CHAPTER VIII

8.0.0 Word classes and structural words:

8.0.1 Prolegomena:

This chapter describes the syntactic functions of DD words and sub-categorizes them in functional terms supplemented by the morphological criteria as and when feasible/necessary.

8.1.1 The grammatical unit word as posited in this study is higher in rank than the minimal meaningful grammatical unit the morpheme in the hierarchy of grammatical units.¹ The formal characteristics exhibited by the unit word in DD are — (1) internal stability and (2) external mobility² in actual utterances like sentences, clauses and phrases. Bloomfield defined

¹(a). Bloch, B. & Trager, G.L. : Outline of Linguistic Analysis, 1972, p. 54


the word as "a minimum free form"\textsuperscript{3} of a language. He recognized the presence of actual and/or potential momentary pause preceding and following a word. Thus, we can define a word as a unit in an utterance bounded by actual and/or potential pauses on both sides.\textsuperscript{4}

8.2.0 Variable and Invariable words:

DD words might comprise one or more morphemes and may be susceptible to morphological variations in terms of inflectional and derivational categories. Such words are designated variable words\textsuperscript{5} in this study.

Many DD words, however, are characterized by constant phonetic/phonological forms and do not exhibit morphological variations and are designated Invariable words.\textsuperscript{6}

/\textipa{/yes/ is an Invariable word while /\textipa{/female idiot, is a variable word having the morphemic composition

\{\textipa{bɛnə}\} + {-1}.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{3} Bloomfield, L. : Language, 1980, p. 178
\item \textsuperscript{4} Hockett, C.F. i A Course in Modern Linguistics, 1970, p. 167
\item \textsuperscript{5} Robins, R.H. : General Linguistics, An Introductory Survey, 1985, p. 151
\end{itemize}
8.2.1 DD Variable words are again sub-categorized in terms of morphemic compositions as belonging to the monomorphic and polymorphic classes (that is, words with two or more morphemes). Examples of monomorphic and polymorphic words are given below:

/kala solata/ The black shirt

The word /kala/ black is monomorphic while the other word in the group /solata/ the shirt is polymorphic in composition, comprising the morphemes {sola} and {-ta}.

Only when the description needs to be precise, terms like bimorphemic/trimorphemic etc. (having two/three morphemes) will be used.

The discussion above pertaining to word classification can be summarized diagrammatically as below:

```
Words
  /------
  |  |
  V  V
Variable  Invariable
  /------
  |  |
  V  V
Monomorphic  Polymorphic
```
8.3.0 In terms of the constituent compositions, words may again be sub-categorized as Simple and Compound.  

8.3.1 Simple words are taken to be single words irrespective of morphemic compositions. Compound words, on the other hand, are unions of potentially independent words, exhibiting internal stability and external mobility thereby fulfilling the grammatical criteria posited for the unit word at the beginning of this chapter.

1. /mui bʰat kʰag/ I eat rice
2. /tʰa-e ahise/ He has come

The five words in the sentences above belong to the simple sub-category. The following are examples of compound words.

3. /bʰale-kuhole/ safety
4. /nakare-kukure/ cats and dogs
5. /mase-mohoge/ fish and meat

The three words above belong to the compound type formed by the concatenation of the following compound words.

7(a). Gleason, H.A. : An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics, 1979, p. 59
each of which is potentially independent:

3. /bha1e/ + /kuhole/
4. /nakare/ + /kukure/
5. /mase/ + /mohove/

8.4.0 In terms of the morphological and syntactic functions/criteria, DD words may be classified as belonging to one of following classes:

(a) Full or Lexical words,
(b) Functional or structural or Grammatical words and
(c) Marginal words.

8.4.1 Full words, in terms of their syntactic functions supplemented by morphological characteristics are classified as belonging to the following word classes —

(a) Noun class,
(b) Adjective class,
(c) Verb class and
(d) Adverb class.

8.4.2 The Noun class words:

Words functioning as subjects or objects or noun-complements in sentences belong to the Noun-class.

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8(a) Lyons, J. : Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics 1968, p. 320
8(b) Huddleston, R. : English Grammar, an Outline, 1958, p. 29
8(c) Quirk, R. & : A University Grammar of English, 1955
Greenbaum, S.
/bilu ahil/ Bilu has come.

In the sentence above the word /bilu/ is the subject, and hence a noun. All words which occupy the subject-slot in sentences are nouns.

