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Students' Viewpoints Toward Part of Speech as The Fulcrum of Grammar

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Abstract

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This study concerned with students' viewpoints toward part of speech which attempted to figure out the students' viewpoints about parts of speech, to explore students' problems in learning parts of speech, and to reveal the students' strategies to be acquainted with part of speech. This research was a qualitative study where the data were collected by interview. The subjects of this research were 28 students (15 females and 13 males) in the third semester, English Education Department at Faculty of Training and Education of a State University in West Sulawesi who were chosen randomly. All of the students were interviewed about their viewpoints about parts of speech. Based on the result of the research, the researcher found that some students misunderstood the definition of part of speech, and some of them understand it. The students were found to have problems in learning parts of speech such as being less practice, not mastering the parts of speech well, lack of vocabulary, and inability to differentiate parts of speech, as well as lack of understanding. In the mean time, the students' way to become familiar with parts of speech was by memorizing the word classes, knowing the characteristics of the word, paying attention to the position of the word in a sentence, knowing the meaning of the word, guessing the word, and looking at the word before and after in a sentence or text. The result of the study could be useful for future lectures about parts of speech

Keywords: grammar, parts of speech, viewpoint

INTRODUCTION

However, learning English requires a long process, an individual needs perseverance and tenacity as well as patience and high ambition because many things must be learned in English, one of which is grammar. In fact, according to Larsen-Freeman in Isyam & Zainil (2010) stated that grammatical skill is the fifth skill, although according to researchers it should be the first skill because without grammar skills students as EFL learners cannot do anything. Learning grammar is a fundamental feature of the English language, although it is hard to master (Mortazavi & Barjesteh, 2016; Yusob, 2018). Grammar is one of the important aspects that English language learners must master. This aspect teaches students to recognize words and how to arrange them to form one or more sentences. This aspect also helps students understand the meaning of a sentence as well as explain ideas to the audience properly and correctly. Apart from that, grammar also helps students to be able to master other skills such as reading, speaking, listening, and even writing. Apart from that, one of the English language proficiency tests such as TOEFL and TOEIC also requires an understanding of grammar. In addition, when communicating in daily life, either verbally or in written form, a set of rules that shape words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, and comprehensible arguments is needed. Without those rules, the message could not be delivered effectively to the listener. That is the reason that it is important to master grammar if students wish to master English well.

Grammar has been defined by some people. According to Ramadhani & Ovilia (2022) Grammar is one important English component that needs to be mastered starting from identifying and understanding parts of speech. Grammar is a collection of rules for using language, starting from the arrangement of words, and phrases, to sentences (Fitria, 2023). It can give us an understanding that grammar has always been the element of a language and the rules of how to arrange these elements into a meaningful unit. For example: how words are arranged into phrases and how phrases are arranged into sentences (Effendi et al., 2017). Richards & Schmidt (2013) also said that grammar is a description of the structure of a language and how language units such as words and phrases are formed into sentences. Grammar is a substantial English element commonly considered a challenging component (Aniuranti et al., 2021). According to Shanklin in Zhong & Wakat (2023) Grammar proficiency refers to "the ability to judge the acceptability and appropriateness of discourse based on grammatical concepts".

Based on those definitions, it can be concluded that grammar is an essential element of a language that contains some rules that are used to form the small unit of language into big units namely starting from words. This aspect must be mastered by everyone who wants to improve their proficiency in English because Weak grammar contributes to the difficulty of mastering the English language (Chiou, 2019).

Based on the test which was given on 21 August 2023 to the intermediate grammar students or the third-semester students in English Education Department Universitas Sulawesi Barat, where the students were given some words to classify into appropriate parts of speech, it was found that some of them still chose incorrect choice. Generally, part of speech contains eight items, they were noun, verb, adverb, adjective, preposition, pronoun, conjunction, and interjection. The students could not classify the word into the correct part of speech. Whereas part of speech is the most basic in grammar. Just like a home, if the foundation is strong, the wall also will be. In English, if the part of speech is strong, the other grammar also will be strong like tense, passive voice, conditional sentences, clause, etc. Part of Speech is a classification of words according to word form (Nurzaenab & Purnawansyah, 2016). Thus, students should have the ability to recognize parts of speech well in order they know how the words to be put based on the types such as verbs, adverbs,

nouns, etc. and parts of speech include one of the topics that are really important to learn English (Maili & Sondari, 2022). The parts of speech indicates how the word functions in meaning as well as grammatically within the sentence (Apriyanti, 2020).

