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MORPHOLOGY

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CHAPTER I

NOUNS

Nouns usually are defined as the „names of people places and things. But this kind of definition by meaning doesn't explain, for example, **worker** is a noun but **working**, **work** and **works** may be nouns or verbs.

A noun is a name word, representing directly to the mind an object, substance, or idea.

Nouns are classified as follows:

(1)**Proper.**

(2) **Common.**

(a) CLASS NAMES:

i. Individual.

ii. Collective.

(b) MATERIAL.

(3) **Abstract.**

(a)ATTRIBUTE.

(b) VERBAL

A **proper noun** is a name applied to a particular object, whether person, place, or thing. The word *proper* is from a Latin word meaning *limited, belonging to one*

*A **common noun** is a name possessed by any one of a class of persons, animals, or things.*

Common, as here used, is from a Latin word which means *general, possessed by all.*

Besides considering persons, animals, and things separately, we may think of them in groups, and appropriate names to the groups.

Thus, men in groups may be called a *crowd*, a *committee*, or a *council*, or a *congress*, etc.

These are called **COLLECTIVE NOUNS.** They properly belong under common nouns, because each group is considered as a unit, and the name applied to it belongs to any group of its class.

The definition given for common nouns applies more strictly to class nouns. It may, however, be correctly used for another group of nouns detailed below; for they are common nouns in the sense that the names apply to *every particle of similar substance*, instead of to each individual or separate object.

They are called **MATERIAL NOUNS.** Such are *glass, iron, frost, rain, wheat, wine, tea, sugar*, etc.

They may be placed in groups as follows:

(1) The metals: *iron, gold,* silver, etc.

(2) Products spoken of in bulk: *tea, sugar, rice, wheat*, etc.

(3) Geological bodies: *mud, sand, e, rock, stone*, etc.

(4) Natural phenomena: *rain, dew, frost, mist*, etc.

(5) Various manufactures: *cloth h, soap, rubber, paint*, etc.

NOTE. -There are some nouns, such as *sun, moon, earth*, which seem to be the names of particular individual objects, but which are not called proper names.

The reason is, that in proper names the intention is *to exclude* all other individuals of the same class, and fasten a special name to the object considered, as in calling a city London. If several bodies like the center of our solar system are known, they also are called *suns* by a natural extension of the term: so with the words *earth, world*, etc. They remain common class names.

Abstract nouns are names of qualities, conditions, or actions, considered abstractly, or apart from their natural connection.

When we speak of a *wise man*, we recognize in him an attribute or quality. If we wish to think simply of that quality without describing the person, we speak of the *wisdom* of the man. The quality is still there as much as before, but it is taken merely as a name. Again, we may say, "*Painting* is a fine art," "*Learning* is hard to acquire," "a man of *understanding*."

There are two main divisions of abstract nouns:-

(1) ATTRIBUTE NOUNS, expressing attributes or qualities.

(2) VERBAL NOUNS, expressing state, condition, or action.

The ATTRIBUTE ABSTRACT NOUNS are derived from adjectives and from common nouns. Thus, (1) *height* from *high*, *redness* from *red*, *stupidity* from *stupid*, etc. ; (2), *childhood* from *child*, *mastery* from *master*, *kingship* from *king*, etc.

The VERBAL ABSTRACT NOUNS originate in verbs, as their name implies. They may be:

(1) Of the same form as the simple verb. The verb, by altering its *function, is used as a noun; as in the expression, "a long run"*.

(2) Derived from verbs by changing the ending or adding a suffix: motion from move, speech from speak, action from act.

(3) Derived from verbs by adding *-ing* to the simple verb. It must be remembered that these words are *free from any verbal function They cannot govern a word, and they cannot express action, but are merely names of actions. They are only the husks of verbs, and are to be rigidly distinguished from gerunds*.

Some abstract nouns were not derived from any other part of speech, but were framed directly for the expression of certain ideas or phenomena.

Such are *beauty, joy, hope, ease, energy; day, night, summer, winter; shadow, lightning, thunder,* etc.

