

THE VERB PHRASE

A look at verbs and the verb phrase in English

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STRUCTURE OF THE VERB PHRASE

A verb phrase consists of a **head** which is obligatory (except in the case of ellipsis) and is optionally preceded by a number of **dependents**. For example, in the verb phrase *may not be examined*, *may*, *not* and *be* are dependents and *examined* the head.

Verbs

We can identify three subclasses of verbs, **main verbs** (or lexical verbs), the **primary verbs**, *be*, *have* and *do*, and **modal verbs**.

Heads

A head is realized by a main verb or primary verb. The prototypical members of these subclasses have the properties of **inflection** and **functional potential**. In English the number of inflections is much restricted compared to Latin: base form, 3rd person singular, past, - participle, and past participle (eg *take*, *takes*, *took*, *taking*, *taken*). Functionally, they can act as head of the verb phrase.

Dependency

The dependents consists chiefly of the **auxiliary verbs** but also include the infinitive participle *to* and the negator *not*. The auxiliaries consist of the modal verbs and the primary verbs. The head may be preceded by up to four auxiliaries (ignoring *not* for the moment) in the following way:

modal	perfect	passive	perfective	main
may	have	been	being	taken

A number of **operators** that allow negation, subject-verb inversion and emphatic constructions in the verb phrase can be identified. These are the modals, and the verbs *be*, *have* and *do*:

Finite and Non-finite verb phrases

Verb phrases can be finite or non-finite. Finite forms show tense distinction in the first verb of the phrase and person-number agreement with the subject in some cases. Non-finite forms occur with the infinitive fronted by the *to* participle, the -ing form and the -en form. Eg:

To smoke is a dangerous thing (non-finite)

Having gone to Spain, they met the president (non-finite)

The cigars *smoked* here are imported from Cuba (non-finite)

In finite verb phrases, the tense is always on the first verb in the phrase. As we add auxiliary verbs to the VP, the tense will shift to the front (first) verb. In 1a. below, the tense is on 'questioned' – it is past tense as shown by the -ed morpheme. In 1b. the tense shifts to the auxiliary 'were' which is past tense. The main verb (question) now has to change to a nonfinite form (questioning). In 1c the auxiliary 'had' takes up the tense. The auxiliary 'were' changes to non-finite form 'been'. Finally, in 1d. a modal takes up the front position of the verb phrase. A modal always has tense. The auxiliary 'had' changes to non-finite 'have'.

1a. The police [questioned] him

1b. The police [were questioning] him

1c. The police [had been questioning] him

1d. The police [might have been questioning] him

Modals

Modals differ from the main verbs in that they are always tensed, do not inflect and do not show subject-verb agreement. Since modals are always tensed, they cannot occur in non-finite verb phrases.

**To might smoke* is a dangerous thing

Categories

The verb phrase indicates various grammatical categories such as tense, aspect, mood and voice.

TENSE

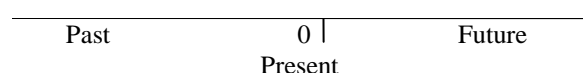
Introduction

The temporal status of the predicate is expressed in grammar as **tense** and **aspect**. Tense locates a situation in time in relation to another time and aspect refers to the internal temporal structure. It is important to note the distinction between the grammatical category of **tense** and the notion of **time**. There is no simple relationship between the two. A VP can be present tense but future time as in (a) or past tense – future time as in (b):

- (a) The boat *leaves* at ten tonight (present tense – future time)
- (b) If he *gave* me the bleach tomorrow, I'd use it (past tense – future time) (Burton-Roberts 2016 p114)

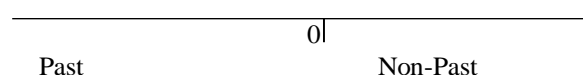
Tense

The traditional way to view the grammatical category of tense is through the Reichenbach time line with the present time marked as zero. Events in the past are then taken as occurring to the left of this time, future events to the right and present events on or near the present time as shown below:



This approach has been criticized for being too ethno-centric in that it is based on the tense system of, in particular, Indo-European languages which traditionally have past, present and future tense, and fails to account for many languages of the world, which in fact have 'tenseless' systems such as Chinese and sign languages. However, it is probably true that all languages have methods for indicating the three temporal situations even if it is not realized by verb morphology. The major differences between languages is not in whether they can make such distinctions, but in whether they require the speaker to do so.

