

عنوان المحاضرة: Forms and Combinations

المادة الدراسية: النحو المقارن

المرحلة الدراسية: 3rd class

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العام الدراسي: ٢٠٢٥-٢٠٢٦



جامعة الموصل

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القسم: الترجمة

2.6 Forms and Combinations of verbs in English

A. Forms

The forms of the English verb are usually **five**:

1- the base,

2-the base+s,

3-the base+-ing,

4-the past form and

5-the past participle:

e.g. go, goes, going, went, gone.

The base is the form found in a dictionary. It is used for the present tense, except when the subject is the third person singular.

26. We play tennis. (Cf. She plays tennis.)

This form is also used in Imperative sentences, and for the infinitive with or without to.

27. Read this page. (Imperative)

28. They wanted to come. (Infinitive with to) He must pay. (Infinitive without to)

Finally the base is used for the subjunctive mood (the mood which expresses wish or desire in contrast to a fact. (The term subjunctive here should not be confuse with the term'subjunctive النصب used for one of the moods in Arabic.)

29. I demand that he pay the bill. (Cf. He pays the bill always. (A fact)

The basers is used for the present tense when the subject is the third person singular.

30. He (she, it) likes music.

The base-ing is used in the progressive aspect, in finite and nonfinite clauses.

31. We were listening to the concert. (Finite)

32. Reading the passage carefully, I discovered two Important points. The past from is used to express the past time.

33. The train arrived five minutes later.

The past participle form is used for the perfective aspect and the passive voice.

34. The plane has taken off.

The train had left five minutes before their arrival.

35. This bridge was built in 1962. (Passive)

On the basis of the last two forms, the past and the past participle, verbs are divided into regular and Irregular. In regular verbs, these two forms are predictable; they are formed by suffixing 'ed': e.g. opened, played, stayed.

In the irregular verbs, the two forms are not predictable: e.g. put, put: saw, seen, wrote, written.

B. Combinations

As we have seen, the verb phrase in English may comprise only one element (simple) or more than one element (Complex).

36. The boys work hard. (One-element verb phrase: simple)

37. The boys will be working hard. (More than one element verb phrase: complex)

The complex verb phrase is formed by using separately or combining two or more of the following four types:

a. The modal / periphrastic (do)

b. Have + Past Participle (Perfective Aspect)

c. Be+-ing (Progressive Aspect)

d. Be + Past Participle (Passive)

Any of these types may be combined in the order stated above (a,b,c,d).

Type a: He may come. (modal) He did come. (periphrastic do)

Type ab: He may have read the letter.

Type abc: She may have been listening to rumours.

Type abcd: The case may have been being examined.

There are various other combinations, in fact eleven altogether; six 2-element, ab, ac, ad, bc, cd: four 3-element: abc, abd, acd, bcd; one

4-element abcd. Here are examples of some of these combinations.

ac: She may be working in the kitchen.

bc: They have been discussing the matter.

bd: The wall has been painted orange.

ad: The wall must be painted orange.

2.7 Finite and Non-Finite Verbs in English

If we examine the complex verb phrase in the following examples with regard to :

1- **tense** (present, past) and

2- **concord** (person, and number)

we find that only the first element of the verb phrase undergoes changes; the other elements remain unchanged.

The person system in English

There are 3 persons and seven pronouns

The **first** personal pronouns are **I and we**

The **second** person pronoun is **you**

The **third** person pronouns are **they , he, she, and it**

The number system in English

English consist of only two number systems

They are the **singular** and the **plural** systems

The tense system in English

We have only two tenses in English: they are:

The present and the past tenses

38. He is reading now.

39. I am reading now.

He was reading yesterday.

You are reading now.

The element of the verb which changes is termed 'finite' and the other element (s) of the verb phrase are **non finite**. In (38) and (39) the Italic elements are finite; whereas the next element, 'reading' is non-finite. A verb phrase which contains a finite element is termed finite verb phrase, and a verb phrase which does not contain a finite element is termed non-finite verb phrase.

In a simple verb phrase, the verb is finite because only a finite verb can occupy the V position.

40. He enjoys music.

We enjoy music.

They enjoyed music.

The **non-finite** verbs are the

To-Infinitive,

the-ing form and

the past participle.

They occur after the finite element in a finite verb phrase.

I want to rest.

41. He will be leaving soon.

The vase has been broken.

The non-finite verb can also occur as **S, O**, etc of a clause.

42. To err is human. To forgive is divine.

Smoking is (was) bad for your health.

The non-finite verb can occur as the verb phrase of a non-finite clause, normally subordinated to the main clause.

43. Walking in the garden, he saw some footprints.

Apart from the two differences already mentioned, tense and concord, finite and non-finite verbs differ with regard to their use in a clause under the element V. Only the finite form can fill this place.

44. They like apples.

*They to like apples.

Moreover, only finite verbs show contrast between the indicative mood, on the one hand, and the imperative and subjunctive mood, on the other.

45. The servant comes every Friday. (Indicative)

Come on Friday. (Imperative).

I suggest(ed) that he **come** on Friday. (Subjunctive)

2. The Verb Phrase in Arabic

In discussing the verb phrase in their language, Arab grammarians devoted most of their efforts to the variations in the form of the verb and other morphological aspects. The reason for this is that the Arabic verb is very rich in its morphological changes. This is a useful approach which sheds light on various aspects of the verb phrase, and will therefore be followed in this section. There is no need in Arabic to classify verbs according to their function into auxiliary and lexical, since such classification is not functional (performs no grammatical function). Interrogation, negation and proform are realized not by means of auxiliaries but by other means which will be explained in the following chapters.

2.9 Classes of Arabic Verbs

Arabic verbs are usually divided into basic classes and derived classes, termed in Arabic المجرد (mujrid) and المزيد (muzid) respectively. The majority of the basic forms are made up of three consonants or radicals and are known as trilateral ثلاثي (thalathi). The other basic forms, which are less common than the first, are the 'quadrilateral' رباعي (rubاعي). They are made up of four radicals. The generic forms for these two types are given as: فعل (fa'ala) and فعلل (fa'allala).

A. Trilateral Classes

The trilateral basic form فعال (fa'ala) has three subtypes according to whether the second radical has or (the vowels/a/, /i/ or/u/. These حسن ثقل (hasan thaqil) as in فرح (farah) as in فعل (fa'ala) as in فعل (fa'ala) as in كذب (kathab) as in فعل (fa'ala) : basic forms are The last two forms are usually Intransitive and express a state or quality فعال (fa'ala) with /i/) normally denotes a temporary quality and فعال (fa'ala) with /u/) denotes normally a permanent quality or state. It is to be noted that the meanings of these two forms may be rendered into English by using a combination of an intensive verb and an adjective, eg حزن (hazan) became or be sad فرح (farah) became or be happy: ثقل (thaqil) : became or be heavy be or became beautiful.