**GRAMMATICAL MEANING**

**GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES**

**1. The notion of ‘grammatical meaning’.**

The word combines in its semantic structure two meanings – lexical and grammatical. Lexical meaning is the individual meaning of the word (e.g. *table*). Grammatical meaning is the meaning of the whole class or a subclass. For example, the class of nouns has the grammatical meaning of thingness. If we take a noun (*table*) we may say that it possesses its individual lexical meaning (it corresponds to a definite piece of furniture) and the grammatical meaning of thingness (this is the meaning of the whole class). Besides, the noun *‘table’* has the grammatical meaning of a subclass –countableness. Any verb combines its individual lexical meaning with the grammatical meaning of verbiality – the ability to denote actions or states. An adjective combines its individual lexical meaning with the grammatical meaning of the whole class of adjectives – qualitativeness – the ability to denote qualities. Adverbs possess the grammatical meaning of adverbiality – the ability to denote quality of qualities.

There are some classes of words that are devoid of any lexical meaning and possess the grammatical meaning only. This can be explained by the fact that they have no referents in the objective reality. All function words belong to this group – articles, particles, prepositions, etc.

**2. Types of grammatical meaning.**

The grammatical meaning may be explicit and implicit. The implicit grammatical meaning is not expressed formally (e.g. the word *table*does not contain any hints in its form as to it being inanimate). The explicit grammatical meaning is always marked morphologically – it has its marker. In the word *cats* the grammatical meaning of plurality is shown in the form of the noun; *cat’s* – here the grammatical meaning of possessiveness is shown by the form *‘s*; *is asked* – shows the explicit grammatical meaning of passiveness.

The implicit grammatical meaning may be of two types – general and dependent. The general grammatical meaning is the meaning of the whole word-class, of a part of speech (e.g. nouns – the general grammatical meaning of thingness). The dependent grammatical meaning is the meaning of a subclass within the same part of speech. For instance, any verb possesses the dependent grammatical meaning of transitivity/intransitivity; nouns have the dependent grammatical meaning of contableness/uncountableness and animateness/inanimateness. The most important thing about the dependent grammatical meaning is that it influences the realization of grammatical categories restricting them to a subclass. Thus the dependent grammatical meaning of countableness/uncountableness influences the realization of the grammatical category of number as the number category is realized only within the subclass of countable nouns, the grammatical meaning of animateness/inanimateness influences the realization of the grammatical category of case, teminativeness/non-terminativeness - the category of tense, transitivity/intransitivity – the category of voice.

**3. Grammatical categories.**

Grammatical categories are made up by the unity of identical grammatical meanings that have the same form (e.g. singular::plural). Due to dialectal unity of language and thought, grammatical categories correlate, on the one hand, with the conceptual categories and, on the other hand, with the objective reality. It may be shown with the help of a triangle model:

It follows that we may define grammatical categories as references of the corresponding objective categories. For example, the objective category of time finds its representation in the grammatical category of tense, the objective category of quantity finds its representation in the grammatical category of number. Those grammatical categories that have references in the objective reality are called referential grammatical categories. However, not all of the grammatical categories have references in the objective reality, just a few of them do not correspond to anything in the objective reality. Such categories correlate only with conceptual matters:

They are called significational categories. To this type belong the categories of mood and degree. Speaking about the grammatical category of mood we can say that it has modality as its conceptual correlate. It can be explained by the fact that it does not refer to anything in the objective reality – it expresses the speaker’s attitude to what he says.

**4. The notion of opposition.**

Any grammatical category must be represented by at least two grammatical forms (e.g. the grammatical category of number – singular and plural forms). The relation between two grammatical forms differing in meaning and external signs is called opposition – book::books (unmarked member/marked member). All grammatical categories find their realization through oppositions, e.g. the grammatical category of number is realized through the opposition singular::plural.

Taking all the above mentioned into consideration, we may define the grammatical category as the opposition between two mutually exclusive form-classes (a form-class is a set of words with the same explicit grammatical meaning).

Means of realization of grammatical categories may be synthetic (*near – nearer*) and analytic (*beautiful – more beautiful*).

**5. Transposition and neutralization of morphological forms.**

In the process of communication grammatical categories may undergo the processes of transposition and neutralization.

Transposition is the use of a linguistic unit in an unusual environment or in the function that is not characteristic of it (*He is a lion*). In the sentence *He is coming tomorrow* the meaning of the continuous form is reduced and a new meaning appears – that of a future action. Transposition always results in the neutralization of a paradigmatic meaning.

Neutralization is the reduction of the opposition.