Some scholars have argued however that the future is not a tense since events in the future are speculative and indeed many languages encode future tense using auxiliaries (viz English). It is possible then to talk of a **binary tense system** with past and non-past in opposition (or future non-future in opposition) rather than the traditional three-way system shown above. This would be represented as below:



Diectic

Tense is said to be **diectic** or external as opposed to aspect which is normally termed internal or non-diectic. This means that tense relies on the time of utterance (hence the context) in order for one to resolve the time of the event specified in the proposition. We can talk of the diectic centre as being the time of the utterance of the speech act and to

which the time of the event is related. The diectic centre is the same for both speaker and hearer unlike spatial centres which normally differ to some degree.

Types of Tenses

We can note two type of tense, **absolute** and **relative** and in passing also note that some languages have **graduated** tense.

In absolute tense, the diectic centre is the present time, and all events are made with reference to this time:

1. John sold his car
2. John is selling his car
3. John will sell his car

In 1, the action of selling the car is taken to have occurred before the time of the utterance and in fact the action is also taken to have finished. In 2, the action is ongoing at the time of the utterance and in 3 it is a future possible event.

With relative tense, the diectic centre is indicated by some other clause in the utterance or discourse and is not necessarily the present time.

4. Looking up, I felt uneasy
5. Looking up, I feel uneasy

Here the non-finite phrase (*looking up*) is given a time of occurrence by being related to the finite, tensed phrase which itself is absolute tense. (In the non-finite form, the participle is said to express simultaneity). In 4 we take the *looking up* to occur in the past and in 5 the present.

Relative tense acts to express temporal relations between any pair of time points, regardless of their diectic centre. It is with relative tense that the distinction between the categories of tense and aspect become blurred:

6. John had reached the summit, when I got there
7. John will have reached when I get there

In 6 the clause *John had reached the summit* is relative to the clause *when I got there*

Some language show graduated tense which can indicate the degree of remoteness from the diectic centre (viz Haya)

Realization

In locating time, languages differ in the degree of accuracy of locating time with respect to the diectic centre and the weight given to the grammatical encoding and the lexical encoding. Tense may be signaled by verb morphology, periphrastic phrases (using auxiliaries) and lexical items.

Stative vs Dynamic Situations

Osten Dahl notes how languages many languages divide up their predicates into those which are dynamic, which typically has a full verb as its head, and those which are stative, which involve nouns or adjectives in predicate function with or without a copula functioning as a dummy head. This distinction can be important for the tense and aspect categories. For example, aspect is neutralized in stative predicates in some languages. In Beja for example past time is only realized in stative constructions. In Afrikaans, only the copula has a morphologically marked past tense, all other cases use periphrastic constructions.

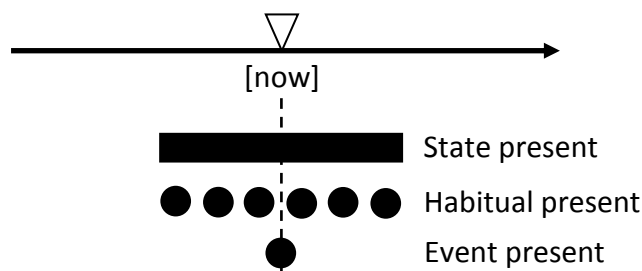
TENSE IN ENGLISH

English has a binary tense system with past and non-past in opposition. Some scholars hold that the future is a third tense but this is formed periphrastically (through the use of will/shall) and future events are more speculative (thus behaving more like mood/modality).

