# SEMINAR 2    WORDS AND WORD CLASSES

**word classes ( closed v. open; conversion)  -   generic v. specific reference  -   marked v. unmarked  -    stative v. dynamic  -   pro-forms  -  ellipsis  -  operator  -   assertive v. non-assertive**

## Word classes (= parts of speech)

- we distinguish two main categories – open v. closed

| *closed, i.e. they are finite* | v. | *open, i.e. can be extended* |

e.g.  pronouns:                                          e.g.  nouns:
    determiners:                                              adjectives:
    primary verbs:                                            full verbs:
    modal verbs:                                              adverbs:
    prepositions:
    conjunctions:

-often referred to as:                                    - often referred to as: 'lexical words'
 'grammatical words'
 'function words'
 'structure words'


!some words can belong to more than one class, i.e. one word can function as more word classes = **conversion**  (see the example below)

       The bank is *round* the corner.
       She has a *round* face.
*round*     The car *rounded* the bend.
        Spring will soon come *round* again.
       The match only lasted five *rounds*.

## Generic v. specific

- generic – *Children* learn from their parents.
- specific – *The children* are playing in the garden.

Consider the following examples, are the noun phrases generic or specific?
1. *Tigers* are dangerous.
2. *The tiger* lives in China, India and Malaysia.
3. *These tigers* are living in a very cramped cage.
4. A keeper is coming to feed *the tiger*.

**Marked v. unmarked**

- this distinction may concern the **form** (words are marked or unmarked **inflectionally**) or **meaning** (words are marked or unmarked **semantically**)

|  | *marked* | v. | *unmarked* |
|---|---|---|---|
| e.g. | tigers (1 above) | | the tiger (2 above) |
| | heroine | | hero |
| | How young is he? | | How old is he? |
| | These tigers are living in a very cramped cage. | | The tiger lives in India. |

**Stative v. dynamic**

|  | *stative* | v. | *dynamic* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | usu: nouns, adjectives, stative verbs | | usu: verbs (see below) |

!Some verbs can be used both statively and dynamically:

|  | | v. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| e.g. | The tiger lives in India. | | These tigers are living in a cramped cage. |
| | They are married. | | They got married. |

**Pro-forms**

- st that can be used instead of other words – we refer to an expression without repeating it, i.e. by using pro-forms we **avoid repetition**

e.g. 1. Carol wanted to buy the blue sweater, but finally she bought the green one.
2. They liked the house, so they decided to buy it.
3. My parents live in the north of the country and my sister lives there too.
4. She hoped they would play a Mozart quartet and they will do so.

**Ellipsis**

- we can also avoid repetition by ellipsis = grammatical omission
  e.g. 1. Her daughter is studying physics and her son history.
      2. He promised he would come and I'm sure he will.

**Operator**

- two basic sentence constituents are the subject + the predicate
- the predicate sometimes involves **an operator – the first or only auxiliary in the verb phrase,** the predicate = *operator + predication*

    e.g.  1. You should phone your mother and ask her for help.
          2. This time tomorrow I will be working.
          3. I have been invited to the party.
          4. I go to discos almost every Friday.

Operator:
a) can be used alone
b) can be followed by n't, not
c) questions are formed by inversion

!When the verb is "be", this functions as itself an operator!

    e.g.  The car is expensive.   -  The car isn't expensive.  -  Is the car expensive?

**Assertive v. non-assertive**

| *Assertive* | v. | *non-assertive* |
|---|---|---|
| She has finished her thesis already. | v. | She hasn't finished her thesis yet. |
| He gave some money to the beggar. | v. | Did he give any money to the beggar? |
| = predication in positive sent. is **assertive** | | = predication in negatives + questions is **non-assertive** |

!Some determiners, pronouns, etc. have specifically assertive or non-assertive use!