

‘English Only’. Course No. 2/ 2015

GRAMMAR DAY 1

1. Importance and Role of Words:

An extract from ‘*Through the Looking Glass*’ by Lewis Carrol :

‘Humpty Dumpty’ and Alice:-

“When I use a word”, Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, “it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less.”

“The question is” said Alice, “whether you can make words mean different things?”

“The question is” said Humpty Dumpty, “which is to be the master – that’s all”

Alice was too much puzzled to say anything, so after a minute Humpty Dumpty began again “They’ve a temper, some of them – particularly verbs, they’re the proudest – adjectives you can do anything with, but not verbs – however, I can manage the whole lot ! Impenetrability ! That’s what I say!”

“Would you tell me please,” said Alice “what that means?”

“Now you talk like a reasonable child” said Humpty Dumpty, looking very much pleased. “I meant by ‘impenetrability’ that we’ve had enough of that subject, and it would be just as well if you’d mention what you mean to do next, as I suppose you don’t intend to stop here all the rest of your life.

“That’s a great deal to make one word mean” Alice said in a thoughtful tone.

“When I make a word do a lot of work like that,” said Humpty Dumpty, “I always pay it extra”

“Oh!” said Alice. She was too much puzzled to make any other remark.

“Better say nothing at all. Language is worth a thousand pounds a word.”

1.1 In this story of the ‘Power of Words’ , there is a whole new world of words. Words are not merely a collection of letters, lifeless and stationary, written or printed on a sheet of paper. They are full of life because they are created, they grow and have their roots, and change their meaning over time. In almost all languages there are many thoughts of wisdom that are priceless. But the value of words lies in the understanding of the listener or the reader. If the listener is unable to understand what is being conveyed, the power is non-existent for him/her.

1.2 Words are the tools with which Man conveys all his emotions and feeling, thoughts and ideas, his pains and fears, his joys and sorrows. As such words can be as sweet or sour, as tasty or bitter, as painful or soothing as the personality of the speaker or writer. The capacity of words to convey human thoughts is unlimited. It is we as students who need to learn this power of words.

1.3 Words are the building blocks with which we construct sentences to communicate our thoughts to others. This communication can either be oral - as in a spoken sentence – or it can be written down by hand or printed in the form of a book

1.4 All the religions in the world, are based on the words and thoughts of one or a few persons, who conveyed their wisdom through words. The thoughts expressed by them through words were so important , that they began to be worshipped as gods. Till today we read and learn from the words of great sages, saints, and poets. In history we can read the inscriptions on the stone *Stupas* of the Maurayan Emperor Ashok who lived and ruled almost 1600 years ago.

1.5 For this reason written Literature is recognized as a part of the most precious cultural heritage in every country. This is because literature encodes the best thoughts that have occurred to Man, that helped him to learn, develop and progress.

1.6 A “language based on words” is what separates the human species from all other living species of plants, insects and animals. In ‘Introduction to Science’ we have learnt that plants, insects, animals and humans are life forms and are called ‘Organic Matter’ in this Universe. Among these only the human species has developed languages based on words. Other living species have sounds and silent modes of communication. It is only humans, who communicate through ‘Words’. All other living organisms have their signs and sounds and various silent forms of communication.

2. **ROLE OF WORDS IN A SENTENCE** ; The main aspects of Grammar, relevant to the understanding of power of words

2.1 **SENTENCE:** Words are the building blocks through which a sentence is constructed. Here, a sentence can be seen as a wall being constructed with bricks or blocks called WORDS. A Sentence is a set of two or more words that makes complete sense. For examples, “Birds fly”; “ I run” ; “Come home”, are sentences of two words each. Stated differently, ‘A Sentence is a complete thought put into words whether spoken or written.’

2.2 Words are like clothing for the thoughts. How well one dresses up or ‘clothes’ one’s thoughts becomes one’s power over words. For having Power over words, one needs to develop a ‘stock of words’ or ‘vocabulary’ on a continuous basis. . For this reason, a student’s or candidates IQ is tested through her / his knowledge, understanding, grasp of meaning and usage of words. All competitive examinations, across the world emphasise on testing the candidate’s ‘ vocabulary level or capability’ This Learning Material is going to introduce you to a method or tool, that will make it easier to know and develop a ‘stock of words ‘ and use them powerfully’.