Present Tense

The present tense has three normal use (1) state present (2) event present (3) habitual present

1. London is the capital of England
2. I advise you to leave
3. John plays soccer every Sunday



There are also some special uses of the present tense. In particular, to refer to the past (4) historical present (5) commentaries (6) special written language:

4. So I got on the bus and then he comes up to me
5. Jones passes the ball to Clarke.
6. In War and Peace, Tolstoy talks of...

And the present can also be used to indicate the future:

7. We go to Spain on Tuesday on the 7:00 plane

Past Tense

Like the present tense, the past tense can also indicate past state, past event and past habitual actions:

8. The King of England was very mighty
9. John drank too much last night
10. Peter always washed up for me.



Like the present tense, the past tense does not always refer to a past temporal situation.

11. He thinks he saw you
12. Did you want to see me now?
13. If you worked hard, you could earn a lot of money

These are known as indirect speech in past, attitudinal past and hypothetical past but all really refer to present or future conditions.

Future Tense

As noted above, the future in English is not normally considered a tense in the sense that it not realized as a grammatical category. Rather it is constructed in a periphrastic fashion more like modal verb phrases:

- I may come over tomorrow
- I will come over tomorrow

The difference here is more one of mood than tense although a temporal situation is definitely present, even without the time adjunct, *tomorrow*.

CROMIE ON TENSE

Cromie asserts that there are no cultures that have tenseless languages or notions. Just because tense is not realized by grammatical categories this does not make the language or culture tenseless any more than asserting that the English have no sex distinction because we lack a genderless language. He notes that some languages are said to be cyclic (Australian Aboriginal) but he dismisses the idea that tense is cyclic for them.

In locating time he states that languages differ in two respects (1) the degree of accuracy of locating time with respect to the deictic centre and more importantly (2) the weight given to the grammatical encoding and that given to the lexical encoding. He notes three ways of signaling tense: lexically composite phrases, lexical items and grammatical categories which is predominant in English.

'There do exist grammatical categories cross-linguistically which encode location in time, and that this set of grammatical categories is sufficiently coherent cross-linguistically to justify the establishment of a general linguistic category of tense defined in this way' p35

Traditionally time is regarded as a feature of the verb but he suggests we might classify it as a feature of the whole sentence since it is a necessary part of the truth-value of the proposition. P12

One of his main tenants of the book is to note the difference between meaning and implicature. Sentences have meaning but can also carry implicature which might be different to the semantic underlying meaning. Thus if we say *it's cold in here* the proposition means *It is cold in here* but we might imply *close the door you fool!* He says implicatures can be nullified but meaning cannot.

He believes that tense carries meaning but does not normally carry the implicature. Thus for example when we use state present such as *John like coffee* he suggest that the meaning of the sentence encodes the temporal feature of the act happening now but it does not encode the possibility of this happening before now or after now. For this we need to refer to the implicature. P38

In particular, the present perfect is sometimes said to put the time closer to the present than the simple past, but Cromie says this is part of the implicature, not the meaning.

ABSOLUTE TENSE: Tense where the diectic centre is the present.

RELATIVE TENSE: where the diectic centre is displaced from the present.

He talks about the diectic centre around which the event unfolds or occurs. The diectic centre is the same for both speaker and hearer unlike spatial centres which normally differ. For present tenses, the act coincides with the diectic centre. Examples of present tense that coincide with the diectic centre are (1) performatives *I name this ship Albert* and (2) commentaries on sport matches *Jones passes the ball*. Also the use of habit as in *John plays football* can be said to occur at regular intervals but author argues that we should view this sentence as creating a habit that is a part of John and this habit is occurring now.

P50 Some languages show binary oppositional tenses such as past/non-past distinction and future/non-future distinction.

He questions whether future tense exists. First he says that the time line is not completely symmetrical since past events have occurred and are more definite whereas future events have yet to occur. He also notes that the future is commonly expressed in English by the present tense or by the auxiliary will which can be considered to be modal.