**THE PARTS OF SPEECH. WORD CLASSES**

The parts of speech are classes of words, all the members of these classes having certain characteristics in common which distinguish them from the members of other classes. The problem of word classification into parts of speech still remains one of the most controversial problems in modern linguistics. The attitude of grammarians with regard to parts of speech and the basis of their classification varied a good deal at different times. Only in English grammarians have been hesitating between 3 and 13 parts of speech. There are four approaches to the problem:

1. Classical (logical-inflectional)
2. Functional
3. Distributional
4. Complex

The classical parts of speech theory goes back to ancient times. It is based on Latin grammar. According to the Latin classification of the parts of speech all words were divided dichotomically into declinable and indeclinable parts of speech. This system was reproduced in the earliest English grammars. The first of these groups, declinable words, included nouns, pronouns, verbs and participles, the second – indeclinable words – adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections. The logical-inflectional classification was quite successful for Latin or other languages with developed morphology and synthetic paradigms but it cannot be applied to the English language because the principle of declinability/indeclinability is not relevant for analytical languages.

A new approach to the problem was introduced in the XIX century by Henry Sweet. He took into account the peculiarities of the English language. This approach may be defined as functional. He resorted to the functional features of words and singled out nominative units and particles. To nominative parts of speech belonged noun-words (noun, noun-pronoun, noun-numeral, infinitive, gerund), adjective-words (adjective, adjective-pronoun, adjective-numeral, participles), verb (finite verb, verbals – gerund, infinitive, participles), while adverb, preposition, conjunction and interjection belonged to the group of particles. However, though the criterion for classification was functional, Henry Sweet failed to break the tradition and classified words into those having morphological forms and lacking morphological forms, in other words, declinable and indeclinable.

A distributional approach to the parts to the parts of speech classification can be illustrated by the classification introduced by Charles Fries. He wanted to avoid the traditional terminology and establish a classification of words based on distributive analysis, that is, the ability of words to combine with other words of different types. At the same time, the lexical meaning of words was not taken into account. According to Charles Fries, the words in such sentences as 1. Woggles ugged diggles; 2. Uggs woggled diggs; and 3. Woggs diggled uggles are quite evident structural signals, their position and combinability are enough to classify them into three word-classes. In this way, he introduced four major classes of words and 15 form-classes. Let us see how it worked. Three test frames formed the basis for his analysis:

Frame A - The concert was good (always); Frame B - The clerk remembered the tax (suddenly); Frame C – The team went there.

It turned out that his four classes of words were practically the same as traditional nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. What is really valuable in Charles Fries’ classification is his investigation of 15 groups of function words (form-classes) because he was the first linguist to pay attention to some of their peculiarities.

All the classifications mentioned above appear to be one-sided because parts of speech are discriminated on the basis of only one aspect of the word: either its meaning or its form, or its function.

In modern linguistics, parts of speech are discriminated according to three criteria: semantic, formal and functional. This approach may be defined as complex.

The semantic criterion supposes the grammatical meaning of the whole class of words (general grammatical meaning). The formal criterion reveals paradigmatic properties: relevant grammatical categories, the form of the words, their specific inflectional and derivational features. The functional criterion concerns the syntactic function of words in the sentence and their combinability. Thus, when characterizing any part of speech we are to describe: a) its semantics; b) its morphological features; c) its syntactic peculiarities.

The linguistic evidence drawn from our grammatical study makes it possible to divide all the words of the language into:

1. those denoting things, objects, notions, qualities, etc. – words with the corresponding references in the objective reality – notional words;
2. those having no references of their own in the objective reality; most of them are used only as grammatical means to form up and frame utterances – function words, or grammatical words.

It is commonly recognized that the notional parts of speech are nouns, pronouns, numerals, verbs, adjectives, adverbs; the functional parts of speech are articles, particles, prepositions, conjunctions and modal words.

The division of language units into notion and function words reveals the interrelation of lexical and grammatical types of meaning. In notional words the lexical meaning is predominant. In function words the grammatical meaning dominates over the lexical one. However, in actual speech the border line between notional and function words is not always clear cut. Some notional words develop the meanings peculiar to function words - e.g. seminotional words – *to turn, to get, etc.*

Notional words constitute the bulk of the existing word stock while function words constitute a smaller group of words. Although the number of function words is limited (there are only about 50 of them in Modern English), they are the most frequently used units.

Generally speaking, the problem of words’ classification into parts of speech is far from being solved. Some words cannot find their proper place. The most striking example here is the class of adverbs. Some language analysts call it *a ragbag, a dustbin* (Frank Palmer), Russian academician V.Vinogradov defined the class of adverbs in the Russian language as *мусорна куnа*. It can be explained by the fact that to the class of adverbs belong those words that cannot find their place anywhere else. At the same time, there are no grounds for grouping them together either. Compare: *perfectly (She speaks English perfectly)* and *again (He is here again)*. Examples are numerous (all temporals). There are some words that do not belong anywhere - e.g. *after all*. Speaking about *after all* it should be mentioned that this unit is quite often used by native speakers, and practically never by our students. Some more striking examples: *anyway, actually, in fact*. The problem is that if these words belong nowhere, there is no place for them in the system of words, then how can we use them correctly? What makes things worse is the fact that these words are devoid of nominative power, and they have no direct equivalents in the Ukrainian language. Meanwhile, native speakers use these words subconsciously, without realizing how they work.

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