

# **3. Parts of Speech**

Chamorro Dictionary Project  
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# The Parts of a Dictionary Entry

- The Chamorro word
- Its part of speech
- Its English definition
- One or more Chamorro sentences illustrating its use
- Other pronunciations
- Related words (such as synonyms)

# One of Our Goals

Every word should have a part of speech.

# The 1975 *Dictionary's* Parts of Speech

- “1” transitive verbs; any word that can take the passive *ma-* or *-in-*
- “2” any word that can take *-um-* or *ma-* when used as a predicate
- “3” “defective verbs” (not actually used)
  
- “Unclassified” all other words

# The Revised Dictionary's Parts of Speech

adj - adjective

adv - adverb

cnj - conjunction

dem - demonstrative

intj - interjection

n - noun

name - name

num - numeral

prep - preposition

pro - pronoun

vi - intransitive verb

vt - transitive verb

# Why the Revised Parts of Speech are Better

- Every word will have a part of speech; no words will be unclassified
- Because the revised list is more detailed, each part of speech **says more** about how a word is used
- The revised list makes a connection to parts of speech in other languages

# How to Identify a Word's Part of Speech

- For any given language, it is possible to find evidence that reveals whether a word is a noun, verb, or adjective
- The evidence differs from language to language

# How to Identify a Word's Part of Speech in Chamorro

- The following procedure may work to identify whether a Chamorro word is a noun, verb, or adjective
- Hopefully, this procedure will work; if it doesn't, all that means is that we have not yet located the best procedure

# Some Useful Notions

- The **root** of a word has no affixes at all
- The **stem** of a word has derivational affixes but no inflectional affixes
- Let's use the term **base** to refer to a root or stem

# Step 1: Identify the Stem

- Identify the stem form of the word
  - Do this by removing the affixes *-um-*, *man-*, *fan-*, *-in-*, *ma-*, the possessive suffixes, and any other pronouns or affixes that can be added to (almost) every word

# Examples

- **po'lo** is a stem form  
(but **mamo'lo**, **pine'lo**, **mapo'lo**, **pine'lo-ku**, **manmapo'lo**, etc. are not)
- **che'lu** is a stem form  
(but **mañe'lu**, **che'lu-hu**, etc. are not)
- **maolek** is a stem form  
(but **manmaolek**, **maolekña**, etc. are not)

## Step 2: Is the Word a Transitive Verb?

- If the stem form can be preceded by **ha** “he, she, it”, the word is a transitive verb (abbreviated *vt.*)

# Examples

- **Ha** “he, she, it” can appear before **po’lo** in **ha po’lo**, so **po’lo** is a transitive verb
- **Ha** “he, she, it” cannot appear before **che’lu** or **maolek**, so these words are not transitive verbs

# Step 3: Is the Word an Adjective?

- If the stem form describes a quality, and can be followed by **-ña** “more” in the sentence

**\_\_-ña este ki ennao**

“This is more \_ than that”,  
then the word is an adjective  
(abbreviated *adj.*)

# Examples

- **Maolek** describes a quality (“good”) and can be followed by **-ña** “more” in **Maolekña este ki ennao** “This is better than that”, so **maolek** is an adjective
- **Po’lo** and **che’lu** do not describe qualities and cannot be followed by **-ña** in **\_\_-ña este ki ennao**, so these words are not adjectives

# Step 4: Is the Word a Noun?

- If the stem form can be preceded by **ennaona** “that” in

**Ha na'manman yo' ennaona** \_\_\_\_

“That \_\_\_\_ made me perplexed”,

then the word is a noun (abbreviated *n.*). Many words that refer to people, places, or things are nouns.

# Examples

- **Che'lu** can be preceded by **ennao na** in **Ha na'manman yo' ennao na che'lu** “That brother or sister made me perplexed”, so **che'lu** is a noun. It refers to a person.
- **Po'lo** and **maolek** cannot be preceded by **ennao na** in **Ha na'manman yo' ennao na \_\_\_**, so these words are not nouns.

# Step 5: Is the Word an Intransitive Verb?

- If the stem form is not a transitive verb, an adjective, or a noun, but it can occur after the plural **man-** in **Man-\_\_ siha** , or **Man- \_\_ ham** , then it is an intransitive verb (abbreviated *vi.*)

# Example

- **Måtto** is an intransitive verb.

It cannot occur after **ha** “he, she, it”, so it is not a transitive verb.

It cannot occur before **-ña** in the sentence **\_\_\_-ña este ki ennao**, so it is not an adjective.

It cannot occur after **enna na** in the sentence **Ha na'manman yo' enna na \_\_\_**, so it is not a noun.

## Example, cont'd

- But **måtto** can occur after **man-** in **Manmåtto siha**  
“They arrived”  
so it is an intransitive verb.

# Words that Have Several Parts of Speech

- If a word has more than one part of speech, each of its parts of speech should be defined and illustrated with examples

# Example

- **Bålas** is a transitive verb: it can be preceded by **ha** “he, she, it”:

**Ha bålas i aguagwat na pátgon.**

- **Bålas** is also a noun: it can be preceded by **enna na** in:

**Ha na'manman yo' enna na bålas.**

# Another Example

- **Boka** is a noun: it can be preceded by **ennaona** in:  
**Ha na'manman yo' ennaona boka.**
- **Boka** is also an intransitive verb: it is not a transitive verb or an adjective, but it can occur after **man-** in:  
**Manboka ham.**

# Why the Procedure Should Be Followed

- Words that “mean the same” in two languages may have different parts of speech
- So meaning or translation cannot be used to determine a word's part of speech

# Example

- English **eat** is both a transitive verb (vt.) and an intransitive verb (vi.)
- Chamorro **kânno'** “eat” is a transitive verb (vt.)
- Chamorro **chotcho** “eat” is an intransitive verb (vi.)

# Another Example

- English **want** is a transitive verb
- Chamorro **malago'** “want” is an intransitive verb

# Still Another Example

- Chamorro **para ke** is translated in the 1975 *Dictionary* (p. 164) as “indifferent, no desire”. But **para ke** does not pass the tests for adjective or noun in Chamorro. It is probably a prepositional phrase (and was borrowed from a Spanish prepositional phrase).

# Consultation

- If the procedure does not identify the word as a transitive verb, noun, adjective, or intransitive verb, a linguist should be consulted to determine its part of speech

# Other Parts of Speech

- Consultation is needed because other parts of speech have no “tests”:

cnj - conjunction      num - numeral

intj – interjection      prep - preposition

name - name      pro - pronoun

# Examples

- **Ya, yan, and lao** are conjunctions
- **Hunggan, ahe', and buenas** are interjections
- **Juan, Garapan, and Kiko'** are names
- **Hamyó, yo', and háyi** are pronouns
- **Ginen** is a preposition

# Exceptional Words

- Consultation is also needed for the very few words which are exceptions: even though they do not pass the tests, they are nouns, verbs or adjectives

# Examples

- **Ya-** “like”, **ga'ña-** “prefer”, and **ga'o-** “prefer” are transitive verbs (vt.) that exceptionally do not pass the tests.
- **Na'-** “food”, **ga'-** “animal, pet”, and **iyo-** “possession” are nouns (n.) that exceptionally do not pass the tests.

Si Yu'us ma'åse' !