2A. The English noun system: Subcategories

A noun is a part of speech denoting a person, an object, a state of being, an event, a phenomenon, a place, a quality, or an idea or abstraction. English nouns can be divided into three subcategories of opposites: concrete/abstract, proper/common, and count/uncount.

A concrete noun refers to something that can be touched or known using the senses. An abstract noun, however, is something that is not physical. For example, "book" and "pen" are concrete nouns, but "education" and "freedom" are abstract nouns.

Proper nouns refer to specific people, specific places, or specific things. These nouns are capitalized in most situations, e.g., Tonya Kaushik is the name of a specific person, Winston-Salem is a specific place, and Civil Rights Act is a specific thing. Common nouns refer to general, non-individualized nouns, such as woman, town, and legislation.

The final subcategory, count/uncount, refers to whether the noun can literally be counted or not. Like the name suggests, count nouns can be counted and made plural, like books, houses and cars. Uncount nouns cannot be made plural — even if the word form looks plural already — like linguistics and physics. Other uncount nouns refer to categories of things, like luggage and tools.

-	
-	
-	
-	

2B. Foreign plurals in English

English has borrowed many words from foreign languages, and although the pronunciation has been altered, many of these words retain their foreign spelling for the plural form. Latin words, for example, tend to use their Latin plural form, even though the English spelling of adding an —s is often accepted. In English, one alumnus becomes several alumni, but an index can be either many indices (the Latin form) or several indexes (the English form).

Foreign plurals in English are irregular in nature because they do not follow the normal add an -s rule. French plurals add an -x, as in beaux and châteaux. Plurals from Hebrew add -im, as in cherubim and kibbutzim. Other foreign plurals, like many food words from Italian, only appear in English in their plural form, such as spaghetti and macaroni.

-	
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	

2C. Collective nouns in English

Collective nouns are nouns that are often singular in form but refer to a group of people, either individually or collectively as a group. Some examples include team, group, class, audience and crew.

In American English, the tendency is to treat collective nouns as singular in form, even if it's obvious the noun is referring to the entire group. During the recent World Cup, for example, American commentators would say, "The team is on the field." Their British or Australian counterparts would say, "The team are on the field," since British and Australian English treats collective nouns as plural in form.

2D. Plural-only nouns in English

Plural-only nouns in English can be tricky because they look plural in form but are used as singular nouns. Plural-only nouns generally fall into one of four categories: tools, clothing, idiomatic meanings, and nouns with no plural markings. For example, a native speaker of English would refer to "scissors" and "pliers" as singular, even though they look and sound plural. Likewise, "pants," "trousers," and "stockings" are clothing words that are plural-only.

Other plural-only nouns have idiomatic meanings. When the U.S. works to reduce "arms," the country is trying to reduce weapons, not the left and right arms of its people. In this instance, "arms" is used as a plural-only noun because when used as a singular noun, it changes meaning.

Finally, English has several words that are plural in nature but do not have the traditional plural marking. These words include men, women, children, livestock, poultry, and police. All these examples would use a verb in the plural form.

-	
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	

2E. Double-possessive nouns in English

A double possessive, or double genitive, noun is possible in English because the language uses two ways to create a possessive: an inflectional form (add –s or –es) and an analytical form (possessor + of). Double possessives include both forms.

A double possessive can only be formed when the possessor is animate (living) and the thing being possessed is indefinite and non-specific in nature. For example, it would be just as correct to say, "She is a friend of Nancy's" as it would be to say, "She is a friend of Nancy" or "She is Nancy's friend." In English, the meaning is the same.

Stylistically, some people prefer using a single possessive even though technically, double possessives are also grammatically correct.

_	
_	

2F. The English adjective and its subcategories

An adjective is a word that modifies a noun or noun phrase; it describes a feature of the noun or noun phrase, giving more detailed information about it. In English, there are three subcategories of adjectives: "true" adjectives, determiners, and post-noun modifiers.

- (1) True adjectives immediately precede the noun. They are gradable into comparative and superlative forms. True adjectives can also be used as predicate adjectives: adjectives that are the complements of linking verbs. Finally, true adjectives are an open class; countless new true adjectives are created every day. (True adjectives can be either short or long. Short true adjectives form their comparative by adding the –er ending and the superlative by adding the –est ending. Long true adjectives add the word "more" to create the comparative and "most" to create the superlative form.)
- (2) Determiners are noun modifiers that precede adjectives. In English, there are four types of determiners: articles, possessives, demonstratives, and quantifiers. With the exception of a few quantifiers, determiners are mutually exclusive. Articles can be definite (the), indefinite (a/ an, some), or implied (the zero or ø article; used with plural nouns or uncount nouns when making generalizations). Possessives can be nouns or pronouns that show ownership or possession, such as "my book" or "Rajiv's car." Demonstratives describe relative closeness in space or time. "This" (singular) and "these" (plural) are proximal demonstratives because they refer to things nearby, and "that" (singular) and "those" (plural) are distal demonstratives because they refer to things farther away. Finally, quantifiers are noun modifiers that express amount or degree. They tend to explain how much or how many of the noun the speaker is referring to, e.g., "a lot" or "a little."
- (3) Post-noun modifiers are different types of phrases that describe the noun/noun phrase. There are five subcategories of post-noun modifiers: adjectival prepositional phrases, relative clauses, appositive phrases, participial phrases, and infinitive phrases. The important thing to notice about these phrases is how they function grammatically. If the phrase does not give more information about a preceding noun or noun phrase, then it is not a post-noun modifier, even if it follows the noun/noun phrase in the sentence.