Based on the background above, the researcher attempts to know deeply about the students' viewpoint about part of speech which related to students' viewpoints about part of speech in grammar, Students' problem in learning part of speech, and Students' way to be familiar with part of speech.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research design

This research was a qualitative study that represents the views and perspectives of the people in a study. It highlighted words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. Qualitative research is an approach to exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, the researcher endeavored to gain experience from a first-person point of view. The main topic of this research was about parts of speech as a crucial part of grammar. The researcher desired to know about the students' point of view about parts of speech after they comprehend grammar for a year in university.

Participants

The subjects of this research were the intermediate students or the third-semester students, English Education Department, Faculty of Training and Education at a university in West Sulawesi. There were 28 students (15 females and 13 males). All of the students were interviewed about their familiarity with part of speech. They were free to convey their understanding and their opinion. The interview of each student is only five and ten minutes, but all students need two weeks to finish.

Procedures and Instruments

This research applied a structured interview session where the students will be asked 5 questions that relate to their understanding of part of speech. Those questions were: What do you know about parts of speech; What problems do you face when learning parts of speech? Why?; How do you recognize parts of speech in a sentence or text; Are parts of speech needed when learning grammar? Why?; In your opinion, which part of speech is difficult to recognize? In your opinion, which part of speech is difficult to recognize?

Before executing the interview, the students joined in basic grammar course in the first semester and pre intermediate grammar course in the second semester. Thus, the researcher thought that the students had had experience of learning grammar.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data discussed students' viewpoint toward the part of speech as a fulcrum of grammar. Most of the findings showed that students had various viewpoints about parts of speech. This would affect the implementation of grammar learning in class. As we know, parts of speech were the basic parts that must be mastered before the students were able to make sentences in English. The result of all the viewpoints will be elaborated on below:

Students' viewpoints about part of speech in grammar

Generally, there were eight parts of speech in the English language that were familiar for the students, they were noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, and interjection. However, there were still many students who did not know what parts of speech were, even though they had studied them in basic grammar classes. This was evident from their varied answers when asked about parts of speech. Some of them said that:

Student's	Transcript
Code	
P10	Part of speech is a sentence
P19	Part of speech is a form of sentence in English
P20	Hmmm, actually I don't understand about part of speech. But I think this aspect is one of the important thing in sentence, may be it is like verb and subject.
P25	Part of speech is Auxiliary verb, maybe
P28	I think it is a part of speaking activity

Table 1. The result of Interview about the students' misunderstanding toward the definition of part of speech

Based on the result above, it could not be denied that some students still felt confused about defining what was part of speech. Whereas, parts of speech were related to the function of a word. It was in line with the opinion of Apriyanti (2020) who said that the part of speech indicates how the word functions in meaning as well as grammatically within the sentence. However, some students still defined part of speech as a sentence and as an auxiliary verb. This understanding must be straightened out so that there were no misunderstandings because if that happened it would make it difficult for students to progress to a more complicated level of grammar.

However, on the other hand, we also should not conclude that they did not understand the items in the part of speech, because, perhaps, they could not define parts of speech verbally, but they comprehended that in English there were things called nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections.

Apart from that, some of them could defined well what a part of speech was, as the results of the interviews below:

Table 2. The result of Interview about the students' understanding toward the definition of part of speech