The adjectives or verbs corresponding to these are either themselves derived from the nouns or are totally different words; as *glad- joy, hopeful- hope,* etc.

Special uses of nouns

Proper nouns are used as common in either of two ways:

The origin of a thing is used for the thing itself: that is, the name of the inventor may be applied to the thing invented, as a *davy*, meaning the miner's lamp invented by Sir Humphry Davy; the *guillotine*, from the name of Dr. Guillotin, who was its inventor. Or the name of the country or city from which an article is derived is used for the article: as *china*, from China; *arras*, from a town in France; *port* (wine), from Porto, in Portugal; *levant* and *morocco* (leather).

Some of this class have become worn by use so that at present we can scarcely discover the derivation from the form of the word; for example, the word *port*, above. Others of similar character are *calico*, from Calicut; *damask*, from Damascus; etc.

The name of a person or place noted for certain qualities is transferred to any person or place possessing those qualities; thus, Hercules and Samson were noted for their strength, and we call a very strong man *a Hercules* or *a Samson Sodom was famous for wickedness, and a similar place is called a Sodom of sin.*

Material nouns may be used as class names. Instead of considering the whole body of material of which certain uses are made, one can speak of particular uses or phases of the substance.

(1) *Of individual objects* made from metals or other substances capable of being wrought into various shapes. We know a number of objects made of iron. The material *iron* embraces the metal contained in them all; but we may say, "The cook made the *irons* hot," referring to flat-irons; or, "The sailor was put in *irons*" meaning chains of iron. So also we may speak of *a glass* to drink from or to look into; *a steel* to whet a knife on; *a rubber* for erasing marks; and so on.

(2) *Of classes* or *kinds* of the same substance. These are the same in material, but differ in strength, purity, etc. Hence it shortens speech to make the nouns plural, and say *teas, tobaccos, paints, oils, candies, clays, coals*

(3) *By poetical use, of certain words necessarily singular in idea, which are made plural, or used as class nouns, as in the following:*

(4) *Of detached portions* of matter used as class names; as *stones, slates, papers, tins, clouds, mists,* etc.

Abstract nouns are frequently used as proper names by being personified; that is, the ideas are spoken of as residing in living beings. This is a poetic usage, though not confined to verse.

Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

Abstract nouns are made half abstract by being spoken of in the plural.

They are not then pure abstract nouns, nor are they common class nouns. The *arts* differ from the *sciences* in this, that their power is founded not merely on *facts* which can be communicated, but on *dispositions* which require to be created.

When it is said that *art* differs from *science*, that the power of art is founded on *fact*, that *disposition* is the thing to be created, the words italicized are pure abstract nouns; but in case *an art* or *a science*, or *the arts*

and *sciences*, be spoken of, the abstract idea is partly lost. The words precedeed by the article *a*, or made plural, are still names of abstract ideas, not material things; but they widen the application to separate kinds of *art* or different branches of *science They are neither class nouns nor pure abstract nouns: they are more properly called half abstract*

Nouns used as descriptive terms. Sometimes a noun is attached to another noun to add to its meaning, or describe it; for example, "a *family* quarrel," "a *London* bank," "the *State Bank Tax* bill," "a *morning* walk. "

It is evident that these approach very near to the function of adjectives. But it is better to consider them as nouns, for these reasons: they do not give up their identity as nouns; they do not express quality; they cannot be compared, as descriptive adjectives are.

They are more like the possessive noun, which belongs to another word, but is still a noun. They may be regarded as elliptical expressions, meaning a walk *in the morning*, a bank *in London*, a bill *as to tax on the banks*, etc.

NOTE. -If the descriptive word be a *material* noun, it may be regarded as changed to an adjective. The term "*gold* pen" conveys the same idea as "*golden* pen," which contains a pure adjective.

WORDS AND WORD GROUPS USED AS NOUNS

Words which are usually other parts of speech are often used as nouns; and various word groups may take the place of nouns by being used as nouns.

(1) *Other parts of speech* used as nouns:

The great, the wealthy, fear thy blow. -Burns.

