Types of Verb

Verb:
A verb is a word which typically describes what a person or thing does, or what happens: be, make, build, remember, occur, and seem are all examples of verbs in English.

Verbs are generally essential to the structure of a sentence, and they can be inflected to show features such as tense, number, and person: for example, the verb remember can be put in the past tense form remembered or the third person present singular form remembers. In English, verbs are transitive or intransitive. The category of verbs is one of the parts of speech.

Transitive and intransitive verbs:
A verb is transitive when it takes a direct object: a noun, pronoun, phrase, or clause which typically refers to the person or thing affected by the action of the verb. A verb is intransitive when it does not take a direct object. An intransitive verb may stand alone, or it may take a complement (for example, a prepositional phrase, adverb, or adjective).

Auxiliary verb: An auxiliary verb is one of a small category of verbs which have a grammatical rather than a lexical role; they are used in combination with other verbs, for example to form particular tenses and constructions. For instance, have is an auxiliary verb ('forming the perfect') in They have sold their house, where it is used in combination with the main verb sold. By contrast, have is a main verb in They have a lovely house, where it has lexical meaning ('own, possess') and is not used to support another verb. In English, the primary auxiliary verbs are be, have, and do; modal verbs such as can, must, etc., are also a type of auxiliary verb.

Copular verb: A copular verb links the subject of a sentence with a complement (usually a noun or adjective) which describes or gives more information about the subject. For example, in the sentence Jane is a dentist, the verb is a form of be is a copular verb, linking the subject Jane with a complement a dentist, which tells us more about Jane. The main copular verb in English is be; others include become (e.g. in 'Jane became a dentist'), remain (e.g. in 'it remained a mystery'), seem (e.g. in 'everything seems in order'), taste (e.g. in 'this soup tastes awful'), and the like.

Main verb: A main verb is a verb which carries lexical meaning and may be used on its own without another verb; the term is usually used in contrast with auxiliary verb. For example, have is a main verb in 'They have a lovely house', where it means 'own, possess' and is not used to support another verb. By contrast, have is an auxiliary verb ('forming the perfect') in 'They have sold their house', where it is used in combination with the main verb sold. Another meaning of main verb is a verb in a main clause as opposed to a subordinate clause. For example, in 'I frowned, not understanding him', frowned is the main verb because it is in the main clause 'I frowned'; understanding is not the main verb because it is in the subordinate clause 'not understanding him'.

Modal verb: Modal verbs are a type of auxiliary verb used to express meanings such as necessity, possibility, and obligation. The main modal verbs in modern English are can/could, may/might, must, shall/should, will/would. Other verbs such as ought and need share some characteristics with modal verbs.

Phrasal verb: A phrasal verb consists of a verb and an adverb or preposition (or sometimes both), functioning together as a single semantic and grammatical unit. Often the meaning of a phrasal verb is not obvious from the meanings of the component words, as in the following examples (in which the underlined groups of words are phrasal verbs):
- His car broke down.
- They took out a loan.
- Look it up in the dictionary.
- Shall I see to lunch?
- She has always looked down on me.
- I’ll take it up with the relevant authorities.

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