This syntactic criterion can be supplemented by a morphological criterion -- which is, the inflection of subject-nouns for the nominative case. DD subject- nouns select the allomorphs \{-e\} and \{-∅\} of the \{Nominative\} morpheme depending on whether they are subjects of transitive or intransitive sentences.

1. /hubgote ḅat kʰal/ Subot ate rice

   In the transitive sentence above the subject-noun /hubgt/ takes the nominative marker \{-e\}.

2. /hubgol gel/ Subot left

   The example above is an intransitive sentence. The subject-noun /hubgt/ takes the nominative marker \{-∅\} (a covert marker).

8.4.3 All words occupying the object-slot in transitive sentences are nouns.

/dʰone sagoltak marise/ Dhan has beaten the goat
In the sentence above the word /sageltak/ is the object, and hence it is a noun.

The morphological criterion for the object-noun is the accusative inflection. The allomorphs \{-k\} and \{-ok\} of the Accusative morpheme are suffixed to V-final and C-final nouns respectively.

1. /zok \_ Howe binuk taka dise/  
   Jakha gave money to Binu

2. /rondone sondonok marise/  
   Randan has beaten Chandan.

In the examples above the object-nouns /binuk/ and /sondonok/ are V-final and C-final respectively. This phonological feature conditions the selections of the allomorphs \{-k\} and \{-ok\} of the accusative morpheme in DD.

8.4.4 All words functioning as noun-complements are nouns.

/ami tak gaybura koriluy/

We appointed him the village head

The word /gaybura/ village head in the sentence above functions as the noun-complement, and hence it is a noun.

8.4.5 Words selecting classifier suffixes (that is, the allomorphs of the classifier morpheme) belong to the noun class.
Selections of the allomorphs of the classifier morpheme are lexically conditioned in DD and hence unpredictable.

8.4.6 Words inflected for the category of number are nouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/sawa/ boy</td>
<td>/sawagila/ boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/hati/ elephant</td>
<td>/hatimokh^a/ elephants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the examples above the words /sawa/ and /hati/ exhibit inflections for the plural category by the affixation of the allomorphs {-gila} and {-mokh^a} of the plural morpheme and hence these belong to the noun class. The selections of the allomorphs of the plural morpheme are lexically conditioned and hence unpredictable.

8.4.7 Words inflected for the category of gender are nouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/garo/ male Garo</td>
<td>/garowani/ female Garo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/master/ male teacher</td>
<td>/mastarani/ female teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The feminine gender is effected by the affixation of the allomorphs of the \{Feminine\} morpheme. Hence these words belong to the noun class. The selections of the allomorphs of the \{Feminine\} morpheme are lexically conditioned and hence unpredictable.

8.4.8 Within the major class noun a sub-class Pronoun needs to be posited in DD.

DD pronouns constitute a closed set -- they are limited in number. The pronouns are characterized by a three-term person category -- 1st, 2nd and 3rd. Each of these three term categories exhibit a singular plural distinction:

1st person /mui/ I /ami/ we
2nd person /tui/ you /tumi/ you (plural)
3rd person /tae/ he/she/it /tami/ they
   (distal) (distal)
   /i/he/she/it /imi/ they
   (proximal) (proximal)

DD pronouns do not exhibit gender contrasts.

Pronouns are not inflected for the nominative category irrespective of the fact whether they are subjects of transitive or intransitive verbs.
1. /mui zam/ I shall go
   /mui tak marim/ I will beat him/her
2. /tui ahibi/ You will come
   /tui tak maribi/ Beat him
3. /tae zabo/ He/she will go
   /tae ramok maribo/ He/she will beat Ram

The basic characteristic of all DD nouns is that they function as the nuclei of noun phrases in the functional slots of subject, object and noun complement in DD sentences.

8.5.0 The Adjective class words:

All words modifying nouns in noun-phrases in the subject, object and noun complement slots of sentences are Adjectives. In DD most adjectives are attributive in relation to the nouns they modify. Only adjectives pertaining to professions and occupations are predicatively used.

/kala saora manuta gel/
The dark tall man left

In the sentence above the subject noun-phrase is /kala saora manuta/ the dark tall man -- a subordinative endocentric construction. The noun /manuta/ the man, which is the head, is preceded by two attributive adjectives /kala/ dark and /saora/ tall, in the modifier-modified relation and hence subordinate to the noun head.

In the sentence below /zogot pondit gel/ Jagat, the teacher left, the noun-phrase is /zogot pondit/ Jagat, the teacher, in which /zogot/ is the noun head and /pondit/ teacher is the predicative adjective, modifying the noun head.

