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Norman C. Stageberg <i>An Introductory English Grammar</i> . 2020	المصادر والمراجع

Analysis of Chapter Twelve: Parts of Speech: Form Classes in *An Introductory English Grammar* by Norman C. Stageberg

Chapter Twelve of *An Introductory English Grammar* (fifth edition, 2000) by Norman C. Stageberg, co-authored with Dallin D. Oaks, examines the **form classes** of English parts of speech, focusing on nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Building on earlier chapters about morphemes (Chapter Eight), words and their types (Chapter Nine), word-formation processes (Chapter Ten), and inflectional paradigms (Chapter Eleven), this chapter provides advanced students with a detailed framework for understanding the structural and functional characteristics of these major word classes. It is a critical component of the textbook, particularly for linguistics students and non-native English learners seeking to master the grammatical roles of words in sentence construction.

Content and Structure

Chapter Twelve centers on the **form classes**—nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs—which are distinguished from function words (e.g., prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns) by their ability to carry lexical meaning and undergo inflectional changes. Stageberg explains that form classes are defined by their **morphological structure** (how they are formed with morphemes), **inflectional paradigms** (how they change to reflect grammatical categories), and **syntactic roles** (how they function in sentences). The chapter systematically explores each form class:

- **Nouns:** Defined as words denoting persons, places, things, or ideas (e.g., "dog," "city," "freedom"), nouns are characterized by their ability to inflect for number (singular "book" vs. plural "books") and possessive case ("book's" vs. "books'"). The chapter discusses subtypes like common vs. proper nouns and count vs. non-count nouns, emphasizing their syntactic roles as subjects, objects, or complements (e.g., "The dog barked").
- **Verbs:** Described as words expressing actions, states, or occurrences (e.g., "run," "seem," "is"), verbs are marked by complex inflectional paradigms for tense (e.g., "walk" vs. "walked"), person/number (e.g., "walks" for third-person singular), mood, and aspect (e.g., "walking" for progressive). The chapter covers regular and irregular verbs, as well as auxiliary verbs used in complex forms (e.g., "has walked").
- **Adjectives:** Identified as words that modify nouns (e.g., "blue sky," "tall tree"), adjectives inflect for degree in comparative and superlative forms (e.g., "big," "bigger," "biggest"). The chapter notes irregular forms (e.g., "good," "better," "best") and discusses adjectives' syntactic

roles in attributive (e.g., "red car") or predicative positions (e.g., "The car is red").

- **Adverbs:** Defined as words modifying verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs (e.g., "quickly ran," "very tall"), adverbs often inflect for degree (e.g., "fast," "faster," "fastest") and are formed by adding "-ly" to adjectives (e.g., "quick" to "quickly"). The chapter highlights their flexibility in sentence position (e.g., "She runs quickly" vs. "Quickly, she runs").

Stageberg emphasizes the **formal criteria** for identifying form classes, such as their ability to accept specific inflectional morphemes (e.g., "-s" for noun plurals, "-ed" for verb past tense) and their compatibility with certain affixes (e.g., "-ness" for nouns derived from adjectives). The chapter also contrasts form classes with function words, noting that form classes have open membership (new nouns, verbs, etc., can be added to the language) while function words belong to closed classes. Additionally, it addresses how form classes interact with syntax, serving as the core components of sentence structure (e.g., nouns as subjects, verbs as predicates).

Pedagogical Approach

Chapter Twelve balances theoretical rigor with practical application, aligning with Stageberg's accessible teaching style. It includes exercises that prompt students to identify and classify form-class words in sentences, analyze their inflectional forms, and determine their syntactic roles. For example, students might be asked to parse a sentence like "The taller trees bloom vibrantly" to identify "trees" as a noun (plural), "taller" as an adjective (comparative), "bloom" as a verb (present tense), and "vibrantly" as an adverb. These tasks reinforce the chapter's concepts and help students apply grammatical analysis to real-world language use.

The chapter uses clear, everyday English examples to illustrate concepts, ensuring accessibility for both native and non-native speakers. Its structured approach, with concise definitions and practical exercises, supports classroom instruction and self-study, particularly for non-native learners in regions like Vietnam, where the textbook is widely adopted for English majors.

Objectives

The primary objective of Chapter Twelve is to equip students with a thorough understanding of the form classes—nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs—and their roles in English grammar. The chapter aims to enable students to identify these word classes based on their morphological and syntactic properties, analyze their inflectional paradigms, and understand their functions

in sentence construction. It seeks to deepen students' knowledge of English morphology and syntax, particularly for non-native learners, by providing a framework for mastering grammatical accuracy in communication. Additionally, the chapter connects form classes to broader linguistic systems, showing how they serve as the backbone of sentence structure and contribute to meaning.

Contributions

Chapter Twelve makes significant contributions to English grammar education by offering a clear and systematic framework for understanding the form classes of parts of speech. Its detailed exploration of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, along with their morphological and syntactic properties, provides students with essential tools for analyzing language structure. By emphasizing the inflectional and syntactic roles of form classes, the chapter enhances students' ability to construct and interpret sentences accurately, which is particularly valuable for non-native learners.

The inclusion of practical exercises strengthens the chapter's pedagogical value, making it a vital resource for educators and students in linguistics and English language courses. By bridging theoretical concepts with practical application, Chapter Twelve supports advanced learners in mastering English grammar and reinforces the textbook's reputation as a cornerstone in linguistics education. Its clarity and accessibility have made it especially impactful for non-native English learners, contributing to the book's global influence in grammar instruction.