



## A Syntactic-Semantic Study of English Phrasal Verbs

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*Resercher*

A verb is a word used primarily to indicate a type of action, such as to fly or to wish, though it may also be used to indicate a general state of existence, such as to live. There is also a special type of verb, known as a copula or linking verb, which helps to describe the subject of the sentence, rather than describing an action. The primary example of this in English is the verb to be which is usually used in the role of linking verb. A verb is one of the basic building blocks of a sentence in most languages, with most grammatical sentences requiring at least one noun acting as a subject, and one verb to indicate an action. Verbs can be inflected, which means the verb is changed in some way to indicate something about the sentence the verb is a part of. A verb may be inflected to describe virtually anything.<sup>1</sup>

Dance! Sing! Paint! Giggle! Chew! What are these words doing? They are expressing action, something that a person, animal, force of nature, or thing can do. As a result, words like these are called action verbs. There are three properties which characterize verbs in English - tense, voice, and mood. The voice of a verb, passive or active, expresses whether the action is being received by the subject or being done by the subject. The two voices may occur in any tense. The mood of a verb expresses the conditions under which an action or condition is taking place. In English there are three moods - indicative, subjunctive, or imperative.<sup>2</sup>

Indicative and subjunctive can be in any tense; imperative, only in the present tense. Verbs are also classified according to function.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.bibliofond.ru/view.aspx?id=444907#text\(16.03.2023\)](https://www.bibliofond.ru/view.aspx?id=444907#text(16.03.2023))

<sup>2</sup> Davidson Ch. Young children's engagement with digital texts and literacy in the home: Pressing matters for the teaching of English in the early years of schooling English Teaching. – Australia.: Central Queensland University, Practice and Critique 2009, December, Volume 8, Number 3. – P. 36-54.



Action verbs show action or possession. Action verbs are either transitive or intransitive. Linking verbs show the condition of the subject. Auxiliary verbs, also called helping verbs, are used with other verbs to change the tense, voice, or condition of the verb. Conditional verbs are verbs conjugated with could, would, or should to show a possible condition. They may be in any tense. A verb is often defined as a word which shows action or state of being.

The verb is the heart of a sentence - every sentence must have a verb. Recognizing the verb is often the most important step in understanding the meaning of a sentence. In the sentence: the dog bit the man, bit is the verb and the word which shows the action of the sentence. In the sentence: the man is sitting on a chair, even though the action doesn't show much activity, sitting is the verb of the sentence. In the sentence: she is a smart girl, there is no action but a state of being expressed by the verb is.

The word be is different from other verbs in many ways but can still be thought of as a verb. Unlike most of the other parts of speech, verbs change their form. Sometimes endings are added (learn - learned) and sometimes the word itself becomes different (teach - taught). The different forms of verbs show different meanings related to such things as tense (past, present, and future), person (first person, second person, third person), number (singular, plural) and voice (active, passive). Verbs are also often accompanied by verb-like words called modals (may, could, should, etc.) and auxiliaries (do, have, will, etc.) One of the most important things about verbs is their relationship to time.

In English the fourteen verb tenses express the time or relative time in which an action or condition occurs. Verbs tell if something has already happened, if it will happen later, or if it is happening now. For things happening now, we use the present tense of a verb; for something that has already happened, we use the past tense; and for something that will happen later, we use the future tense.



A Phrasal Verb is a phrase which consists of a verb in combination with a preposition or adverb or both, the meaning of which is different from the meaning of its separate parts: 'look after', 'work out' and 'make up for' are all phrasal verbs. According to Trask (1993: 208) a phrasal verb is lexical verb "which consists of a simple verb combined with one or more particles" and whose meaning is typically unpredictable. And Phrasal verbs are two- or three-word idiomatic expressions, consisting of a verb and a particle or a combination of a particle and a preposition.<sup>3</sup>

Phrasal verbs have been the source of frustration for learners of English. Many students talk about the difficulties they have using the phrasal verbs. Phrasal verbs are widely used by native speakers of English but they have been found to be difficult for second language learners to master. The subject of how best to teach phrasal verbs is still quite controversial. Although teaching of phrasal verbs has been daunting and difficult for teachers, and therefore tedious for learners, it is necessary to develop our students' skills in understanding and using them. Since phrasal verbs are frequently used by native speakers both in written and spoken English, students need to be encouraged to learn them. "There is no specified way or a programmed manner in which a student can learn all the phrasal verbs, nouns, adjectives, and idioms. The authors observe that the only way to acquire such knowledge is by extensive reading and listening".

Vocabulary is all about words. When we use language we use words all the time, thousands of them. If we know a language well, we know how to write its words and how to say its words. However, it may surprise you to know that it is not all that easy to say exactly what a 'word' is. One way would be to say that a word represents one unit of meaning and, in writing, has a space either side of it. So it would seem easy enough, at least in writing, to know what a word is - something with a space on either side.

<sup>3</sup> Driscoll P., Frost D. The teaching of modern foreign languages in the primary schools. – L.: & N.Y.: Routledge, 2005. – 258 p.



Because of this, we can confidently say that *car park* consists of two written words. But what about *it's*? There is no space in the middle, but most of us would say that *it's* consists of two words, *it* and *is* (shortened using 's).

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