Student's Code	Transcript
P2	Hmm, I think, part of speech is a Material ee to understand before tenses,
	which is divided into pronouns, interjections, in other things, is a small
	part in sentences that use tenses. Emmm, This cointains of some
	vocabulary maybe, that has a certain function. For example, book is a
	noun, beaitiful is an adjective, etc. In making sentence we have to know
	that book is noun so we can put it in correct sentence. Hmmm I think eee
	something like that.
P3	I think parts of speech are a way to differentiate groups in words. This part
10	of speech is very important to learn so that a sentence is complete or
	matches the word in English
P5	Well, Part of speech is a class of words based on the categories of form,
10	function and meaning or to compose good and correct word. So, if I want
	to make sentence I have to know about part of speech. It can help me to
	make a good sentence.
P12	Part of speech is a part of grammar in the form of a classification of words
112	which are divided into several categories based on their role and function
	in the structure of a sentence, divided into parts, namely noun, pronoun,
	verb, adjective, adverb, and there are still several more parts
P16	Part of speech is a part of English grammar in the form of a classification
110	of words which are divided into several categories based on their role and
	function in the structure of a sentence.
P26	English grammar is a classification of words which are divided into
1 20	several categories based on their role and function in the structure of a
	sentence.
P27	Groups of words in language units based on categories of form, function
1 4/	and meaning. To compose good and correct sentences based on standard
	sentence patterns,

Based on the result above, it could be seen that some of the students had conveyed some definition of part of speech based on their experience in learning grammar. P2 said that part of speech was a Material before tenses which was divided into pronouns, interjections, and other that has a certain function. While P3 said that parts of speech were a way to differentiate groups in words. Additions from P5 and P27 stated that part of speech was a class of words based on the categories of form, function, and meaning or to compose good and correct words. P12 argued that part of speech was a part of grammar in the form of a classification of words which were divided into several categories based on their role and function in the structure of a sentence, divided into parts, namely nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and there were still several more parts. The last was P16 and P26 who said that part of speech was a part of English grammar in the form of a classification of words. Thus, the researcher concluded that some of the students understood parts of speech as a class of words that had certain functions which made them different from the other words. Students who already had an understanding of parts of speech will find an easiness to make sentences and even to compose a paragraph because they knew how to put words according to their function.

Starting from the definition expressed by students regarding parts of speech, it turned out that they also had an understanding that parts of speech were an important element in grammar. Their opinion was stated below:

Table 3. The result of Interview about the students' viewpoints toward the position of part of speech in grammar

Student's	Transcript
Code	
P4	Part of speech in grammar is important, of course, before will learn Tenses,
	because these are little parts for the making sentences use tense. For
	example we know about the formula of tenses, like subject, verb, and object.
	So we have to know what word that inculded as usbject, what word as verb,
	and so on.
P6	Yes it is very important because. You will be confused if you arrange
	sentences irregularly. Because it is very helpful in arranging and
	arranging words/sentences and also because there are no parts of speech,
	we don't know which words contain nouns, verbs and we also know how
	to arrange sentences correctly
P14	Well, hmm Parts of speech are really needed, in grammar it is like a
	foundation in grammar to be able to complete the buildin. Yes, because
	parts of speech are the basic thing in English that we must know as an
	English language student. We have to know vocabulary classification in
	order to make sentences correctly.
P21	Needed, in order to differentiate between one word and another. Placing the
	right words in a sentence so as not to get confused and in English toO. It
	can make it easier for us to compose sentences
P22	Yes, of course it is very necessary, because it can help us know what the
	next or previous word will look like before we continue with a word so that
	the sentence we make can be neatly arranged and well structured.
P23	It is very necessary, by knowing the parts of speech our English will be
	structured neatly and there will be no more mistakes and we can analyze
	the word classes of each vocabulary

Based on the result on the table 3 above, it could be assumed that some students agreed that part of speech was a prominent element in English. It was in line with Maili & Sondari (2022) who said students should have ability to recognize part of speech well in order they know how the words to put the types such as verb, adverb, noun, etc and parts of speech include one of topics that really important to learn English. According to P4, part of speech was an important part in grammar which was learnt before tenses. While P6, P22, and P23 said that part of speech was very helpful in arranging sentences. The other opinion from P14 who stated that student must master vocabulary classification in order to make sentences correctly. The opinions expressed by students were an interpretation of the benefits of knowing the parts of speech while they were learning English. In this case, parts of speech were the basis for all material in grammar. In essence, studying parts of speech was the same as opening up the opportunity for the students to master all grammar topics such as tenses, passive voice, question tags, etc.