	_
-	

α . M-1

26. The English <u>determiner system: Subcar</u>	<u>tegories</u>
Determiners are noun modifiers that precede adjectives. In English, there are four types of determiners: articles, possessives, demonstratives, and quantifiers. With the exception of a few quantifiers, determiners are mutually exclusive. This means that you can say either "a dog" or "the dog" but not "a the dog," "the a dog," or even "a some the that dog."	
Articles can be definite (the), indefinite (a/an, some), or implied (the zero or ø article; used with plural nouns or uncount nouns when making generalizations). "The" can be used with singular or plural nouns, but only "a/an" can be used with singular nouns, and only "some" can be used with plural nouns.	
Possessives can be nouns or pronouns that show ownership or possession, such as "my book" or "Rajiv's car."	
Demonstratives describe relative closeness in space or time. "This" (singular) and "these" (plural) are proximal demonstratives because they refer to things nearby, and "that" (singular) and "those" (plural) are distal demonstratives because they refer to things farther away.	
Finally, quantifiers are noun modifiers that express amount or degree. They tend to explain how much or how many of the noun the speaker is referring to, e.g., "a lot" or "a little."	

2H. The zero article in English

The zero or ø article is an implied determiner that is used with plural nouns or uncount nouns when making generalizations. For example, there is a difference in meaning between using the zero article in the sentence, "Dogs are great pets," and using a quantifier, as in the sentence, "Some dogs are great pets." The first example implies that all dogs are great pets. The second example narrows the focus of the generalization, meaning that yes, some dogs are great pets, but others, for whatever reason, are not great pets at all.

Since the zero article is used with plural and uncount nouns, it can be tricky for non-native speakers to tell whether the speaker/writer is making a generalization, but there are two clues to know when a generalization is intended: the use of the present tense and the use of adverbs of frequency. In the above examples, the present tense verb was a clue that the author intended to express an opinion about dogs in general. Similarly, the addition of the word "often" or "usually" (two examples of adverbs of frequency) would be a clue that the author is making a generalization, as in "Dogs are often great pets" or "Usually, dogs are great pets."

_	
-	

21. The <u>possessives as nominal postmodifiers</u> in English: <u>Subcategories</u>

Possessive pronouns caers when they are used as a relative clause. The form nally determined by the nate (the antecedent of the redetermined by the role that its own adjective clause. If the antecedent is hur noun used is "whose." For its an author whose books tive phrase "whose books to the author; it helps extions as an adjective.	the relative prono of the relative prature of the noun elative pronoun) ne relative pronoun man, the possessi r example, in the s I've always enjoy	oun that begins onoun is exterbeing modified and internally un plays inside ve relative prosentence, "She byed," the related refers back		
,				
			-	
			-	
			-	
The fellowing about al		.1		
The following chart sh	nows the person	ai pronouns in		
English:	Number			
Form / Case	Singular	Plural		
lst person:	I	Wo		
	me			
	mine			
	my			
Reflexive:	myself	ourselves		
2nd person:				
Subject:	you	you		
	ýou			
	yours			
	your			
Kenexive:	yourself	yourserves		
3rd person:				
	he, she, it	they		
	him, her, it			
	his, hers, its			
Possessive adjectival:	his, her, it	their	-	
Reflexive:	himself,	themselves		

2J. Noun postmodifiers in English: Subcategories

Post-noun modifiers are different types of phrases that describe the noun/noun phrase. There are five subcategories of post-noun modifiers: adjectival prepositional phrases, relative clauses, appositive phrases, participial phrases, and infinitive phrases.	
Adjectival prepositional phrases are prepositional phrases (preposition + object) that help describe a noun/noun phrase they follow.	
Relative clauses are subordinate clauses that must be introduced by a relative pronoun (who, whose, whom, which, that) or a relative adverb (where, when).	
Appositive phrases are noun phrases that further identify or explain another noun.	
Participial phrases include a verb in its participial form (either -ing or -en) and other elements required by the verb for completeness of structure.	
Infinitive phrases include a verb in its infinitive form (to + base).	
The important thing to notice about these phrases is how they function grammatically. If the phrase does not give describe an antecedent noun/noun phrase or provide more information about a preceding noun or noun phrase, then it is <u>not</u> a post-noun modifier, even if it follows the	
noun/noun phrase in the sentence.	