks, administrative assistants, and word processing specialists. Writers, teachers, librarians, students, and other community members also seek answers to language questions.

Selected questions and Dr. Guffey's answers to them will be presented in the following chapters. In this way you, as a student of the language, will understand the kinds of everyday communication problems encountered in business and professional environments.

Representative questions come from grammar hotline services across the country. You can locate lists of grammar hotlines by using the search phrase *grammar hotline* in *Google* (www.google.com). Many grammar hotlines have Web sites where you can browse questions and answers. Most grammar hotlines accept questions via both e-mail and phone.

Question

Q: We're having a big argument in our office. What's correct? *E-mail*, *e-mail*, *email*, or *Email*? *On-line* or *online*? *Website*, *Web site*, *web site*, or *website*?

Answer

A: In the early days of computing, people capitalized *E-mail* and hyphenated *on-line*. With increased use, however, both of these forms have been simplified to *e-mail* and *online*. In regard to *Web site*, I recommend the capitalized two-word form. Capitalizing *Web* is logical since it is a shortened form for World Wide Web. These are also the forms noted by the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition (our standard reference). You might want to check with your company's in-house style manual for its preferred style for all of these words.

Q: Should I capitalize the word *Internet*? I see it written both ways and am confused.

A: I recommend writing the word with a capital *I* (*Internet*). However, we are in a time of change with regard to the proper spelling and writing of Web-related words. For example, *Wired News* was the first to spell *Internet*, *Web*, and *Net* using lowercase letters; others may follow. For now, though, you should continue to capitalize *Internet* and *Web* because that's what many style manuals and dictionaries recommend.

Q: What is the name of a group of initials that form a word? Is it an abbreviation?

A: A word formed from the initial letters of an expression is called an *acronym* (pronounced ACK-ro-nim). Examples: *scuba* from *self-contained underwater breathing apparatus*, and *PIN* from *personal identification number*. Acronyms are pronounced as single words and are different from abbreviations. Expressions such as *FBI* and *NFL* are abbreviations, not acronyms. Notice that an abbreviation is pronounced letter by letter (*F, B, I*), whereas an acronym is pronounced as a word. An example of an acronym is *OSHA* (pronounced *Oh-shah*), which stands for *Occupational Safety and Health Administration*. Shortened versions of words such as *dept.* and *Ms.* are also considered abbreviations.

Q: I saw this sentence recently in the newspaper: *At the movie premiere the crowd scanned the arriving limousines for glitterati.* Is *glitterati* a real word?

A: A fairly recent arrival to our vocabulary, *glitterati* means "celebrities or beautiful people." (The word is actually a blend of the words *glitter* and *literati*.) New words are generally considered legitimate when their use is clear and when they are necessary (that is, when no other word says exactly what they do). If educated individuals begin to use such words, the words then appear in dictionaries, and *glitterati* has made it.

Q: What's the difference between *toward* and *towards*?

A: None. They are interchangeable in use. However, I recommend using the shorter word *toward* because it is more efficient.

Q: Is *every day* one word or two in this case? *We encounter these problems every day.*

A: In your sentence it is two words. When it means "ordinary," it is one word (*she wore everyday clothes*). If you can insert the word *single* between *every* and *day* without altering your meaning, you should be using two words, as in your sentence.

Q: Should an e-mail message begin with a salutation or some kind of greeting?

A: When e-mail messages are sent to company insiders, a salutation may be omitted; however, including a salutation will personalize your message. When e-mail messages travel to outsiders, omitting a salutation seems curt and unfriendly. Because the message is more like a letter, a salutation is appropriate (such as *Dear Courtney*, *Hi Courtney*, *Greetings*, or just *Courtney*). Including a salutation is also a visual cue that identifies the beginning of the message. Some writers prefer to incorporate the name of the recipient in the first sentence (*Thanks, Courtney, for responding so quickly*).

Q: In e-mail messages is it acceptable to use abbreviations such as *IMHO* (*in my humble opinion*), *LOL* (*laughing out loud*), and *TIA* (*thanks in advance*)?

A: Among close friends who understand their meaning, such abbreviations are certainly acceptable. But in business messages, these abbreviations are too casual and too obscure. Many readers would have no idea what they mean. Smileys (or emoticons) such as :-) are also too casual for business messages. Worst of all, abbreviations and emoticons make business messages look immature and unprofessional.

Q: Tell me it's not true! I just heard that the word *d'oh*, which is uttered frequently by the Homer Simpson character, was recently added to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Surely this is an urban legend.