(2) *Certain word groups* used like single nouns:

Too swift arrives as tardy as *too slow* -Shakespeare.

(3) Any part of speech may be considered merely as a word, without reference to its function in the sentence; also titles of books are treated as simple nouns.

When, in a sentence above, the terms the great, the wealthy, are used, they are not names only: we have in mind the idea of persons and the quality of being great or wealthy The words are used in the sentence where nouns are used, but have an adjectival meaning.

1.1. Gender

In Latin, Greek, German, and many other languages, some general rules are given that names of male beings are usually masculine, and names of females are usually feminine. There are exceptions even to this general statement, but not so in English. Male beings are, in English grammar, always masculine; female, always feminine.

When, however, *inanimate* things are spoken of, these languages are totally unlike our own in determining the gender of words. The great difference is, that in English the gender follows the *meaning* of the word, in other languages gender follows the *form*; that is, in English, gender depends

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on *sex*: if a thing spoken of is of the male sex, the *name* of it is masculine; if of the female sex, the *name* of it is feminine. Hence:

Gender is the mode of distinguishing sex by words, or additions to words.

English can have two genders,- **masculine** and **feminine.**

All nouns, then, must be divided into two principal classes,- **gender nouns**, those distinguishing the sex of the object; and **neuter nouns**, those which do not distinguish sex, or names of things without life, and consequently without sex.

Gender nouns include names of persons and some names of animals; neuter nouns include some animals and all inanimate objects.

Some words may be either gender nouns or neuter nouns, according to their use. Thus, the word *child* is neuter in the sentence, "A little *child*shall lead them," but is masculine in the sentence from Wordsworth,-I have seen A curious *child.. applying to his ear The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell.*

According to the definition, there can be no such thing as "common gender:" words either distinguish sex (or the sex is distinguished by the context) or else they do not distinguish sex.

If such words as parent, servant, teacher, ruler, relative, cousin, domestic, etc. , do not show the sex to which the persons belong, they are neuter words.

The inflections for gender belong, of course, only to masculine and feminine nouns. *Forms* would be a more accurate word than *inflections*, since inflection applies only to the *case* of nouns.

There are three ways to distinguish the genders:-

(1) By prefixing a gender word to another word.

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(2) By adding a suffix, generally to a masculine word.

(3) By using a different word for each gender.

I. Gender shown by Prefixes.

Usually the gender words *he* and *she* are prefixed to neuter words; as *he-goat- she-goat, cock sparrow- hen sparrow, he-bear- she-bear.*

One feminine, woman, puts a prefix before the masculine man Woman is a short way of writing wife man.

II. Gender shown by Suffixes.

By far the largest number of gender words is those marked by suffixes. In this particular the native endings have been largely supplanted by foreign suffixes.

The **native suffixes** to indicate the feminine were *-en* and *-ster These remain in vixen and spinster, though both words have lost their original meanings.*

The word *vixen* was once used as the feminine of *fox* by the Southern-English. For *fox* they said *vox*; for *from* they said *vram*; and for the older word *fat* they said *vat*, as in *wine vat Hence vixen is for fyxen, from the masculine fox.*

The **foreign suffixes** are of two kinds:

(1) Those belonging to borrowed words, as *czarina, señorita, executrix, donna. These are attached to foreign words, and are never used for words recognized as English.*

(2) That regarded as the standard or regular termination of the feminine, *-ess (French esse, Low Latin issa)*, the one most used. The corresponding masculine may have the ending *-er (-or)*, but in most cases it has not.

Whenever we adopt a new masculine word, the feminine is formed by adding this termination –ess.

The ending -ess is added to many words without changing the ending of the masculine; as:

baron-baroness

count-countess

lion-lioness

Jew-Jewess

heir-heiress

host-hostess

priest-priestess

giant-giantess

The masculine ending may be dropped before the feminine -ess is added; as:

abbot-abbess

negro-negress

murderer-murderess

sorcerer-sorceress

The feminine may discard a vowel which appears in the masculine; as in:

actor-actress

master-mistress

benefactor-benefactress

emperor-empress

tiger-tigress

enchanter-enchantress