The problem of phrases verb in English

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays we are trying to establish a strong democratic state, of course, with the help of the new generation. 1 also consider myself as one of the members of this innovative people. I dare say, foreign languages, especially English is a good source to lake the advantage. So, in this very book I tried to make a good research working on the theme "The problem of verb phrases in English"

Actuality: In the given work one of the urgent problems of English Grammar - the problem of verb phrases in English that are being confused by many learners during the tests and speeches are considered.

Subject: The English language, as well as other languages, has many similar grammatical structures that sometimes make out unexpected misunderstandings. The problem of predicative phrases in English is also typical for this kind. In fact, the presence of large quantity of words that belong to only one kind of phrase does not arouse the problem, but the variety of the types of the phrase referring to the tense tonus figure out the troubles.

Object: Despite extensive amount of ambiguity in phrases, the English language has subordinated them to the laws not only of comprehensive structure but also in everyday usage.

Main Aim: The problem of verb phrases in English are also compared and contrasted in a separate section of this handout because they can have different functions in a sentence

Novelty: Throughout this document, occasional example sentences with the problem of verb phrases in English that might be considered nonstandard,

ambiguous, or at least peculiar in formal writing are all taken from literary texts and marked with an asterisk.

Theoretical Signification: The basic purpose of the given research is the systematization of the critical analysis and review of linguists' views concerning an issue of types of phrases and process of lexical potentiality of these lexemes andtheir subsequent development in the English language. In the work the attempt is made to consider as well the other problems.

Practical Value: The results of research can be used during the lectures on grammar aiid as well during the seminars on this discipline. To make the teaching easy. The urgency of work is caused by that every researcher who worked on very topic gave only limited information, none of them gave perfect, or as much as perfect, I should say, information. Proceeding from the purposes of the researches, I can say, there is no integral review and systematization of this question in the scientific literature. Actually, it is very deep in construction. The purpose of research consists in detailed study of "The problem of verb phrases in English."

1.1 Classifications of Phrases in Modern English

A phrase is a group of words without both a subject and predicate. Phrases combine words into a larger unit that can function as a sentence element. For example, a participial phrase can include adjectives, nouns, prepositions and adverbs; as a single unit, however, it functions as one big adjective modifying a noun (or noun phrase). See this overview of phrases for more.

Noun Phrase - "The crazy old lady in the park feeds the pigeons every day." A noun phrase consists of a noun and all of its modifiers, which can include other phrases (like the prepositional phrase in the park). More examples.

Appositive Phrase - "Bob, my best friend, works here" or "My best friend Bob works here." An appositive (single word, phrase, or clause) renames another noun, not technically modifying it. See this page from the Armchair Grammarian for everything you ever wanted to know about appositives.

Gerund Phrase - "I love baking cakes." A gerund phrase is just a noun phrase with a gerund as its head.

Infinitive Phrase - "I love to bake cakes." An infinitive phrase is a noun phrase with an infinitive as its head. Unlike the other noun phrases, however, an infinitive phrase can also function as an adjective or an adverb. More examples.

Verb Phrase - The verb phrase can refer to the whole predicate of a sentence (I was watching my favorite show yesterday) or just the verb or verb group (was watching).

Adverbial Phrase - The adverbial phrase also has two definitions; some say it's a group of adverbs (very quickly), while others say it's any phrase (usually a prepositional phrase) that acts as an adverb — see this second definition.

Adjectival Phrase - As with adverbial phrases, adjectival phrases can either refer to a group of adjectives (full of toys) or any phrase (like a participial or prepositional phrase) that acts as an adjective - see this second definition.

Participial Phrase - "Crushed to pieces by a sledgehammer, the computer no longer worked" or "1 think the guy sitting over there likes you." A participial phrase has a past or present participle as its head. Participial phrases always function as adjectives.

Prepositional Phrase - "The food on the table looked delicious." A prepositional phrase, which has a preposition as its head, can function as an adjective, adverb, or even as a noun.