ASPECT

Definition

Aspect is the way we view the internal temporal structure of a situation. Thus in the following two examples:

He read the book

He was reading the book

we see that the second makes explicit reference to the internal constituency of the verb phrase. That is, presumably the action has a start point and an end point and the point under consideration is located somewhere between these two points. In effect, we can look into the verb phrase and feel it unfolding with time. In the first example, however, no reference is made to the internal constituency of the verb. The action has been reduced to a point or blob like status. The action still has a start and end point and middle, but these are rolled up into one.

Perfective vs Imperfective

The above two examples bring out the classic distinction between the Perfective aspect and Imperfective. The Perfective aspect has the effect of reducing the action of the verb to a blob in time so that no the internal constituency of the verb is not made reference to. It is this lack of reference to the internal temporal structure of the verb phrase that Comrie states is the true nature of the Perfective. It is not that the verbs in the Perfective don't have internal structure. Some verbs can be very complex by nature, but the aspect of the verb phrase can indicate a lack of reference to this structure. Thus in the following:

King John reigned for 20 years

He sneezed

the first example has a verb that potential is very complex; the verb *reign* is complex by nature. But the use of the progressive makes us consider the verb as a single blob, similar to the second example where the durativity of the verb *sneeze* is inherently point-like.

The imperfective, in contrast, does make explicit reference to the internal structure of the situation. The imperfective can be subdivided into habitual vs non-habitual and the non-habitual can be further subdivided into non-progressive (state) vs progressive. Examples are given below:

Habitual: John plays football every Sunday

State: John passes the ball

Progressive: John was working here

The progressive in English is not completely incompatible with the habitual. In the following, a habitual state of affairs is seen to be in a progressive mode:

John used to be writing poems

Peter was singing for the choir every day in the 60s

While the perfective can be used with verbs that inherently are internally durative, the imperfective cannot be used with verbs that have no duration; i.e. verbs which are punctual:

1. He sneezes
2. He is sneezing
3. He reached the summit
4. He was reaching the summit when I looked up
5. He was about to reach the summit when I looked up

The verb *sneeze* is inherently punctual taking no time to complete (ignoring the physical make up of a sneeze) Thus, we would have to take 2 as meaning a series of sneeze and not the progressive form of 1 which is just one sneeze. Similarly 4 is unusual since the act of *reaching* a summit is taken to be instantaneous. To avoid such conflict, example 5 is a better way of expressing 4. (Or *he had just reached...*) The conflict between the lexically punctual verb *reach* in 4 and the progressive aspect of the clause highlights the conflict between aspect and aksionstart which refers to the internal temporal structure at the lexical level.

It is quite possible to use a verb in the perfective aspect in one clause and then in the imperfective aspect in another:

John read that book yesterday. While he was reading it, the postman came

Non-dietic

Aspect is said to be non-dietic in comparison with tense which is dietic. The location in time of the action of a verb is made with reference to the context and in particular the time of utterance of the speech act. With aspect however, we are concerned with the internal structure (or lack of) of the verb and thus the time of utterance (the dietic centre) plays little role in the interpretation:

I am singing in the choir

I was singing in the choir

While the tense in the second example here is in the past compared to the dietic centre, the progressive aspect is still the same in both cases.

Realization

Aspect can be realized through verbal morphology, periphrastic phrase (involving auxiliaries) or other means.

Conflict

The category of aspect is a relatively recent addition to the study of English and has come from the study of the Slavic languages which have distinct, overt aspect subcategories of Perfective and Imperfective. However, these neat subcategories don't always fit neatly into the English system.

Many scholars often confuse tense and aspect. This is not surprising since the two grammatical categories are similar. In particular, it is often assumed that the English perfect tense is the same as the Perfective aspect but this is not the case:

She had seen him.

In the above example the perfect tense locates the action as in the past but with current relevance. The perfective aspect however, makes reference to the internal structure of the verb and not the time of the action.