Students' problems in learning part of speech

In the previous section, students' views regarding parts of speech and their function in grammar had been elaborated. In this section, the interview results would be explained in more detail regarding the problems which students faced that made them difficult to categorize parts of speech in a sentence or text. The result were below:

Student's Code	Transcript
P2	My problem is bacause Less practice, not every moment
P4	The problem faced is that they usually forget the differences between parts of speech
P6	I think the main poin that be a problem is Vocabulary because it is difficult to detect what part the word belongs to, if you don't know the meaning Vocabulary because it is difficult to detect what part the word belongs to, if you don't know the meaning
P7	It is quite difficult to remember the tenses of parts of speech and vocabulary because there are many parts of speech and some parts that I think are quite difficult for me to remember
P8	Sometimes I have difficulty distinguishing between adjectives and adverbs
P9	Difficulty distinguishing parts of speech. Difficulty distinguishing between nouns and verbs
P10	I Think, my problem is Lack of comprehension and understanding
P11	Sometimes i get confused to mark every part of speech. Especially verbs and nouns. Because sometimes a verb can be a noun depending on the sentence
P15	Difficulty distinguishing syllables and their placement. Because there is

Table 4. The result of Interview about the students' problem in categorizing part of speech

Table 4 showed that some students face similar problems with their friends, while some of them had different problems. Some problems that conveyed by students were:

a lack of vocabulary, especially in verbs 2 and 3

Less practice; According to P2, a factor that made it difficult to determine part of speech was less practice. Just like the idiom which says that *practice makes you perfect*. English was a skill. Thus, whoever wanted to master must practice every time. If the students learned about part of speech only in the class, without conducting reviewing at home or after the class, they could not master it.

Forget the part of speech; This part was still related to the first point, less practice, which made it easier for the student to forget the part of speech. This situation happened to P4. Even though he has learned or memorized some examples of each part of speech, he just kept in mind for a long time, that the words would be lost.

Vocabulary: According to <u>Chand (2021)</u> there are various factors that affect language learning such as difficult grammatical patterns, difficult vocabulary, variation in L1 and L2, motivation, classroom practices and pedagogies, learners' attitudes and so many. It was in line with P4 and P4 who had vocabulary problems in recognizing part of speech. Indeed, in understanding parts of speech, an enormous vocabulary is needed so that we can notice the differences. The more vocabulary we learn, the easier it is for us to identify parts of speech.

Cannot differentiate part of speech; Even though parts of speech consist of 8 items, it cannot be renounced that some students discovered it difficult to differentiate between one-word class and another. Especially if one word has two meanings, for instance, the word book in the sentence "*I have a book*" and the word book in the sentence "*Do you book a hotel?*". Certainly, they will feel confused. They would think that "*book*" in both sentences has the same meaning and function, and they would assume that the second sentence has error grammar. Another condition emerged with the words "*Present*" and "*Presentation*", sometimes students had difficulty distinguishing between

verbs and nouns, so they always made mistakes when speaking or writing. They said, "*I will present*" even though it should be "*I will present*". Small things like this are usually the problems faced by students, as expressed by P8 P9 P11, and P15.

Lack of understanding: The worst thing is when students did not understand the parts of speech material at all. They did not know that in English there was something called parts of speech. As P10 said, his lack of understanding made him difficult to categorize word classes. This needs to be followed up and given special training

Every student had different difficult part of speech to recognize, here was delivered about the difficulty face by student to differentiate certain part of speech:

Table 5. The result of the students' viewpoint about the most difficult part of speech

Student's	Viewpoint about the most difficult part of speech to
Code	recognize
P1	Preposition
P2	Preposition
P3	Noun, Conjunction
P4	Conjunction, Preposition
P5	Conjunction, Preposition
P6	All of part of speech
P7	Pronoun
P8	Conjunction, Pronoun
P9	Prepisition, Interjection
P10	Pronoun, Preposition, conjunction
P11	Adjective, adverb
P12	Adverb, conjunction, preposition, interjection
P13	Preposition
P14	Preposition
P15	Conjunction
P16	Adverb, verb
P17	Preposition
P18	Conjunction
P19	Conjunction
P20	Adverb
P21	Verb
P22	Noun
P23	Adjective
P24	Preposition, Conjunction
P25	Conjunction
P26	Conjunction
P27	Conjunction
P28	Adverb

Based on the result from the table, it was found that the most difficult part of speech to recognize by the students were conjunction, which was chosen 15 students, the part of speech that occupies the second most difficult position was the preposition namely 12 people had chosen it. The third position was adverb, followed by verb, pronoun, interjection, noun and adjective.