Absolute Phrase - "My cake finally baking in the oven, I was free to rest for thirty minutes." Unlike participial phrases, absolute phrases have subjects and modify the entire sentence, not one noun. Almost a clause, the absolute phrase can include every sentence element except a finite verb. For example, "My cake finally baking in the oven" would be its own sentence if you just added one finite verb: "My cake was finally baking in the oven." Phrases are considered as the second level of classification as they tend to be larger than individual words, but are smaller than sentences. We refer to the central element in a phrase as the head of the phrase. If the head is a noun then the phrase is called a noun phrase. There are nine generally accepted classifications for phrases. These classifications are generally based on the headword or construction of the phrase. The headword can usually stand alone as a one-word phrase. It is the only part that cannot be omitted from the phrase.

1. NOUN PHRASES

Noun phrases may serve as subjects, direct objects, indirect objects, or objects of prepositions. Most noun phrases are constructed using determiners, adjectives and a head noun.Examples: My coach is happy, (noun phrase as subject)

2. VERB PHRASES

Verb phrases are composed of the verbs of the sentence and any modifiers of the verbs, including adverbs, prepositional phrases or objects. Most verb phrases function as predicates of sentences.

Example: Henry made my coach very proud, (verb phrase as predicate)

3. ADJECTIVAL PHRASES

Adjectival phrases are composed of the adjectives that modify a noun and any adverbs or other elements that modify those adjectives. Adjectival phrases always occur inside noun phrases or as predicate adjectives. Example: Dad bought [(a blue and green) sweater]

4. ADVERBIAL PHRASES

Adverbial phrases are composed of the adverbs that modify verbs, adjectives, or clauses. Adverbial phrases may occur with more than one word. The extra adverb is called an intensifier. Example: He scored the goal very quickly.

5. PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Prepositional phrases are composed of the preposition and a following noun phrase. Prepositional phrases are used either adjectivally to modify nouns or adverbially to modify verbs, adjectives, or clauses[1]. Examples: The man in the house rented it. (prepositional phrase modifies a noun adjectivally)

He went in the arena, (prepositional phrase modifies a verb adverbially)

Dad was happy about the goal, (prepositional phrase modifies an adjective adverbially)

 On reflection, I believe that she was correct, (prepositional phrase modifies a clause adverbially)

6. GERUNDIVE PHRASES

Gerundive phrases may function in any way in which nouns may function: as subjects, objects, objects of a preposition, or even nouns functioning as adjectives Gerundive phrases may contain gerunds, adjectives, objects, adverbs or other main verb elements.

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[1] Azar Betty Shrampfer "Fundamentals of English Grammar" Second Edition, New Jersey "Prentice-Hall" 1992.

Example: Dad talked about winning the game.

7. PARTICIPIAL PHRASES

Participles are root verbs with an "ed, en or ing" suffix. In the case of the past participial, the form may be irregular. Participial phrases may contain objects and other elements that might occur with main verbs. Participial phrases always function as adjectives. Example: Racing around the comer, he slipped and fell.

8. ABSOLUTE PHRASES

Absolute phrases are composed of a subject noun phrase and a participial phrase. The absolute phrase is formally independent of the main clause. The subject of the absolute phrase does not have to appear in the main clause— because the absolute phrase has its own subject! Example: [(My chores) (completed for the week)], I went on a walk.

9. INFINITIVE PHRASES

Infinitive phrases are composed of an infinitive verb (the base form of the verb preceded by to) and any modifing adverbs or prepositional phrases. The infinitive phrase has three functions: noun, adjective, adverb. Examples: My duty as a coach is to teach skills, (infinitive phrase functions as a noun)

My sister wanted a cat to love, (infinitive phrase functions as an adjective)

Bill is eager to work on his skating, (infinitive phrase functions adverbially, modifying an adjective)

Noun Phrases are groups of words that can function as subjects or objects in sentences.

They may take on various forms: Water is important for survival. (Single words)

In giving a general preview of our subject we pointed out that within the domain of syntax two levels should be distinguished: that of phrases and that of sentences. In giving characteristics of a part of speech we consistently kept apart the two layers in so far as they concern the syntactical functions of parts of speech — their ability to combine with other words into phrases, on the

one hand, and their function in the sentence, on the other. In starting now to analyze problems of syntax itself, we must first of all try to elucidate as far as possible the sphere belonging to each of the two levels. After that we will proceed to a systematic review of each level.