The two are often most confused when relative tense is used such as with an adverbial:

He was reading the newspaper, when I got home

Here the location in time of the first clause is relative to the second and depends less on the deictic centre. However, the categories of aspect and tense can be kept distinct if we remember that aspect is internal and tense external.

BOUNDEDNESS & TELICITY

A situation can be said to be bound or unbound depending on whether the action has an endpoint which indicates its completion. Thus in the following:

John sings

John is making a chair

we could interrupt John's singing at anytime and say that he has sung but if we interrupt John's making of a chair before it is complete we cannot say he has made a chair. Thus the first situation is unbound and the second bound since it has an internal endpoint.

We can generally test for boundedness by interrupting the action and then converting the phrase into a question in the perfect tense. The clause *John sings* can be bound in the following manner:

John is singing a song

If we interrupt the act and then ask *Has John sung a song?* The answer is no since the singing of a song inherently contains an endpoint. The following two examples indicate further changes:

John is singing songs

John is singing five songs

The first is unbound since the singing of songs does not have an inherent end point and provided John sings a few we can say he has sung songs. However, the second does contain an endpoint

Boundedness can be crucial in some languages in the choice of the perfective or imperfective aspect. Eg Russian.

Telicity

a. John is singing

b. John is making a chair

a) is atelic because we can stop singing at any point and say 'John has sung' but we cannot stop making a chair half way in between and say 'John has made a chair'. Clearly 'making a chair' has a terminal point. Telic situations have a built in terminal point beyond which the process cannot continue.

a. John is singing

b. John is singing a song

c. John is singing songs

d. John is singing five songs

We note a) is atelic but b) telic and c) atelic and d) telic. Hence we cannot talk of telic verbs. We must talk of telic situations.

State vs dynamic situations

P49 'With a state, unless something happens to change that state, then the state will continue: this applies equally to *standing* and *knowing*. With a dynamic situation, on the other hand, the situation will only continue if it is continually subject to a new input of energy. Thus we might say *I know* is a state situation since we can cut into the action at any time and the situation will be the same and *I run* is dynamic since this changes internally. Punctual situations are inherently dynamic.

Telic situations combined with perfective allow for certain logical deductions to be made that cannot be made from aspect of situation referring to atelic situation.

MODALITY

Modality is realized through the use of the modal verbs of which the central members are *may, might, can, could, will, shall, must & have to* and the catenatives *need* and *dare* as well as *have* and *be* in some uses. Consider the following sentences

Middlesbrough could survive relegation
Middlesbrough will survive relegation
Middlesbrough might survive relegation
Middlesbrough should survive relegation
Middlesbrough must survive relegation
Middlesbrough have to survive relegation

What is the difference in meaning of these sentences? The modal verbs add an element of meaning - a judgement or estimation of degree of possibility, or duty. If we were to rank the sentences in the order of likelihood of happening we might end up with:

1. Middlesbrough will survive relegation
2. Middlesbrough should survive relegation EPISTEMIC
3. Middlesbrough could survive relegation
4. Middlesbrough might survive relegation

Middlesbrough must survive relegation
Middlesbrough have to survive relegation DEONTIC
(Middlesbrough should survive relegation)

Note how we have split the sentences into two broad groups. The first group expresses the likelihood of the proposition happening. The strongest expression is *will* while the weakest is *might*. The other two sentences however don't seem to be expressing probability; instead they seem to suggest a certain obligation or duty that the team has to fulfill. (Note that *should* can often have both meanings.)

Thus we have two major classes of modality: deontic modality and epistemic modality. Epistemic modality is linked with the notion of 'truth' of a proposition and deontic with permission / obligation imposed on an utterance. The two can be clearly seen in the use of the modals *must* and *may*.

Necessity: *Must*

He must be home by now (Epistemic)

He must be home by 5:00 (Deontic)

In the first example, the speaker expresses a proposition which is qualified as to the likelihood of the proposition being true. We can see this by looking at the residue after the modality has been abstracted away. Essentially it is *He is home now*. The second example, by contrast expresses the obligation imposed on *He* by the speaker. There is an element of will in the speaker's utterance.

