

### **English and Slovak Verbs and their categories**

Please, study the questions below and try to use them in your text analysis. The handout consists of two parts:

Part 1: Morphology (Grammar 2)

Part 2. Contrastive Linguistics.

For part 1, study GREENBAUM, S., QUIRK, R.: A Student's grammar of the English language, Pearson Longman 1990, pp. 24 – 69

#### **3.1**

1. What are the two senses the word verb is used in?
2. What are the three major categories of verb? (as a word class)?
3. How do you identify the main verb if there are more than one verb in the clause?
4. What do we call the category of verbs which may act as both main and auxiliary verb?

#### **3.2**

5. What are the two major categories of verbs concerning their regularity? Comment each of them.

#### **3.3**

6. What are the functions of verb forms?

#### **3.4**

7. Comment on “ing” and “s” form in English verbs, focus on their structure and their treatment.
8. Comment on the regular “ed” form in English verbs, focus on its structure, changes in spelling and its overall treatment.
9. Specify the changes in spelling with the “ing” and “ed” endings. Focus on deletion of “e” the treatment of “y”.

#### **3.11**

10. Characterize verbs as operators. Which types (categories) of verbs may function as operators?

#### **3.12**

11. What are the four major characteristics of modal auxiliaries?

#### **3.13**

12. What are the primary verbs? Why are they referred to as “primary”?
13. Give examples of all 3 primary verbs functioning as modal verbs and full verbs.
14. Give an example of “have” functioning as an operator in its stative senses.

#### **3.16.**

15. Give examples of Central modal auxiliary verbs. Why are they called central?

#### **3.17.**

16. Give examples of marginal modal auxiliaries. Why are they called marginal?

#### **3.18**

17. Give examples of modal idioms and semi-auxiliaries. Why are they called “modal idioms”?

#### **3.19. - 3.20**

18. Characterize finite verb phrases and distinguish finite verb phrases from the non-finite ones. Why are non-finite phrases referred to as “non-finite”?

**3.21.**

19. What are the two types of verb phrases regarding their complexity?

20. What is the word order in complex verb phrases?

**3.22.**

21. Comment on the contrast expressed in the verb phrase. Focus on the following: tense, finiteness, mood, voice, questions, negation, emphasis.

**3.23**

22. What are the two forms of subjunctive mood?

23. Characterize and give examples of two types of usage of subjunctive mood (mandative and formulaic).

**3.25.**

23. Explain the structure and the formation of passive sentence in English.

24. What are the most common uses of the passive voice?

**4.1.**

25. What is the relationship / difference between the entity of time and grammatical tense?

**4.2**

26. Explain stative and dynamic senses of verbs. Give examples. Give examples of verbs which may function as both stative and dynamic depending on the context in which they are used.

**4.3**

27. Explain using simple present tense for present time.

**4.4.**

28. Explain using simple present tense for past and future.

**4.5.**

29. Explain using simple past tense for past time.

**4.6**

30. What are some of the special uses of the past simple tense?

**4.7.**

31. Characterize Aspect in English verb phrase. What are the major types of Aspect?

32. The category of English Aspect may be compared to one of the Slovak verbal grammatical category – which one? Why?

**4.8.**

33. Explain using present perfect aspect in English (the three types of usage)

**4.9.**

34. explain using past perfect aspect in English.

**4.10.**

35. explain using progressive aspect in English (3 types of usage).

**4.11.**

36. comment on verb senses and the progressive (4 types)

**4.12.**

37. Explain and give example of the aspect combination – perfect progressive.

**4.13 – 4.20**

38. What are the means of expressing future in English? Characterize each of them and give examples.

**4.21 – 4.28**

39. Comment on two main types of meaning of English modal verbs (extrinsic and intrinsic) and give examples. What is the difference in both the structure and the meaning,

**4.29. – 4.31**

40. Comment on the past tense forms in modals. (Past time in indirect speech, past time in other constructions) give examples.

#### 4.31. – 4.34

41. Explain and give examples of hypothetical meaning and tentativeness of meaning in modal verbs.

#### 4.35

42. Explain and give examples of different types of usage and meaning in the non-finite verb phrases.

## Part 2: CONTRASTIVE LINGUISTICS

### The English and Slovak Verbs

#### Handout

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English and Slovak verbs share a number of features, on the other hand, there are features which make English and Slovak verbs different. Verbs can be viewed from the **onomatological** and from the **syntactic perspective**. Onomatologically, the verb expresses the changeable aspect of the subject, syntactically, it is a means of sentence predication.

