TRADITIONAL AND MODERN INTERPRETATION OF VERB LEXEMES IN ENGLISH LINGUISTICS

E. Tukhtaeva [1]
(Supervisor: Djurakobilova X.X.)

Abstract:

This paper examines the traditional and modern interpretations of verb lexemes in English linguistics. Traditional views focus on the grammatical aspects of verbs, such as tense, aspect, and voice, within fixed syntactic structures. Modern approaches, influenced by cognitive linguistics, emphasize the flexible, context-driven nature of verbs, considering their semantic and pragmatic roles. By comparing these perspectives, the paper highlights the evolving understanding of verb lexemes in contemporary linguistic research.

Key words: verb lexemes, inflected form, modern interpretation, irregular verbs, phrasal verbs.

The study of verb lexemes in English linguistics is diverse and multificated,ranging from syntactic approaches to cognitive prospectives and cultural and also semantic analysis. In linguistics, a "lexeme" is the basic unit of meaning in a language, and it encompasses all the different forms that a single word can take. The traditional interpretation of verb lexemes in the English language focuses on the concept of the base form (or dictionary form) of a verb, which represents the core meaning. This interpretation emphasizes the idea that all forms of a verb share a common meaning, despite variations in tense, aspect, voice, and mood. Here's a closer look at how verb lexemes are traditionally understood:

1. Base Form .The base form is the simplest form of the verb, often referred to as the infinitive without "to." Examples include: run, eat, write, use, send. In the example "I run fast" , "I eat much ", " I write 3 messages today" we can see that verb is used without to and we call bare infinitive form.

2. Inflected Forms. Inflected forms of verbs include variations that show tense, aspect, mood, voice, and agreement with the subject. Key inflected forms in English include: a. Simple Present Singular (third person): adds "-s" or "-es" for example: he runs, she watches, b.Simple Past Regular verbs typically add "-ed" walk –walked, use-used, add-added. Irregular verbs have unique past tense forms go - went, eat – ate, send-sent. c. Past Participle Used with auxiliary verbs to form perfect tenses or passive voice. Regular verbs often use the same form as the simple past. walked (regular), eaten (irregular) d.Present Participle /Gerund Formed by adding "-ing" to the base form. Used in continuous tenses and as gerunds (verb forms functioning as nouns) running, eating, sending, using, coming and etc.

3. Irregular Verbs .Irregular verbs do not follow the regular patterns of conjugation. Their past and past participle forms can vary significantly from the base form. run - ran – run; sing - sang – sung. I run fast- I ran fast last year.

4. Modal Verbs. Modal verbs express necessity, possibility, permission, or ability. They include: can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would. These verbs do not follow typical conjugation patterns and do not have past participles.In the examples "She can speak

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[1] *Tukhtaeva Elmira, MA Student. Karshi State University*

three languages", "It may snow tomorrow" , "She might come to the party" , "I would go if I had time" modal form of verbs is used.

5. Phrasal Verbs. Phrasal verbs consist of a verb plus one or more particles (prepositions or adverbs) that change the meaning of the base verb. Phrasal verbs are verbs combined with one or more particles (prepositions or adverbs), creating a new meaning that is often idiomatic. Here are some common examples of phrasal verbs:

- Break down – to stop functioning (usually for machines or vehicles): "My car broke down on the way to work."

- Bring up – to mention a topic or raise a child: "She brought up an interesting point in the meeting."

- Call off – to cancel something: "They called off the wedding due to the storm."

- Carry on – to continue doing something: "Please carry on with your work."

- Come across – to find something by chance or appear in a certain way: "I came across my old photos yesterday."

- Give up – to stop trying or quit: "She gave up smoking last year."

- Look after – to take care of someone or something: "She looks after her younger brother."

-Look forward to – to anticipate something with pleasure: "I look forward to meeting you soon."

6. Verb Aspects and Tenses. Verb aspects and tenses in English are formed using auxiliary verbs and the main verb: Simple (I walk), Progressive/Continuous (I am walking), Perfect (I have walked), Perfect Progressive (I have been walking).