It is worth mentioning here that DD adjectives while modifying nouns in a sequence do not maintain a fixed order of occurrence. Thus, both the orders /kala saura/ and /saura kala/ are equally well-formed.

8.5.1 Some (not all) adjectives in DD are in concordial relation with the nouns they modify in terms of the category of gender.

raji gai/ red cow

raja halow/ red bull
In the examples above the nouns and adjectives are in concord in terms of the category of gender. /gal/ cow is a feminine noun which colligates with the adjective /raj/ red, inflected for the category of feminine gender. /halowa/ bull is a masculine noun colligating with /raja/ red which is correlatable to the masculine category.

However, it must be pointed out here, that this is an optional syntactic feature characterizing DD speech. /rajagai/ and /rajigai/ are equally well-formed.

8.5.2 In noun-phrases adjectives colligate with intensifiers, to form subordinative endocentric constructions:

1. /birat saura gas/ Very tall tree
2. /mosto dagar hati/ Very big elephant

In the examples above /birat/ and /mosto/ are adjective intensifiers. The intensifier + adjective structure within a noun-phrase is designated an adjective phrase in this study. An adjective phrase has one or more adjectives as head or heads.

1. /birat saura/ Very tall - Intensifier + Adjective head
2. /mosto daŋŋar aru dignila/ Very big and tall
   Intensifier + Adjective + Conjunction + Adjective

8.6.0 The verb class words:

Words functioning (actually or potentially) as the nuclei or heads of verb-phrases constituting predicate components of sentences or clauses are designated verbs$^{10}$ in this study. Verbs in DD are characterized by inflections for the fused categories of person and tense. A structural study of this type needs the postulation of a three-term person category and a five-term tense category. All DD verbs in their full forms are inflected for the fused categories of tense and person.

$^{10}$ (a). Bloomfield, L: Language, 1980, pp. 172-175
(f). Robins, R.H.: General Linguistics an Introductory Survey, 1985,
Every verb in the finite form must exhibit the person concord in relation to the subject noun.

1. /mui khây/ I eat
2. /tui khâi/ you eat
3. /tae khâe/ He/she eats

The verbs in the sentences above exhibit concord for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd person subject-noun respectively. The tense category posited for the verb is Tense 1 in all the sentences (for the definition of Tense 1 vide the following section).

8.6.1 In terms of the category of tense, verbs exhibit a five-term morphological contrast in OD. In this study these are designated by the neutral terms Tense 1, Tense 2, Tense 3, Tense 4 and Tense 5 because of the fact that the traditional terms like present tense, past tense and future tense have been found to create confusions. This is because of the fact that people tend to correlate a particular tense form with a particular time. Thus the form /lagisil/ would be designated a past tense form in OD according to the traditional use of the term. But in a sentence like /mok taka lagisil/ I need some money, it denotes the present time.
Hence the choice of neutral terms like Tense 1, Tense 2 etc. in this study. Thus, Tense 1 can very well signal present, past and future times without causing any confusion.

8.6.2 Tense 1:

Tense 1 denotes the various time connotations described below:

(a) Progressive all-inclusive:

/ami dudnait tʰakoŋ/ We live in Dudhnoi.

The Tense 1 form of the verb /tʰakoŋ/ denotes an all-inclusive time. The fact reported was true in the past, it is true now and it is likely to be true in the future. In addition there is the aspect of progression at the present time.

(b) Habitual all-inclusive:

/mui məd kʰaŋ/ I drink wine.

The Tense 1 /kʰaŋ/ denotes the aspect of habituality along with the all-inclusive time.

(c) Proximal future:

/mui dʰorɔŋtela/ I am catching it then.
The verb /d^grfrj/ inflected for Tense 1 denotes the time connotation of proximal future. The utterance is context-bound.

(d) Progressive present:

/b^andarot d^han ase/ There is paddy in the granary

The Tense 1 form of the verb /ase/ denotes the present time.

The aspect conveyed is that of progression.

(e) Preterite past:

/unisso matsollis sonot b^argot sad^in hoj/

India became independent in 1947.

In the example above, the verb /hoj/ is in the Tense 1. The time correlated is past and the aspect associated is preterite.

6.6.3 Tense 2:

The Tense 2 forms of verbs denote various time references and aspects. These are described below:

(a) Distal past:

/mui b^hat k^haisu^j/ I have taken rice
The Tense 2 form of the verb /kʰaisuŋ/ denotes the past time. The activity took place at a time about which the statement is vague.