Formally, the Slovak verb is characterized by a much higher percentage of **syntetic formations**. On the contrary, the English verb contains very few synthetic forms being the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular of the present tense, the simple past tense and some nominal forms derived from the verbal bases (taking up the suffix “*ing*” – *smoke, smoking*). In addition, the number of **conjugational endings** is much more limited in English than it is in Slovak. In fact, there are only three endings. /s, z, :iz/, /t, d, id/, and /ɪŋ/

Verbs, as a form class are defined by their **morphological categories** (person, number, voice). These morphological categories are mostly **context-dependent**. Other categories are including tense, aspect and mood are mostly **context-independent**. Verbs are also defined by their **syntactic functions** (predicate for the finite forms and subject, object, attribute and adverbial for the non-finite forms).

**Classification of verbs:** verbs can be classified according to various criteria. The classification used in this paper is the following:

- (1) The function of the verb within the sentence
- (2) The function of the verb within the verb phrase
- (3) The meaning of the verb
- (4) The morphology of the verb

#### (1) The function of the verb within the sentence

In English we distinguish intransitive, monotransitive, ditransitive, and copular verbs.

**INTRANSITIVE VERBS:** (1) they occur in the *S-V* pattern and do not require an object or any other obligatory element. *Someone was coughing*. Other features of intransitive verbs within *S-V* pattern are the following:

- (2) The *S-V* pattern is rare with verbs in simple forms (*They slept*).
- (3) *S-V* pattern very often has an optional adverbial (*S-V-(A)*): *She fainted (from hunger)*.
- (4) *S-V* pattern often has an optional complement (*S-V-(Cs)*): *He returned exhausted*.
- (5) Some intransitive verbs appear in the *S-V-A* pattern with an obligatory adverbial: *A tear rolled down her cheek*. This *S-V-A* pattern is near the patterns with the copular verbs.

**MONOTRANSITIVE VERBS:** the verbs require one (direct) object. They function in the *S-V-O* pattern, the direct object may be a noun phrase or a clause: *Mary lost her handbag, He has always looked down on her., I have learnt how to fly a hang-glider.*

**DITRANSITIVE VERBS:** the verbs require two obligatory elements, it may be two objects, or an object and an adverbial or a complement: *She wished me good luck (S-V-Oi-Od), She's left her gloves on the train (S-V-O-A): I found her asleep (on the sofa) (S-VO-Co(-A)).*

**COPULAR VERBS:** The word copula derives from the Latin noun for a “link” or a “tie” that links two different parts. Copulas are often referred to as linking verbs because of their linking function. The principal copula is the verb to be, which is also the most common and the most neutral copula (*John was very friendly, Charles is my friend (S-V-Cs, She is not at home – S-V-A.* Many other verbs are equivalent to the principal copula in their function, e.g. *to seem (The girl seemed very happy, It seems the best solution – S-V-Cs, to live – Her brother lives in Canada – S-V-A.*

Copular verbs can be divided into **current copulas** and **resulting copulas**. **Current copulas** are usually stative and can be subdivided into **verbs of seeming** (*to seem, to appear, verbs of perception*, e.g. *to look, to sound*) and into **verbs of remaining** (*to remain, to keep*). **Resulting copulas** are dynamic (*to become, to turn, to get*).

Some verbs can be **both action verbs and copulas**, depending on the surrounding context. One of the ways to determine whether one and the same verb is an action verb or a copular is to substitute the verb “*is*” for the verb in question. If the sentence still makes sense, then it is a linking (copular) verb. If it does not, the verb is an action verb. E.g. in the sentence “*John appeared uninjured after the accident*” the verb “*is*” could be substituted for the verb “*appeared*” Thus the verb “*appear*” is considered copular in this sentence. On the other hand, in the sentence “*Before I could leave, John appeared*” the verb “*appeared*” cannot be substituted by the verb “*is*”. The verb “*appeared*” is thus treated as an action verb.

There are questions over whether **the verb “to be”** in its copular function is considered lexical or auxiliary verb. Following the most standard practice, if the verb to be preforms as a copular verb, then it will be treated as lexical verb because it represents the only verbal element of a clause/sentence. Most discussions of the lexicon of any language describe a distinction between Lexical vocabulary and grammatical functors (Givon 2001). Lexical verbs then constitute an open class of verbs which have certain syntactic features and semantic content (e.g. *eat, dream, read, write*). Auxiliaries, on the other hand, constitute a relatively small closed set of grammatical functors (e.g. modal auxiliaries – *would could, aspectual auxiliaries – have, be, and a dummy auxiliary – do*). Following this, copular be is considered to be a member of the lexical category.

The classification of Slovak verbs operates with other terms. What is an intransitive verb in English is called subjective or objectless verb in Slovak (*spat'*). While Slovak intransitive verbs are those which cannot have a direct object (*prikývnuť niečomu*) Slovak transitive verbs have a direct object (*stretnúť niekoho*).