Possibility: *May*

He may have taken two cakes (Epistemic)

He may take two cakes (Deontic)

Here the first sentence makes a statement while the second says that *it is possible (you are allowed) to have two cakes* and thus expresses permission.

Saeed (1997): Let S represent the sentence below:

S: Niamh has gone to the airport

Another strategy for modulating the strength of the assertion is to use an adjective or adverb of modality.

It is certain that S

It is probably that S

It is likely that S

It is possible that S

Or we can put the sentence into a higher clause which describes the speaker's belief:

I know that S

I think that S

I doubt that S (Saeed, 1997)

Huddleston claims that the difference between epistemic and deontic:

1. different residues one expressing a fact, the other a will or desire
2. can be seen in the temporal location of the residue. With epistemic it usually expresses a past or present fact (although the future is possible as in *John must be going to Spain*) whereas deontic refers to a future action that the speaker want to bring about. The etymology of *deontic* includes the notion of 'binding'. However, it is possible to find several examples where the proposition in epistemic modality futurity is expressed: *It may rain tomorrow*.
3. they interact differently with negation

Can can sometimes be substituted for *may* in deontic modality but rarely in epistemic.

Exercise

Saeed 1997: 136. For each of the sentences, try to imagine two contexts, one which gives the modal verb an epistemic reading, the other a deontic reading.

Alcohol may not be served to persons under eighteen

We should be at the hotel by nine

You can go home now

We could take the examination early

We will not leave this island

Negation

Epistemic and deontic modality interact somewhat differently with negation. With epistemic modality, *may* / *must* are normally outside the scope of negation but inside with deontic. To bring them inside with epistemic we need to use *can't/needn't*

Will

Will can also be used in deontic sense and epistemic:

You will do as you are told! (Deontic)

Tom will be home by now (Epistemic)

In its epistemic use (and deontic), it is similar to *must* but is said to be epistemically 'weaker' than it with the two said to be 'weaker' than the unmarked sentence using *is* but parallel in function:

Tom is home by now.

When the proposition of its epistemic mode is not past then we get a future statement which is one of the reasons why some grammarians claim that the future tense in English is really a modal construction.

Tom will go to Spain.

But Palmer says there is a distinction between epistemic *will* and future *will*.

That'll be Tom

Modifications

English has ways of modifying the basic epistemic modality. It has the forms *might/would* which are called tentative forms:

He might be there now

He would be there now

It is also possible for the speaker to modify his commitment still further with the use of 'harmonic combinations' and 'hedges' as in *I'm sure, surely, certainly* and *I think, I mean, I suppose* for *must* and *perhaps, possible* for *may*.

Similarly, the deontic modals also have ways of being modified. *Must* has *should* and *ought to* and *may* has *might* or *can/could*. *Must* differs from *should/ought to* in that it does not include a possibility of the event not take place:

*He must come, but he won't

He should come but he won't

Also, *must* cannot be used in the past

*I must have come

You should have come

Strong & Weak forms of epistemic modality

There is a clear sense in the use of *must* of it having two forms: one of inference when there is certain information available the other of confidence indicating the degree of confidence a speaker has in the utterance.

Dynamic Modality

Outside of the epistemic/deontic modal groups some authors have indicated dynamic modality through the use of *can* to represent 'ability':

Sue can speak 10 languages

With deontic modality there is a degree of subjectivity where the speaker is involved in the statement. With *may* it is quite strong:

You may come in now

But there are 'degrees of involvement' with *must*:

You must come here at once

You must run or you'll miss the bus

And then there is the use of *can* above where the speaker seems detached from the statement although it is quite clearly a modal. It is for this reasons that some grammarians such as Palmer claim a third type of modality *dynamic* along side epistemic and deontic. Some authors have termed deontic + dynamic modality *root* modality.

