

General Criteria

of Distinguishing
Parts of Speech

The Part of Speech Category

is a lexical-grammatical category.



The grammatical signs characterize and distinguish between words, rather than their separate forms.

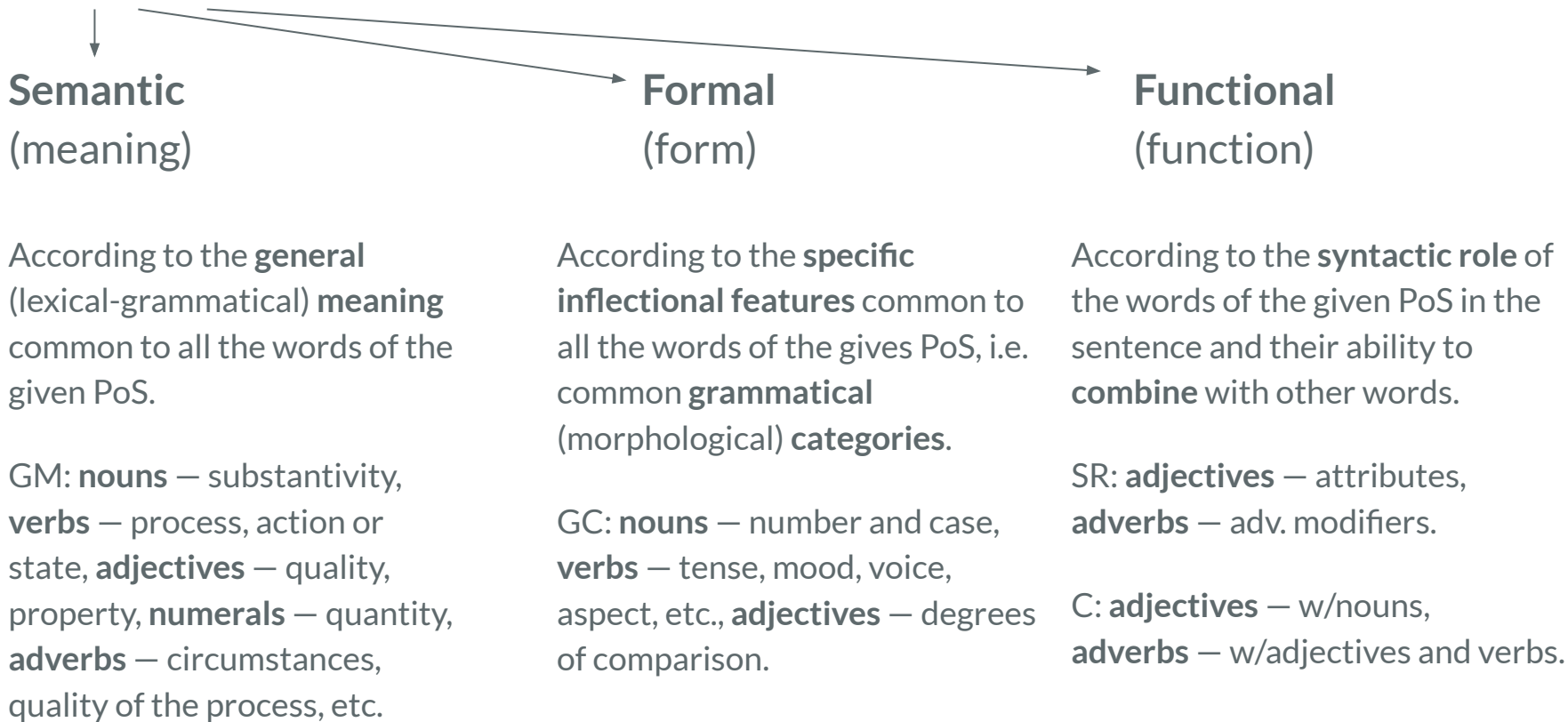


The word classes are characterized by certain grammatical (morphological) forms and a certain grammatical (syntactic) combinability.

Parts of Speech

are word classes **united semantically** and characterized by a very **abstract, common meaning**, which is expressed by a **combination of grammatical features** of these words.

Criteria



Formal and Functional Criteria

In general grammatical characteristic of PoS their **morphological and syntactic features** play an equally important role. But the syntactic part is more general and that is why it takes the first place in the grammatical characteristic of a word. It is due to the fact that morphologically not all the word classes can be definitely distinguished, but they have their certain syntactic role.

E.g.: **interjections** and **adverbs** are both **uninflected**, but they belong to different PoS due to their **different syntactic roles**.

The Role of Lexical Morphology

There are certain **word-forming affixes** which indicate the PoS of a given word.

E.g.: -ness, -dom, -hood (*nouns*), -ate, -ize, -en (*verbs*), -ly (*adverbs*), etc.

But the role of these indicators in distinguishing PoS is **insignificant** and they are applicable only when they **do not contradict** the results obtained from the grammatical form of the word.

E.g.: difference (n) 'разница' — difference (v) 'отличать'.

The Problem of Validity of Criteria

In order to have **scientific validity** any classification must be organized on a **constant basis**, i.e. the adopted principle(s) must be applicable to all the words of a given class and the classes must be **mutually exclusive**.

The classification could be consistent if based on a **single principle**.

A. I. Smirnitsky (1956) **doubts the validity** of distinguishing PoS according to the **formal or functional** criteria only: *“nouns are nouns not because they are able to decline, but they are able to decline because they are nouns”*.

Syntactic role may be induced by the general meaning. E.g.: adjectives — property — combined with nouns — attribute.

**Thank you
for your
attention!**