## **(2) The function of the verb within the verb phrase**

We distinguish the open class of **full verbs** (also called lexical verbs), and the two closed classes, the **primary verbs** and the **modal auxiliary verbs**.

## **(3) The meaning of the verb**

The main distinction is between **stative** and **dynamic verbs**, or between the stative and the dynamic meaning of a verb. The distinction is important for the use of the progressive forms.

STATIVE VERBS denote qualities or states. Qualities are relatively permanent properties (*be tall, have blue eyes*) while states are less permanent (*be tired, have a bad cold*). The examples show that the same verb may be both stative and dynamic so that rather than distinguish between stative and dynamic verbs we should speak of the **stative and the dynamic meaning of a verb**.

The states include states of mind (*know, realize*), states of emotion or attitude (*like, wish*), states of perception (*see, hear, smell*), and states of bodily sensation (*hurt, itch*).

The verbs *to live, to sit* and *to stand* are intermediate between the stative and the dynamic types and refer to a situation which may be called STANCE (Quirk et al. 1985). They express a permanent state if they are used with the non-progressive (*John lives in London*) or a temporary state if they are used with the progressive (*John is living in London*).

#### (4) The morphology of the verb

The English verb is characterized by a much higher percentage of analytic formations than the Slovak verb.

#### GENDER AND NUMBER

The English verbal forms do not indicate gender and only one form indicates number. A number of Slovak verbal forms indicate these two categories.

#### TENSE

Tense should be distinguished from time. Time is the objective reality and tense is the grammatical conception and classification of this reality. Both Slovak and English have three basic tenses, present, preterite, and future. In addition to that, English has a system of pre-tenses and a system of progressive forms. Some grammarians have doubts about the existence of future tense in English and some grammarians do not regard the pre-tenses and the progressive forms as tenses but as aspect (Quirk et al.). The difference between the preterite and the pre-present, however, is not in the completeness (perfectivity) of the action, or in the result of the action: both *Where did I put my glasses?* and *Where have I put my glasses?* (Dušková 1994) have the same result but the time reference is different. The progressive forms refer to actions in progress at a given time, which is an aspectual feature. The aspectual reference, however, is always linked with temporal reference.

#### ASPECT

Aspect expresses how an action, event, or state, denoted by a **verb**, extends over time. Slovak verbs, with a few exceptions, are morphologically marked for aspect. The exceptions are either some domestic verbs (*venovať sa, obetovať sa*) or verbs of foreign origin (*absorbovať, delegovať, havarovať, regenerovať* etc.), which do not express aspect in the beginning and develop morphological means for expressing it only later as part of the process of domestication. Slovak aspectual forms correspond to English. Slovak language quite heavily relies on lexical means when expressing aspect. In spite of the fact that in English expressing aspect through grammatical means prevails, lexical means (mostly in combination with the grammatical ones) are used as well. Apart from the others, the following lexical concepts may be used to demonstrate the aspectual differences in both languages.

**Adverbs** (*down, out, e.g. vypit' – drink up*)

**Lexical means** (*rozplakat' sa* – to burst into tears, *dohovoriť* – to stop talking, *zastreliť* – to shoot dead)

**Verbo-nominal phrases** (*strčiť* – to give a push),

**The verbs will, would and used to** (*stával celé hodiny* – he would stand for hours, *chodievali sme* – we used to go).

In a few cases we can use **English verbs with prefixes** (*vnútiť* – enfore) but this is a rare case because English lost most of its verbal prefixes.

To demonstrate the different ways of expressing aspect in English and in Slovak, Sokolová 2009 in Repka 2016 states that that the imperfective-perfective distinction is possible only with such verbs whose meanings enable us to view the same action from two perspectives. Metaphorically speaking, the imperfective form of the verbs views an eventuality as moving pictures, i.e., as a process. For instance:

Problém **sme riešili** dva roky. = We were solving the problem for two years.

(We were working out the problem for two years.)

On the other hand, the perfective form is used to conceive the same eventuality as a single snapshot. For instance:

Po dvoch rokoch **sme** problem **vyriešili**. = After two years we have solved the problem.

Mathesius (1976: 69-70) exemplifies this assertion using the following Czech examples (finite forms) which are translated into English by means of non-finite forms:

Pamatuji si, že jsem ti tu knihu **pučoval**. = I remember **lending** you the book.

Pamatuji, že jsem ti u knihu **pučil**. = I remember **having lent** you the book.

The same also holds good for Slovak. (Repka 2016).