We will term "phrase" every combination of two or more words which is a grammatical unit but is not an analytical form of some word (as, for instance, the perfect forms of verbs). The constituent elements of a phrase may belong to any part of speech. For instance, they may both be nouns, or one of them may be an adjective and the other a noun, or again one of them may be a verb and the other a noun, or one may be a preposition and the other a noun; or there may be three of them, one being a preposition, the other a noun, and the third a preposition, etc.

We thus adopt the widest possible definition of a phrase and we do not limit this notion by stipulating that a phrase must contain at least two notional words, as is done in a number of linguistic treatises. 1 The inconvenience of restricting the notion of phrase to those groups which contain at least two notional words is that, for example, the group "preposition + noun" remains outside the classification and is therefore neglected in grammatical theory.

The difference between a phrase and a sentence is a fundamental one. A phrase is a means of naming some phenomena or processes, just as a word is. Each component of a phrase can undergo grammatical changes in accordance with grammatical categories represented in it, without destroying the identity of the phrase. For instance, in the phrase write letters the first component can change according to the verbal categories of tense, mood, etc., and the second component according to the category of number. Thus, writes a letter, has written a letter, would have written letters, etc., are grammatical modifications of one phrase.

With a sentence, things are entirely different. A sentence is a unit with every word having its definite form. A change in the form of one or more

words would produce a new sentence. It must also be borne in mind that a phrase as such has no intonation, just as a word has none. Intonation is one of the most important features of a sentence, which distinguish it from a phrase. Last not least, it is necessary to dwell on one of the most difficult questions involved in the study of phrases: the grammatical aspect of that study as distinct from the lexicological.

The difference should be basically this: grammar has to study the aspects of phrases which spring from the grammatical peculiarities of the words making up the phrase, and of the syntactical functions of the phrase as a whole, while lexicology has to deal with the lexical meaning of the words and their semantic groupings.[2]

Thus, for instance, from the grammatical point of view the two phrases read letters and invite friends are identical, since they are built on the same pattern "verb + noun indicating the object of the action". From the lexicological point of view, on the other hand, they are essentially different, as the verbs belong to totally different semantic spheres, and the nouns too; one of them denotes a material object, while the other denotes a human being. Thus, the basic . difference between the grammatical and the lexicological approach to phrases appears to be clear. However, it is not always easy to draw this demarcation line while doing concrete research in this sphere.

It is to the phrase level that the syntactical notions of agreement (or concord) and government apply. In studying phrases from a grammatical viewpoint we will divide them according to their function in the sentence into (1) those which perform the function of one or more parts of the sentence, for example, predicate, or predicate and object, or predicate and adverbial modifier, etc., and (2) those which do not perform any such function but whose function is equivalent to that of a preposition, or

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[2] Akhm anova O. Syntax: Theory and Method. M oscow, 1972 (256p)

conjunction, and which are, in fact, to all intents and purposes equivalents of those parts of speech. The former of these two classes comprises the overwhelming majority of English phrases, but the latter is no less important from a general point of view.

1.2 Verb Phrases in English

In this chapter we are going to take a detailed look at the structure of the phrase that is in some ways the core of the clause. In this phrase the basic argument structure of the clause is formed which is made up of the verb, acting as the predicate, its arguments and adjoined modifiers. Thus, it is within the VP that role assignment takes place. We will also see that it is within the VP that other aspects of semantic interpretation are represented, such as event structure and aspect. Other aspects of clausal interpretation, such as tense, modality and force are introduced in structures built on top of the VP and we will deal with these in the following chapters.