7. Voice. Voice in   English language is devided into two. The first one is active voice in which the subject performs the action. For example: She writes a letter. The second one is passive voice in which he action is performed on the subject. For instance: A letter is written by her. These elements combined make up the various forms of a verb lexeme in English. Understanding how these forms are used and conjugated is essential for mastering English grammar.

While, in modern linguistics, the concept of verb lexemes is explored with greater nuance and depth, incorporating advances in morphological theory, syntax, and semantics. This perspective often goes beyond the traditional view, emphasizing the complexity and variability within verb forms. Here are some key aspects of the modern interpretation of verb lexemes in English:

1. Lexeme as an Abstract Entity. Modern linguistics maintains that a lexeme is an abstract entity representing a set of related word forms. However, there is a greater focus on the distinction between the lexeme itself and its various inflections and derivations. The lexeme serves as a mental construct that encompasses all the grammatical and morphological forms.

2. Paradigms and Morphological Analysis Paradigms. The modern approach often emphasizes the concept of paradigms, which are sets of related forms that a lexeme can take. For example, the verb lexeme "run" has a paradigm that includes "run," "runs," "ran," "running," and "run" (past participle). Morphological Analysis: Modern linguistics uses detailed morphological analysis to study how different forms are generated from the base lexeme. This includes examining inflectional morphology (changes for tense, aspect, mood, etc.) and derivational morphology (creating new words or forms).

3. Syntax-Semantics Interface. The interaction between syntax and semantics is crucial in understanding verb lexemes. Modern linguistics explores how different syntactic structures and argument structures (the roles of subjects, objects, etc.) are associated with different verb forms and meanings. This includes studying: Valency: The number and type of arguments a verb can take (e.g., "give" has a valency of three: subject, direct object, and

indirect object). Subcategorization Frames: The syntactic patterns a verb can appear in, including complements and adjuncts.

4. Inflectional versus Derivational Morphology. While traditional linguistics also distinguishes between inflection and derivation, modern linguistics pays closer attention to how derivational processes can produce new lexemes with distinct meanings, not just grammatical forms. For example, "runner" derived from "run" introduces a new lexeme with a nominal meaning.

5. Cognitive and Usage-Based Approaches. Modern interpretations often incorporate cognitive and usage-based theories, which emphasize the role of speakers' mental processes and real-world usage patterns in shaping the understanding and evolution of verb lexemes. This includes prototype theory that examines how certain forms or meanings are more central (prototypical) to a lexeme than others and construction grammar which studies how different verb forms are associated with specific constructions or patterns in language.

6. Variation and Change. Modern linguistics also considers language variation and change over time, recognizing that verb lexemes can shift in meaning, form, and usage. This includes studying dialectal variations which includes differences in verb forms and usage across different dialects of English. Additonally, Language Contact and Borrowing: How contact with other languages can influence verb lexemes in English.

7. Corpus Linguistics and Computational Approaches. The use of corpus linguistics and computational methods allows for the analysis of large datasets to observe actual usage patterns and frequencies of different verb forms. This empirical approach provides insights into how verb lexemes function in real-world communication.In summary, the modern interpretation of verb lexemes in English linguistics is more detailed and sophisticated, integrating insights from morphology, syntax, semantics, cognitive science, and corpus linguistics. This approach acknowledges the complexity and fluidity of verb forms and their meanings, as well as the influence of context and usage on their interpretation.Linguists have consistently emphasized the centrality of verb lexemes in understanding how language encodes meaning, how the mind processes linguistic forms, how languages evolve over time. Chomsky's generative grammar highlights the central role of verb lexemes in the structure of sentences. His theory posits that verb lexemes govern the syntactic rules that underlie sentence generation, as seen in his work on verb phrase structure rules and transformations. Moreover, Steven Pinker in his dual-route theory, explains that verbs in English follow either a rule-based or memory- based mechanisms, particularly in how they handle regular and irregular forms. While, from a cognitive linguistic perspective, William Croft analyzes verbs as representations of human cognition. He argues that verb lexemes reflect how speakers conceptualize actions and events. His work also covers the typological diversity of verbs across languages, demonstrating how English verbs fit into broader cross-linguistic patterns.

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