## MOOD

Studies based on the semantic approach to mood appear occasionally. One of the first ones to view mood in this way was Max Deutschbein in his Syntax (1917). He introduced a number of moods into English, which he divided as follows:

The **cognitive** was divided into:

- The **indicative**: *He is coming.*
- The **irrealis**: *I should give you the money if I had any.*
- The **potentialis**: *This may be true.*

The **optative**: *May you succeed!* The optative includes:

- The **permissive**: *May I go now?*
- The **voluntative**: *Speak!*, the mood for the 1<sup>st</sup> ps is the adhortative: *Let us go!*
- The **expectative**: *He is sure to come*, its subtype is the **dubitative**: *I doubt whether he knows.*

## CASE GRAMMAR

According to Charles Fillmore the term case refers to the semantic relationship between the verb and various noun phrases.

**Agentive case**: *Tom spruced the roses* – The form of the sentence is not decisive and not every subject is in the agentive case: *Tom loves roses* in the experiencer case.

**Benefactive case**: *John baked a cake for Louise. John baked Louise a cake*

**Experiencer** (or dative) case denotes the person/animal affected by the action of the verb: *Gregory was frightened by the storm. I persuaded Tom to go.*

**Resultative** (or factitive) case describes the relationship when something is made or created by the action *Tony built the shed*. Not every object is in the resultative case: *Tony repaired the shed* is an objective case.

**Instrumental** case refers to the means by which the action is performed: *The door was opened by/with the key, the man opened the door with the key.*

**Locative:** *Irene put the magazine on the table*

**Objective** case represents the most neutral relationship. *Tom sliced the sausage with a knife.*

**Task 1:** The following verbs can be either stative or dynamic (depending on the context). For each verb create 2 sentences, one with the stative and one with the dynamic meaning of the verb.

1. *Think* 2. *Mind* 3. *Have* 4. *Smell* 5. *Sound*

**Task 2:** Analyse the following verb phrases with respect to the following criteria:

Simple – complex
Finite-non-finite
Intransitive, mono-transitive, di-transitive, copular
Stative – dynamic
Perfective – progressive (combinations)
Grammatical tense
Verbs – full (main), primary, modal auxiliary

If not all criteria are possible, select those which are relevant for the given sentence.

*She worked hard to pass the test.*

*I couldn't solve the problem*

*To err is human*

*She was feeling nervous!*

*The doctor is attending to the injured people.*

*Your duty is to cross the river without getting noticed.*

*The students were asked to submit their assignments by Friday.*

*She might have been working on the project for years.*

*What I like is watching TV.*

*The information was being processed for quite a long time.*

*Supported by the school, he just couldn't quit.*

*The car looks fast*

*Look what I've brought for you.*

*She looked upon the future with hope.*

*She became a racehorse trainer.*

*She remained a spinster*

*God is everywhere.*

*God is helping us everywhere.*

### Study Guide:

1. Explain how verbs can be viewed from onomatological and from syntactic perspectives. Give examples.
2. Compare English and Slovak verbs with respect to their synthetic formations. Give examples of synthetic formation in English

3. Explain the terms context dependent and context independent morphological categories of verbs. Which morphological categories are context-dependent and which are context independent?
4. Explain the statement: verbs are defined by their syntactic function
5. What is the classification of verbs according to their function within the sentence? (Give examples (a sentence) for each type.
6. Characterize INTRANSITIVE VERBS. Which clause patterns may they enter? Give an example sentence for each type.
7. Characterize MONOTRANSITIVE and DITRANSITIVE VERBS. Which clause patterns may they enter? Give an example sentence for each type.
8. Explain the notion of "COPULAR VERBS" Give 5 examples of copular verbs.
9. Characterize the terms of CURRENT and RESULTING COPULA. Give examples. What is the difference between the two types of copula?
10. Give an example of a verb in a sentence which can function as both the action verb and the copula. What is a possible criterion for distinguishing whether the verb is an action verb or a copula in a given sentence?
11. When the verb "to be" performs in copular function, is it commonly treated as an auxiliary or a main verb? Explain (give reasons) for your choice.
12. What is the classification of verbs according to their function within the verb phrase? Give an example for each category.
13. Explain the term STATIVE VERBS and give an example.
14. Give 3 examples of verbs which may function as both stative and dynamic. Use them in sentences to illustrate the difference.
15. Explain the term of STANCE and give 3 examples of stance verbs.
16. Explain the difference between TENSE and TIME. What basic tenses are there in English?
17. Define the category of ASPECT of verbs.
18. Explain the statement that Slovak verbs are "morphologically marked for aspect"
19. Aspect can be expressed lexically and/or grammatically – give an example of each type, use your example in a sentence to illustrate your ideas.
20. Give 5 categories of lexical means for expressing aspect in English. Give an example for each category.
21. Comment on the difference between the following sentences with respect to aspect. Translate the sentences: I remember lending you the book / I remember having lent you the book.
22. What are the types of mood according to Deutscher? Give an example of each type.