The principles of Theta Theory introduced in chapter 2 will play a large part in determining the structure of the VP, alongside those of X-bar theory. In particular we will be guided by the Uniform Theta-role Assignment Hypothesis (UTAH), which as we explained in chapter 2 assumes that specific -roles are assigned to similar positions in all structures. Thus, if we find evidence that a particular -role, theme for example, is assigned to a particular position in one structure, then by the UTAH we should assume that it is assigned to this position in all structures where it is found. In many ways this is a very simple theory, but it does lead to the assumption of somewhat more abstract structures than might have been guessed at prior to analysis. However, we will demonstrate that the more abstract structures have quite a few advantages over what might at first seem to be more straightforward analyses and these advantages can be used to independently motivate the analyses and thus support the assumption of the UTAH. We will start our discussion with the

simpler cases and work our way to the more complex ones, though this order of presentation might not be the usual one we find in grammar books.The notions of event structure and aspect are new and we will spend a little time introducing them in the next section.

As we have seen in chapter 1, the traditional idea that verbs are 'doing words', inasmuch as what they refer to is actions, is not very accurate. Some verbs refer to emotions or states of mind in which nothing can really be said to be done:

(1) a) Lucy loves silent movies

b) Fred fears commitment

c) Sam saw the possibilities

Yet obviously these verbs have meaning and they can be said to refer to something. Let us call what it is that a verb describes in a sentence an event and this can either be an action, a state or whatever. Some events described by a verb are simple, consisting of a single part. For example:

(2) a) the plane arrived at Heathrow

b) Lorraine lives in London

c) the rock eroded

In each of these sentences there is a single event consisting of the state of some element or the relationship between two elements. In (2a), for example, the plane has achieved a state in which it can be said to be located in some place, i.e. at Heathrow. Other verbs describe a more complex event:

(3) a) the wind eroded the rock

b) Peter put the eggs in a bowl

c) Gus gave Sam a sandwich

In (3a) an event is described which includes the event described in (2c) but also involves the wind doing something that results in this. We might see this as a series of 'sub-events' connected in one way or another to make up a complex event. Thus, one event involves the wind doing something involving the rock (blowing at it or something) and the other event involves the rock being

in a state of erosion. Moreover, the first event has a causal relationship with the second. We might represent this situation thus: (4) e = el Пe2

Here, e represents the complex event associated with the sentence the wind eroded the rock and the equals sign indicates that this is constituted of a series of other events, in this case el and e2. The first of these is the event involving the wind's action and the second is the event of the rock being in the state of erosion. The arrow between the two indicates the causal relationship between the two sub-events in that el causes e2. The events described in (3b) and (c) are even more complex. In (3b) we have

Peter doing something to the eggs which causes the eggs to undergo a process of movement which results in them being situated in a location (in the bowl):(5) e = el rje2 Qe3

In this, el represents the action of Peter, e2 the movement of the eggs and e3 the state achieved by the eggs of being located in the bowl. Note that el results in e2 and e2 results in e3 as represented by the arrows. (3c) has a similar event structure involving Gus doing something that causes the sandwich to undergo a process the end result of which is that it ends up in Sam's possession. Thus, el is Gus's action, e2 is the process of movement or 'change of ownership' that the sandwich undergoes and e3 is the state achieved by the sandwich of being possessed by Sam[3]. Just like thematic structure, we will demonstrate below that event structure also has an effect on the syntactic organization of elements within the VP. The main claim is that there is an isomorphism between event structure and the structure of the VP, so that just as a complex event may be broken up into a series of sub-events, then the VP also breaks up into 'sub-VPs' in a one-to-one correspondence with the sub-events.This will become clearer as we progress.

Turning now to aspect. Again this is a semantic property of verbs which has to do with the process involved and its relationship to the progression of time. This

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[3] Akhm anova O. Syntax: Theory and Method. M oscow . 1972 (256p)

is not tense, however, which situates an event at a particular place in time with respect to some other point, the time at which a sentence is uttered, for example. With aspect time is important with respect to the internal aspects of the event itself. For example, the end point of the event seen with respect to its starting point and what goes on between the two. It is important to distinguish between two types of aspect, one which is internal to the meaning of the verb, which we might refer to as lexical aspect, and one which is to do with the interpretation of a particular event described by a sentence, which we call grammatical aspect. Lexical aspect is also sometimes called aktionsart.