3. Each word in a sentence, has a special role to play in completing the meaning of the thought. The same word can have different roles in different sentences. So pay attention to the role or function performed by a word in a sentence and not to the word itself. So the trick is to understand what role the word is playing in a given sentence and how to

identify that role. There has to be at least one Noun and one Verb to make a sentence.

4. **NOUNS** are the ‘naming words’. They tell who is doing the action in the sentence. Nouns are part of the first section in a sentence.
5. **VERB:** A ‘Verb’ is the ‘doing word’ in a sentence. It conveys the action that is taking place in the sentence. As Humpty Dumpty said to Alice ‘Verbs have a temper’. You cannot misplace them or use them incorrectly otherwise the entire meaning of the sentence will change.
6. **ADJECTIVES :** Next, there are words that tell us more about the Noun. Such words are called ‘Adjectives’ because they ‘Add to the meaning of the NOUN. So, if we say ‘The white birds fly’ the word ‘white’ is telling us more about the kind of birds that are flying. It is adding some more information on the ‘birds’, so the role of the word ‘white’ in this sentence is of an ‘adjective’. Thus, Adjectives answer the question ‘What kind of doer i?’ is the Noun in a given sentence.
7. **ADVERBS:** Similarly, words that add to the meaning of the Verb are called ‘Adverbs’. If we say ‘The white birds fly higher and higher’, or that they ‘fly swiftly’ or ‘fly slowly’ the role played by the words ‘higher’ ‘swiftly’ and ‘slowly’, would be of an ‘Adverb’, because in these sentences, they are telling us more about the Verb ‘fly’. So words that answer the question “How the action is being done?” are playing the role of ‘Adverbs’.
8. **PREPOSITION:** In addition to verb, adverb, noun and adjective, there can be other words in a sentence with additional roles. For example, ‘Preposition’ – are words that are placed just before or after the Noun or Adjective. **PROVERB:** is a word placed before a verb to help complete the action. Its role is to be in position just before, nearest to the verb.
9. **CONJUNCTION:** Another role for a word in a sentence is that of joining two parts of a sentence, and therefore they are called ‘Conjunctions’.

Conjunctions join two or more simple sentences, to make a Compound Sentence. They may also join two parts in a simple sentence.

12.1 Normally, a Compound Sentence is made by joining two simple sentences with the help of a Conjunction. You can easily remember it by recalling that a railway station is a ‘Junction’ if trains from two or more directions come and converge at that station. So a ‘conjunction’ is the ‘joining word’.

10. **INTERJECTION**: is a word that expresses sudden emotion or feeling. “Hurrah ! we have won the match”. ‘Alas! my pet is dead’.

11. **Summary**: The above fundamental rules of Grammar are common to all languages whether English or Hindi or Sanskrit or any other. To sum up, the role of words in a sentence remains that same in all languages . Words play the role of a verb (showing action) a noun (indicating the doer of the action) an adjective (telling more about the noun), pronoun,(instead of a noun) an adverb (telling more about the verb) a preposition (placed before a noun, adjective, verb or adverb), a conjunction (joining two parts of a sentence), proverb (coming before a verb) , an interjection (exclamatory words).

12. Also remember that **the same word can have different roles in different sentences**. So pay attention to the role or function performed by a word in a sentence and not to the word itself. **The trick is to understand what role the word is playing** in a given sentence and how to identify that role. Example, Sit down and rest a *while*. I will watch *while* you sleep. They *while* away their evenings with books and games.

PRACTICE FOR DAY 1

Q. 1. Indicate the role of each word in the following Sentences:

1. Still	2. waters	3. run	4. deep.	
5. He	6. still	7. lives	8. in 9. that	10. house.
11. The	12. up	13. train	14. is	15. late.

16. After	17. the	18. storm	19. comes	20. the 21. calm.
22. The	23. after 24. effects	25. of 26. this	27. drug 28. are 29.	30. bad
31. Suddenly,	32. One 33. Of 34. The	35. wheels	36. came	37. off.
38. He	39. Was 40. Only	41. One 42. foot	43. off	44. me.
45. She	46. is	47. on	48. a	49. Committee
50. Sit	51. down	52. and	53. rest	54. a 55. while.
56. I	57. will	58. watch	59. while	60. you 61. sleep. 62.
63. They	64. while	65. away	66. their	67. evenings 68.
69. with	70. books	71. and	72. games	73. during 74. holidays.
75. They	76. arrived	77. soon	78. after.	
79. They	80. arrived	81. after	82. us.	
83. They	84. arrived	85. after	86. we	had left.