(b) Progressive present:

/mui likʰi asuŋ/ I am writing.

The auxiliary /asuŋ/ is in the Tense 2 form and it denotes the present time and the progressive aspect. It is a response utterance, the question being /ki korisa/ What are you doing (now)?

(c) Habitual all-inclusive:

/ami bosore domahi patiʰakoŋ/ 

We have been celebrating the Domahi every year.

In the sentence above the auxiliary /tʰakoŋ/ has been inflected for Tense 2 to denote a habitual activity which was true in the past, which is true at the moment of speaking and which is likely to be true in the future.

(d) Proximal future:

/mui darjisuŋ/ Ilifting (immediately)
The verb /davjisuŋ/ lifting, in this context-bound utterance denotes an activity likely to take place immediately. The participation of the speaker in the activity is imminent.

(e) Pluperfective past:

/mui lui thuisuŋ/ I have accepted (already)

The auxiliary /thuisuŋ/ inflected for the Tense 2 denotes a past time. The action is complete and over without doubt. The aspect denoted is pluperfective.

8.6.4 Tense 3:

The Tense 3 inflections of verbs and auxiliaries are correlatable to various time and aspect denotata. These are described below:

(a) Proximal past:

/tar kathata bhala paluj/ I was pleased to receive the news about him (recently).

The Tense 3 form of the verb /paluj/ denotes a past time and the aspect of proximality. The time is less remote than the one signalled by Tense 2 (designated Distal past in this study).
(b) Progressive past:

/mui daukhan hatot lulu

I was taking up the knife in hand

The verb in the Tense 3 form /lulu/ denotes a past time with the aspect of progression. Such a sentence constitutes a response to an utterance like /tela tui ki korili/ What did you do then?

(c) Proximal future:

/mui gelu

I am leaving (now)

The Tense 3 form of the verb /gelu/ indicates a proximal future time. The action denoted takes place along with the time of utterance.

8.6.5 Tense 4:

The various different time and aspect connotations correlatable to Tense 4 forms of verbs have been described below:

(a) Aorist past:

/mui ti bhi saisilu

I watched the TV
The Tense 4 form of the verb /saisilu/ denotes a past time without the connotations about the aspect of completion, duration etc.

(b) Simple past:

/tak dorkar lagisil/ I needed him.

The Tense 4 form of the verb /lagisil/ denotes the present time (the actual time of the utterance)

(c) Habitual past:

/tela tae hik han gayot t^akisil/ He/she used to stay in that village at that time.

The Tense 4 form of the verb /t^akisil/ denotes the past time with the associated aspect of habituality.

(d) Pluperfective past:

/tae di ph^elaisil/ He/she gave (it) away

The Tense 4 form of the auxiliary /ph^elaisil/ denotes the past time with the aspect of pluperfectivity.

8.6.6 Tense 5:

The Tense 5 forms of verbs correlatable to different time and aspect denotata have been described below:
(a) Simple future :

\[/mui \text{ zam/} \] I shall go

The Tense 5 form of the verb \(/\text{ zam/} \) is associated with the future time without any aspectual shade of meaning.

(b) Pluperfective future :

\[/\text{ hi di } \text{ phelabo/} \] He will give (it) for sure.

The Tense 5 form of the auxiliary \(/\text{ phelabo/} \) in the verbal group denotes an action likely to take place in the future. The aspect abstracted is that of pluperfectivity.

8.6.7 Classification of DD verbs in terms of constituent composition :

DD verbs can be further sub-categorized according to the criterion of constituent composition into (a) Monoconstituent and (b) Polyconstituent groups.

The verb types have been defined, sub-categorized and described with profuse exemplification in the next chapter.

8.6.8 Transitive and Intransitive verbs :

In terms of actual or potential presence of object nominals in verb phrases DD verbs are sub-categorized as belonging
to the (a) *Transitive* and (b) *Intransitive* groups.

8.6.8.1 *Transitive* verbs:

Verbs colligating with object nominals (covertly/overtly) are *Transitive* verbs. *Transitive* verbs can be *monotransitive* or *bitransitive* in terms of the number of objects — those colligating with single objects are *monotransitive* as against *bitransitive* colligating with two objects:

1. /hi bʰotok marise/ He beat Bhata
2. /mui horok taka disuŋ/ I gave some money to Hara

In sentence 1 the verb /marise/ has colligated with a single object nominal and hence a *monotransitive* verb whereas in sentence 2, the verb /disuŋ/ has colligated with two object nominals and hence a *bitransitive* verb.