With lexical aspect we can distinguish between those verbs which describe events which have a natural end point and those which do not. Consider the difference between eat and sit. Eating involves a process which if it continues long enough must come to a natural end determined by the extent of the thing being eaten: one can only eat an apple until it is all gone! Sitting, on the other hand, can continue indefinitely and will only come to an end when something else happens to stop it, the person stands up or the chair breaks, for example. By contrast, grammatical aspect looks at end points of an event from the perspective of the situation being described. Compare: (6) a the Queen of England is sitting on this chair b the Queen of England has sat on this chair In (6a) the situation described involves the Queen of England being on the chair when the sentence is uttered. The sitting event started at some point before the utterance and continued for some undetermined time after it. In (6b), the Queen of England is no longer on the chair when the sentence is uttered - she has stopped sitting and has gone somewhere else. Thus the sitting event is complete. Note that in (6a) the auxiliary verb be is used in conjunction with the ing form of the verb and in contrast (6b) involves the auxiliary have with the 'erf form of the verb (irregularly expressed as sat in this case).Although the encoding of grammatical aspect in English is complex, the forms be + Wing and have + Yen are often called the progressive and perfective forms to reflect

the kind of distinction made in (6). That things are not so simple, however, can be seen from the following:

(7) a) I was living in Paris (until 1985)

b) I have lived in Paris (for 12 years)

Although (7a) has the verb in its progressive form, the event described is clearly completed and the person has stopped living in Paris. (7b) on the other hand is in the perfective form, but the event is not complete: the person is still living in Paris at the time the sentence is uttered.[4]

While this is a very interesting and complex part of the description of the semantics of English verbal complexes, we will not have very much to say about it in this book, as we are mainly interested in syntax and in semantics only inasmuch as it has an effect on the syntactic organisation of an expression. For us, the main interest in grammatical aspect is to do with the appearance of the auxiliary verbs and their syntactic distributions and properties. Having introduced these notions, we can now turn to the analysis of English verbs and the constructions we find them in.

1.3 Phrasal verbs in English

Obviously, the Verb Phrase revolves around the head verb, the head being the central element of any phrase. Not only does the head project its categorical properties to the phrase, but also by restrictive selection it determines the categorical nature of its complements. Thematic heads also impose restrictions on arguments by assigning roles to them. The arguments of a thematic head, such as a verb, will appear either in complement or specifier positions according to the principles of role assignment detailed in chapter 2. It follows therefore that the lexical properties of individual verbs will play a large role in determining the structure of particular VPs. We will organize this central

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[4] Allen W .S. Living English Structure. Longmans, 1960 (270p)

section of this chapter by focussing on different subcategories of verbs, starting with those that have the simplest lexical specifications.

A set of verbs which demonstrate some unique properties are known as phrasal verbs.These appear with what looks to be a preposition, traditionally referred to as a particle, following them:

(122) a) the plane took off

b) the patient came to

c) time ran out

One obvious fact about these verbs is that their meaning is usually idiomatic in that it is not straightforwardly computed from the meaning of the verb and the meaning of the preposition combined. To take off for example, means 'to become airborne' and to come to means 'to become conscious'. These verbs do not behave like those which take a PP complement and the two types of verb can be distinguished in a number of ways:

(123) a) he took off his hat he took his hat off

b) he lived in a hut *he lived a hut in

(124) a) in this hut, he lived for ten years

b) off this hat, he took in an instant

(125) a) he lived right near a mountain

b) he took right off his hat

(126) a) he lived near the forest and next to a river

b) he took off his hat and off his coat

Much of this evidence seems to suggest that the preposition does not act as the head of a preposition phrase, but forms a unit with the verb. For example, while

(124a) shows that the PP complement of a verb can be moved to the front of the clause, it seems that the particle plus the following DP cannot be moved (124b), indicating that it is perhaps not a constituent. Moreover, as we have seen in (125a) a PP can be modified by an adverb like right, but this is not possible for the particle followed by a DP (125b). Finally, we can coordinate a PP complement with another PP (126a), but we cannot

coordinate the particle plus the following DP with a PP, indicating that the particle does not form a PP with the following DP. For this reason, it is often claimed that the particle forms a syntactic unit with the verb, perhaps being adjoined to it: (127) V P the answer find out However, it should also be observed that the verb and the particle do not seem to behave like a complex verb and in a number of ways, the verb is still independent of the particle, which would not be expected if (127) were the correct analysis. For one thing, the verb bears all inflections, and these are not stuck onto the end of the phrasal verb itself:

