

## ENG 414 – Studyguide to Chapter 4

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This chapter is about basic building blocks and concepts necessary to describe languages.

- 1. Parts of Speech.** Whaley calls them 'lexical classes'. Many people (myself included) divide them into: lexical categories (N, V, Adj, Adv, P) and grammatical categories (D, AUX, C).

You can find the Parts of Speech by applying 3 diagnostics: semantic, morphological and syntactic, as in Table 1:

		Noun (N)		Verb (V)
Morphology	a.	plural -s with a few exceptions, e.g. <i>children, deer, mice</i>	h.	past tense -ed with a few exceptions, e.g. <i>went, left</i>
	b.	possessive 's	i.	third person singular agreement -s
	c.	some end in -ity, -ness -ation, -er, -ion, -ment	j.	some end in -ize, -ate
Syntax	d.	may follow <i>the/a</i> and <i>this/that/these/those</i>	k.	may follow an auxiliary e.g. <i>have</i> and <i>will</i>
	e.	modified by adjective	l.	modified by adverb
	f.	followed by preposition and noun	m.	followed by noun or preposition and noun
Semantics	g.	person, place, thing	n.	act, event, state, emotion

Table 1: Some differences between N(oun) and V(erb)

- 2. Semantic Role.** Realize that verbs determine the roles the noun phrases play. Linguists have different views as to how many roles there are (again lumpers and splitters). Generally, we recognize: Agent, Theme (or Patient), Goal, Source, Experiencer, Instrument. They can be determined in terms of semantics, syntax, and morphology. All languages have these but not all mark them similarly.
- 3. Grammatical Role.** You are all familiar with these: subjects, direct and indirect objects are the most common. **There are two main ways of marking subjects and objects: on the verb through agreement and on the noun through case.**

Another concept in this chapter: **ergativity**. I will explain this but if it is very abstract to you, skip it. I won't ask on an exam....