Students' way to be familiar with part of speech

When students had trouble distinguishing parts of speech, they had the initiative to recognize them. The interview results regarding how students recognized parts of speech, whether the word stood alone or was combined with other words in a sentence or text.

Table 6. The result of the students' viewpoint about the way the recognize part of speech

Student's Code	Transcript
P1	Eee so the way I recognize part of speech hmmm like this, the fist of all,I learned what is word which into are pronoun, adverb, other things. After that I will consider the class of the word.
P2	My view is I have to know the characteristic first. Like noun, adjective, or verb
P5	My way is by knowing the position of the word in a sentences
P12	Well, the way that I use to know about part of speech is by seeing the structure of the sentence of the teks. My teacher always said that subject is always noun, subject always stand in the first in the sentence, so all the word in the first sentence is noun or maybe pronoun.
P16	I think, to know about part of speech, we must learn first about part of speech. We must know the part of speech first. The words that include as noun, verb, adverb, an so on. Because if have learnt about all of part of speech, I am sure that we will remember
P17	My way maybe different with the other. Because knowing about part of speech is difficult enough. We must memorize it. But I think I cannot memorize well. Sometimes I forget if I memorize a word. So my way is I have to know about the meaning of the word. If I know the meaning of the word I am sure I can know the class of the word. For example a word like eat, I know that in Indonesia eat is makan. So that is adverb. The other word like banana, it is a fruit or in Indonesia pisang, so it is a noun. I think just like that.
P18	Actually, I have to ways to recognize about part of speech. The first way is by knowing the meaning of the words. If I know the meaning, I will know the class of the word weather it is a noun, verb, preposition or others. The second way is by guessing. If I don't have any idea about the meaning of the word, I must guess it, maybe it is noun or verb. Sometimes my guessing is correct
P24	My way is by looking for the meaning of the word in dictionary"
P26	The way I know that the word is verb or adjective, by looking at the word before and after. For example the sentence like, She plays badminton in the field. If I want to know the class of the word plays, means I must see the word "she" and "badminton". She is subject, while badminton is object. So based on the formula, after subject there will be a verb. Before object there will be also a verb. So it can be concluded that plays is a verb.
P27	by Seeing from the word, meaning. Position and use. I think just it the way to know the part of speech

Based on the results above, it has been found that there were several ways that could be used to recognize parts of speech, including:

a. Memorizing each word and its classes

Memorizing is one of the activities which sometimes difficult for students. However, some of them chose this way in order they remembered the material or certain topic in learning. It was in line with the opinion from Hoque (2018) who said that Memorization, it must be stressed, does not necessarily mean learning by 'rote' and in fact rote learning is just one way in which we are able to commit things to memory. Based on data analysis, P1 and P16 suggested that they applied memorization in recognizing part of speech. Recognizing some words such as noun, adverb, and verb and the other part of speech made them easier to identify the class of a certain word. Even though, this way maybe would be difficult to apply because some students did not have memorization habit.

b. Knowing the characteristic of the word

According to P2, knowing part of speech could be conducted by knowing the certain characteristics because Each word has own characteristic. If we learned about characteristics of word it would relate to phonological awareness. Phonological awareness could be measured by a variety of tasks, such as blending (i.e., putting sounds together to form words or word segments), elision (i.e., removing sounds from words to form new words), segmentation (i.e., isolating the sounds of words or decomposing words into their constituent sounds), and rhyming, which required manipulation of sounds at different levels of linguistic complexity, such as the word, syllable, onset rime, or phoneme levels (Goodrich & Lonigan, 2015). This way was almost the same with memorization. The students must memorize the characteristics for each word.