Use of perfective and progressive aspects

The modals rarely occur with the perfective and progressive aspects with deontic modality but can combine in epistemic modality:

He may have been talking to her

He must have been being taken for a ride.

EVIDENTIALITY

Saeed, 1997: the category of evidentiality allows the speaker to express their source of information. In English this is possible by embedding the information in a separate clause or by parenthetical adverbials.

S: She was rich

1. I saw that she was rich

2. I read that she was rich

3. The lawyer claimed that she was rich

4. Apparently she was rich

5. It seems she was rich

VALENCY AND TRANSITIVITY

VALENCY

The term **valency** is taken from chemistry. In grammar it refers to the number of constituents required in the complement of the verb. Each verb will **subcategorize** for a number of constituents (eg NP, PP, Aps) and this is the valency. Note, valency does not include the subject which is outside the verb phrase. Neither does it take into account adjuncts. Valency is semantically determined. That is the semantics of the particular verb will direct how many participants are required and thus the valency.

Verbs

Verbs can be copulas, intransitive, ditransitive and possibly tri-transitive. Copulas are such verbs as be, become and possibly seem etc. They do not take objects but are termed verbs of incomplete predication and as such require a predicative complement such as a noun phrase or adjective.

She is a lawyer
She is happy

Transitivity

The term **transitive** comes from Latin and means to 'carry across'. Thus transitive verbs are seen to carry the action across the verb from subject to the object whereas intransitives do not. Intransitives thus take a valency of 0 or, in other words, subcategorize for nothing:

She perished
He wilted

Transitive verbs have a valency of 1 and subcategorize for a complement which can be a noun phrase, a prepositional phrase or a clause;

She hit the wall
Ed went to the pub
She decided that it was time to get a job

Ditransitive verbs take two complements:

She gave a biscuit to Ed
She gave Ed a biscuit

The first sentence can go through a dative shift to yield the second so we can say that ditransitive verbs subcategorize for a NP and PP or two NPs.

A few tritransitive verbs have been postulated but their existence is controversial:

She transferred her husband from the bathroom to the kitchen

Multivalency

Many verbs (in fact the majority) show multi-valence potential. That is they can be intransitive or transitive:

She drove
She drove him crazy
She was reading
She was reading a book

In the first pair the meaning of the verb changes but in the second pair the meaning does not. We can posit that multi-valent verbs are either two verbs with separate lexical entries or one verb with different subcategorization frames.

Changes in Valency

Changes in valency can be observed in the construction of passives and causatives. Passives act to reduce the valency of the verb by one:

She took a sweet
A sweet was taken

Passives in English are known as personal passives. Some languages such as German allow for impersonal passives. These allow intransitive verbs to be passivized. Languages can be made into passives by a periphrastic process which is the case for English or by morphological changes in the verb. (eg Korean)

Causative allow the valency of a verb to be increase by one. They add an agent to the clause and the general meaning is *to make someone do something*. Thus the clause *John ate the apple* can be made into a causative thus: *I made John eat the apple*. The verb valency has increased from one to two.

Do Support

(Quirk et al p133): Do-support. English uses 'do' as an operator in certain cases. However, it is considered an empty or dummy operator in conditions. There is no semantic reason for any other operator to be present in the following

She doesn't want to stay (negative construction)
Did he stay late (interrogative construction)
They do want you to come (emphatic)

MOOD

Definition

Mood is a term applied to a grammatical category that indicates how the information contained in the sentence is to be taken. Modality is a syntactic/semantic notion that indicates the manner in which the meaning of a sentence is qualified so as to express the speaker's judgment of the likelihood of the proposition thus expressed being true. In a way, modality is an interface between grammar and semantics

The relationship between mood and modality has been likened to the one between tense and time, number and enumeration though this is a simplification.

Realization

Every sentence in English can be said to be in a particular mood: indicative (which is taken as the unmarked mood), imperative or subjunctive. Mood is realized in English by verbal morphology and the use of auxiliaries.

SOURCES

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