8.6.8.2 *Intransitive* verbs:

An *Intransitive* verb does not have an object nominal in the verb phrase.

1. /tae gel/ He/she left.
2. /zokʰowe ahise/ Jakha has come

In both the sentences the verbs /gel/ and /ahise/ do not have object nominals to colligate with and hence *Intransitive* verbs.
8.7.0 The Adverb class words:

Words functioning as modifiers of verbs (either attributively or predicatively) in syntactic terms belong to the Adverb class. The structure verb + adverb is an endocentric construction, the adverb being subordinate to the verb nucleus.

/mui zore zam/ I shall go fast.

In the sentence above, the word /zore/ fast modifies the verb /zam/ shall go, attributively and hence an adverb.

8.7.1 Single word DD adverbs are either monomorphemic or polymorphemic.

/aste ah/ Come slowly.

The single word adverb /aste/ slowly is monomorphemic in composition. The following is an example of a polymorphemic (single word) adverb:


(b). Leech, G. &: A Communicative Grammar of English
Svartvik, J. 1984, pp. 202-204

The single word adverb /kʰorokori/ quickly is bimorphemic in composition, and is divisible into two morphemes -- \{kʰoro\} and \{kori\}.

8.7.2 For the sake of descriptive convenience, a distinction has been maintained in this study between the units -- adverbial phrase and adverbial sequence. The former has the structure -- modifier + adverb(s), a subordinative endocentric construction while the latter has the structure -- adverb + adverb -- a co-ordinative endocentric construction.

/\textit{tae mesto kʰorokori gise}/ He/she walked very fast.

In the sentence above the adverbial phrase comprises /mesto/ very, a modifier and /kʰorokori/ fast an adverb.

/\textit{hibelabʰati dirikori saikelot gise}/

He left leisurely by bicycle in the afternoon.

In the sentence above, /belabʰati dirikori saikelot/ leisurely by bicycle in the afternoon, is an adverbial sequence with three co-ordinating adverbs /belabʰati/ afternoon, /dirikori/ leisurely and /saikelot/ by bicycle.
8.7.3 Phrasal Adverbs:

In DD two independent words might function adverbially and are designated phrasal adverbs. It is an exocentric construction. One example of a phrasal adverb would suffice:

Phrasal adverb of location (spatial):

\[ g^h_\text{horor} b^h_\text{itorot}/ \text{inside the house} \]

8.7.4 Adverbs may be subcategorized in denotative terms. The following is a list of some of these possibilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denotatum</th>
<th>Adverbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time location</td>
<td>/bosorot/ annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space location</td>
<td>/pat^h_\text{arot}/ in the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assedic</td>
<td>/golparat/ to Goalpara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concomitive</td>
<td>/logot/ with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>/kat^h_\text{aridi}/ with a knife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connective</td>
<td>/zihok/ however</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>/tulok/ for Tul</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.8.0 Structural words in DD:

The words designated structural words in DD are conspicuous by the absence of lexical/semantic denotata in them.
Their functions in the dialect are strictly syntactic/grammatical. These words function in syntactic processes like linkage and bondage of clauses, co-ordination/parataxis of full/major words in larger constructions and so on. The number of such words in the dialect is limited — hence they constitute a closed set. But words belonging to the major/full subcategory are potentially unlimited in number; and hence they constitute an open class. The following are some of the DD structural words:

/ba/ or, /ram ba hori/ Ram or Hari

/buli/ that, /tae zabo buli kuise/ She stated that she would go.

/dara/ by /korenor dara kamta korilu)/

I have got the work done by Karen.

/kintu/ but /tui zabi kintu nak^abi/

You go there but do not eat any thing.

12(a). Fries, C.C. : The Structure of English, 1952
(c). Quirk, R. & : A University Grammar of English, 1985
Marginal words in DD:

In DD certain words belong neither to the major nor to the structural subcategory. They have contextual and socio-linguistic functions. Their uses are correlatable to social stratifications and status distinctions. The meaning of these words are context-bound. Their functions cannot be equated with those of major words. They have none of the grammatical functions of the structural words. Some of these closed set words are as below:

/hi/ hello! /hi ah/ Hallo! come here!
/zabl dewok/ please /zabi dewok/ Please go
/hi nahil dek'ha/ He had not come
/mui kizani nak'ha/ I might not eat

Two marginal words /d'het/ and /d'hei/ exhibit sex and social distinctions in terms of their use:

/d'het ah/ stop it and come! (male use)
/d'hei ah/ stop it and come! (female use)