Thus, it could be concluded that, it was hoped that the method of recognizing parts of speech based on their characteristics could also be applied in the learning process because the diversity of word characteristics could give students the opportunity to know parts of speech more quickly, especially words that were often used in everyday life. Therefore, that there were no more misunderstandings in choosing the part of speech that suited what you want.

c. Paying attention to the position of the word in a sentences

Each word in a sentence has its own function. The position of a word in a sentence determined its function. Thus, students should have an ability to recognize part of speech well in order they know how the words to put the types such as verb, adverb, noun, etc. and parts of speech include one of topics that really important to learn English (Maili & Sondari, 2022). Based on the interview results, P5 and P12 could identify parts of speech by looking at the position of the word. That is, P5 looked at whether the word was at the beginning, in the middle and at the end. Usually in sentences, both English and Indonesian, the word that always came in front is the subject. While the subject could be a noun. So, P5 and P12 assumed that if a noun came first in a sentence, then that word was a noun. It could not be denied that this method was also effective for beginners in knowing the parts of speech of a word. For example, we wanted to find out words that function as adjectives. So, we looked at the position

of a word, if it was in front of a noun it could be an adjective. For instance, in the phrase, beautiful woman. The word "beautiful" was an adjective because its position was in front of the noun, where the adjective has the function of describing the noun. We could conclude the position of words as part of speech markers below:

Table 7. The way to recognize part of speech based on the position

Part of	Position
speech	
Noun	At the beginning of the sentence: The cat eat fish
	Before the verb: <i>The cat</i> eat fish
	Before the adjective: <i>she is a beautiful woman</i>
	After the preposition: <i>I am sorry for sending the paper late</i>
Verb	After subject : <i>The cat eat fish</i>
	Before object : I see the man
Adverb	Before verb: I rarely go to the beach
	After verb : she drives slowly
	Before adjective : she looks extremely tired
Adjective	Before noun: <i>He is a smart student</i>
Preposition	before direction, time, place, and position and many more: I put
	the book on the table
Conjunction	Between two parallel words: <i>She opened the door and the window.</i>
	Between two phrases: Do they prefer playing chess or playing
	soccer?
	Between two clauses: He studied all night but he failed the test.
Pronoun	Appears in the second sentence to replace the person's name in
	the first sentence: Ani likes cooking. She can cook the most
	delicious food.

d. Knowing the meaning of the word

If someone knows the meaning of a word, it will make easier for him to determine the function of the word. Understanding the meaning of words is the same as memorizing vocabulary. According to P18, P24, and P27, knowing or looking up the meaning of a word in a dictionary would make it easier to know the part of speech of the word.

e. Guessing the word

There will be conditions where students cannot open a dictionary or do not know the meaning of a word at all, so it is difficult for them to analyze parts of speech, so the way they take is guessing. This way could be applied by the student who lack of vocabulary. According to P1, guessing was one of the ways to determine part of speech. Davidson asserted that guessing word meaning from the context is suitable for students who have limited mastery of vocabulary, do not often use their existing knowledge, and frequently get only limited meaning from text (Rahmalia et al., 2019). In this case by guessing the function of the word also can work well for the student who do no know the meaning of the word.

f. Looking at the word before and after in a sentence or text
Word before and after in a sentence will help a student to recognize the part of speech.
Based on interview result with P26, she argued that the way she knew about part of speech by looking at the word before and after just like in the sentence "She plays badminton in the field". The part of speech of the word plays is a verb, because it occurred after subject and before object. It is line with what Mujahidah et al. (2020) stated that verbs are a word that function to show an action and condition of the subject.

CONCLUSIONS

The study aims to explore students' viewpoints toward the part of speech as the fulcrum in grammar. The findings reveal three points namely students' viewpoints about part of speech in grammar, Students' problems in learning part of speech, and Students' way to be familiar with part of speech.

The first point was students' viewpoints about part of speech in grammar which showed two perspectives, there were some students misunderstood the definition of part of speech, and some of them understood it. The students who misunderstood part of speech still defined part of speech as a sentence or an auxiliary verb. The students who understood stated that parts of speech were a way to differentiate groups in words which have function and meaning or to compose a good and correct word.

The second point was students' problems in learning part of speech namely Less practice, Forgetting the part of speech, lack of vocabulary, they cannot differentiate parts of speech, and Lack of understanding. It was also found that the most difficult parts of speech to recognize by the students were conjunctions and prepositions.

The last point is Students' way to becoming familiar with part of speech namely by memorizing each word and its classes, Knowing the characteristics of the word, paying attention to the position of the word in a sentence, knowing the meaning of the word, guessing the word, and looking at the word before and after in a sentence or text.

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