A: It's true. The word *d'oh* was recently added to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, long considered the foremost authority on the English language. Its editors decided that the word *d'oh* is so universally accepted that it warranted formal recognition. This certainly proves what an effect popular culture has on our language. However, keep in mind that not all words appearing in dictionaries are appropriate for business messages.

2

REINFORCEMENT EXERCISES

Name _____

A. (Self-check) Complete these statements.

1. Names for persons, places, things, qualities, feelings, concepts, activities, and measures are
 a. verbs b. adjectives c. nouns d. pronouns _____
2. Words that substitute for nouns are
 a. adverbs b. adjectives c. interjections d. pronouns _____
3. The part of speech that answers the question *What kind?* and *How many?* is a/an
 a. adverb b. adjective c. preposition d. conjunction _____
4. Words such as *slowly*, *very*, and *tomorrow* that answer the questions *How?* and *When?* are
 a. adverbs b. adjectives c. nouns d. conjunctions _____
5. *I*, *you*, *they*, *hers*, and *he* are examples of
 a. pronouns b. nouns c. adverbs d. adjectives _____
6. *Wow*, *well*, and *oops* are examples of
 a. pronouns b. prepositions c. interjections d. adjectives _____
7. *And*, *or*, *nor*, and *but* are
 a. adverbs b. prepositions c. interjections d. conjunctions _____
8. 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 _____

Check your answers below.

B. In each of the following groups of sentences, one word is used as an adjective, as a noun, and as a verb. For each sentence indicate the part of speech for the italicized word.

Example: We have little *time* in which to make a decision. noun _____
 Officials will *time* the runners in the marathon. verb _____
 Factory workers must punch a *time* clock. adjective _____

1. He had to *dress* quickly for the awards ceremony. _____
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 *worked* overtime to finish the project. _____
7. Advertisements promised instruction from a *master* teacher. _____
8. Few students can *master* Web design in a short course. _____
9. Warren Buffet is a *master* in the field of investing. _____

1. c 2. d 3. b 4. a 5. a 6. c 7. d 8. b

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Write complete sentences using the word *contract* as a noun, as an adjective, and as a verb.

- 10. (noun) _____
- 11. (verb) _____
- 12. (adjective) _____

C. The italicized words in the following sentences are either prepositions or conjunctions. Write *C* for conjunction or *P* for preposition.

1. Technical skills are important *for* entry-level positions, *but* communication skills are necessary for promotion *into* management.

<i>for</i>	_____
<i>but</i>	_____
<i>into</i>	_____

2. Writing good letters *and* e-mail messages *to* customers creates goodwill *for* business and professional organizations.

<i>and</i>	_____
<i>to</i>	_____
<i>for</i>	_____

D. Read the following sentences and, taking into account the function of each word within each sentence, identify the part of speech of each word shown. Use a dictionary if necessary.

One e-mail message contained a virus, but it was very quickly deleted.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. One _____ | 7. but _____ |
| 2. e-mail _____ | 8. it _____ |
| 3. message _____ | 9. was _____ |
| 4. contained _____ | 10. very _____ |
| 5. a _____ | 11. quickly _____ |
| 6. virus _____ | 12. deleted _____ |

She hurriedly scanned several e-mail messages before the meeting.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. She _____ | 5. e-mail _____ |
| 2. hurriedly _____ | 6. messages _____ |
| 3. scanned _____ | 7. before _____ |
| 4. several _____ | 8. meeting _____ |

E. Selected verbs in the following sentences have been italicized. Use a check mark to indicate whether these verbs are linking or action.

- | | LINKING
VERB | ACTION
VERB |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| Example: Broadband <i>is</i> faster than DSL. | ✓ | _____ |
| 1. An optimist <i>is</i> a person who thinks a housefly is looking for a way out. | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Google Earth <i>provides</i> a tool for viewing satellite images. | _____ | _____ |
| 3. The hotel manager <i>selected</i> four trainees from many applicants. | _____ | _____ |

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4. Her outgoing message *sounds* professional. _____
5. Please *deliver* the computers and printers before April 4. _____
6. The manager and the human resources director *studied* all job descriptions carefully. _____
7. Words *are* the most powerful drug used by mankind. _____
8. Antonia *felt* bad that too much money was left at the end of her money. _____

F. Hotline Review. In the space provided write the correct answer choice.

1. Those research statistics are available on the _____.
a. internet b. Internet c. InterNet _____
2. Experts suggest that users check their _____ at regular intervals.
a. Email b. E-mail c. email d. e-mail _____
3. We are considering subscribing to an _____ databank to aid research.
a. on-line b. online _____
4. Our _____ has been completely updated.
a. Web site b. website c. web site d. web-site _____
5. All computer files must be backed up _____ to prevent possible loss.
a. everyday b. every day c. every-day _____
6. Backing up files is an _____ occurrence in most organizations.
a. everyday b. every day c. every-day _____
7. Which of the following is an acronym?
a. U.S.A. b. IRS c. PIN d. RSVP _____
8. Which of the following is an abbreviation?
a. laser b. MADD c. NASDAQ d. DVD _____

G. Writing Exercise. In two or three complete sentences, explain why it is important to understand the parts of speech for this course and later on the job.

