

An Introductory English Grammar

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Second Year

Name of the Course: Syntax

The fifth lecture : Basic Sentence Patterns

Second Semester 2018-2019

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Basic Sentence Patterns



Pattern 6: N1

InV (intransitive verb)

Example: My brothers smile.

The verb in this pattern is called intransitive. It does not need to be followed by an object as it self-sufficient. This means that it can stand alone.

Basic Sentence Patterns

- ❖ The verb in this pattern can be modified by words and word groups known as adverbs and adverbials.

Examples:

The sportsman fished early.

The sportsmen were fishing in the stream.

The sportsmen were fishing when we drove up.

Basic Sentence Patterns

- ❖ An intransitive is not completed by a noun or pronoun. For example, in

They finished late “finished” is intransitive, but in

They finished the game “finished” is transitive

- ❖ The subject in this pattern has the grammatical meaning of “the performer of the action”

❖ Some intransitive verbs characteristically do not occur alone but take adverbial modifiers as they have different meanings; one cannot grasp their meanings without the adverbial complement.

For example, the verb live takes an adverbial modifier in three meanings:

“reside” as in “He lives in Mexico”

“stay alive” as in “He lives on soy bean products”.

“be alive” as in “He lived in the first half of the 20th century”

Basic Sentence Patterns

- ❖ Intransitive verbs with a passive sense based on transitive verbs take an adverbial modifiers, as in:

Your car rides comfortably.

Her book is selling well.

Basic Sentence Patterns

- **Pattern7: N1 TrV(transitive verb) N2**

The girl bought a dress.

Different from pattern 6, pattern 7 needs a verb that must be completed by a noun (or pronoun), for which one can substitute him, her, it or them.

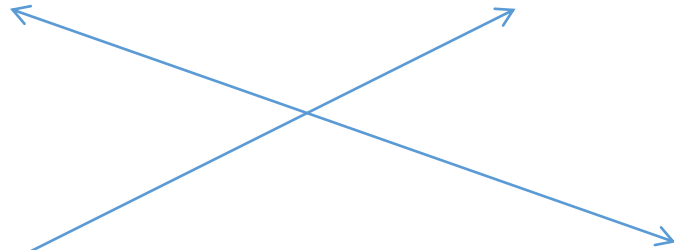
Basic Sentence Patterns

- ❖ N2 in this pattern does not have the same referent as the subject.
- ❖ N2 is called the direct object and has the grammatical meaning of “the undergoer of the action.”
- ❖ A transitive verb has two forms, which we call active and passive. The active form is the one that is followed by the direct object, which we have seen in pattern7.

Basic Sentence Patterns

Examples:

Active: The waiter poured the coffee.



Passive: The coffee was poured (by the waiter).

- The object of the active form becomes the subject of the passive form.
- The passive is made up of a form of the verb *be* plus a past participle, as in *was poured*.

Basic Sentence Patterns

- The subject of the active verb may be made the object of preposition by, or it may be suppressed.
- In the passive, two grammatical meanings are shifted around. The performer of the action, *waiter*, is now the object of the preposition, and the *undergoer*, coffee, is the subject.