In a few sentences, explain the difference between nouns and verbs. Which do you think is more important to a writer?

The following memo requires you to supply a single word for each blank. The word you supply should represent the part of speech shown. You may complete the exercise here or at the **Guffey Companion Web Site** at www.thomsonedu.com/bcomm/guffey.

CONSOLIDATED INDUSTRIES

INTEROFFICE MEMO

DATE: January 28, 200x
TO: All Employees
FROM: Brandon James, Manager *BJ*
SUBJECT: Reducing Overnight Delivery Costs

Overnight delivery services are speedy, but [pronoun] _____ are costing us too much [noun] _____. Here at Consolidated, we have seen our use of these services increasingly devour a [adjective] _____ portion of our shipping budget. It seems that anyone who wants to send something to a customer or a vendor automatically [verb] _____ it by FedEx. Although we have corporate rates with FedEx, we are still spending too much on overnight deliveries.

To avoid future restrictions imposed by the CEO, I'm [verb] _____ you to voluntarily reduce your use of these delivery services by 50 percent in the next two months.

Rather than face a ban on all [adjective] _____ services, let's work together to reduce our costs. Here are some suggestions:

1. Ask yourself whether the recipient will [adverb] _____ use the information immediately. If not, [verb] _____ a cheaper method.
2. Send messages [preposition] _____ fax or e-mail. A long-distance fax costs only about 35 cents, [conjunction] _____ local messages cost nothing. E-mail messages are equally inexpensive.
3. Use the FedEx or UPS account number [preposition] _____ the recipient whenever possible.
4. Plan ahead so that [pronoun] _____ can use FedEx or UPS ground service. These ground [noun] _____ take about three to five days.

Some overnight shipments, of course, [verb] _____ critical. However, to retain our budget for those essential shipments, we must [verb] _____ our overall use by one half before April 1. If you can think of [adjective] _____ ways to reduce overnight shipments, please call me at Ext. 213. I appreciate your ideas and your [noun] _____ in solving this problem.

Want to explore more? Go to: <http://www.thomsonedu.com/bcomm/guffey> or Xtra!

Many colleges and universities offer online writing labs (OWLs). These Web sites provide helpful resources for students and businesspeople. You can read online or download handouts that provide help with punctuation, spelling, sentence construction, parts of speech, and writing in the job search.

Goal: To learn to use an online writing lab.

1. With your Web browser on the screen, key the following URL in the location box:
http://owl.english.purdue.edu. Press **Enter**.
2. Click the **The OWL at Purdue** link.
3. Scroll down to reveal the site's nine areas as listed in the navigation menu to the right. Notice that you can click on each option to reveal a

drop-down menu showing the complete contents of each area. Clicking the menu item a second time closes the drop-down menu.

4. Click **The Writing Process**.
5. From the list of handouts, click **Proofreading Your Writing**. The handout will display in the main window.
6. Read the handout.
7. Print a copy. (You can click the **Full Resource for Printing** icon to print any handout.)
8. Select another topic to peruse.
9. End your session by clicking the **X** box in the upper right corner of your browser. Turn in your printout or send an e-mail message to your instructor summarizing what you learned.

Identify the parts of speech in this sentence by underlining the correct choice. Compare your answers with those at the bottom of the page.

Paul **nervously waited** for his turn to interview for the **available position**.

- | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. nervously | a. adverb | b. pronoun | c. preposition | d. conjunction |
| 2. waited | a. adverb | b. verb | c. preposition | d. conjunction |
| 3. for | a. interjection | b. pronoun | c. preposition | d. conjunction |
| 4. available | a. verb | b. noun | c. adverb | d. adjective |
| 5. position | a. pronoun | b. verb | c. noun | d. adjective |

1. a 2. b 3. c 4. d 5. c

Want to explore more? Go to: <http://www.thomsonedu.com/bcomm/guffey> or Xtra!