(128) a) faded out -fade outed

b) fading out -fade outing

c) fades out -fade outs

From the other side of things, the particle seems independent of the verb, in that it can move separately from the verb, as already pointed out in (123), but demonstrated again here:

(129) a) he looked up the word he looked the word up

b) she held up the bank she held the bank up

c) they put off the meeting they put the meeting off

A final problem for (127) is that it tends to go against the general pattern of compounding in English. When a complex head is formed from two heads by adjoining one to the other, it is generally the case that the head of the compound is the leftmost element. This is true in compound nouns and adjectives, but also with verbs:

(130) a) armchair, milk jug, family film, white lie, etc.

b) dark brown, ice cold, rock hard, squeaky clean, etc.

c) outdo, undercut, overspend, over wrap, dry clean, etc.

In all these cases of compounding, the rightmost element provides the compound with its syntactic and semantic properties. So an armchair is a kind of chair not a kind of arm and a white lie is a noun not an adjective. We might assume that these compounds are formed by adjoining the modifying element

to the left of the head. This is clearly the opposite of the phrasal verb, with the preceding verb being taken as the head. When the particle is separated from the verb by an object, it seems to have properties that it cannot have when it precedes the object. For example, we have seen that, unlike a preposition, the particle cannot be modified by an adverb in (125b). However, in the post-object position it can be modified by an adverb:

(133) a) he took right off his hat

b) he took his hat right off

Moreover, when the particle is behind the object, it cannot have an object of its own, but it can when it follows the object:

(134) a) enough to put off his food the dog

b) enough to put the dog off his food

Obviously, this is a very unique kind of construction with many mysterious properties. Let us see if we can solve at least some of these mysteries. When a phrasal verb has an object, this object is often a theme and hence we would expect it to go in a specifier position of the thematic verb. This verb should follow its specifier, leaving the complement position available for a PP complement. This works fine for an example such as (134b).

In this structure, presumably the main verb will move to support the light verb and the right word order will be achieved. It would seem reasonable to assume that the particle construction with the particle following the object is derived in exactly the same way, with the preposition heading a PP which has no other content:

Again the verb will move to the light verb position and the word order is predicted.

The fact that the particle heads a PP accounts for its ability to be modified by an adverb, as in (133b).

The tricky part is to account for the pre-object particle. If we assume that is the basic structure of the construction, then we might analyze the pre-object particle construction as derived by a movement of the preposition head to the verb,

so that when the verb moves to the light verb position, the preposition is taken along with it:

Note that the structure that is formed by the movement of the particle is the same as the one that is traditionally assumed to be the basic structure for a phrasal verb, with the preposition adjoined to the verb. Of course this means that the preposition does not form a PP with the following DP in the specifier of the lower VP and hence we account for why it does not behave like a PP complement, which would have an entirely different structure.

The question needs to be addressed as to why the movement of the preposition is allowed and when it is not. Obviously not every verb that has a PP complement allows this movement, and indeed those verbs which do allow it do not allow it in all circumstances:

(138) a) they put the meeting off -they put off the meeting

b) he put the book on the shelf -he put on the book the shelf

c) they put the meeting right off -they put off the meeting right

It seems that it is only when the verb has a PP complement which consists only of a prepositional head that the preposition is allowed to move out of the PP. If the preposition itself has a complement, or if it is modified, then it is not allowed to move.[5] It is not entirely clear why this should be, as other heads can move out of their own phrases when there are other elements in other positions within them. For example, we have seen many cases of a verb moving out of the VP when its specifier or complement is filled by its arguments. Another observation from (138) might help to shed some light on the problem. Note that when the verb has a simple PP complement, it has a different interpretation: to put something off does not mean the same as to put something somewhere. Similarly, put down, put on, put back, put over, etc. all have somewhat idiosyncratic meanings that are not simply related to the meaning of put as a verb of placement. So, put down can mean 'to kill' (of animals), put on 'to fake', put back 'to delay' and put over 'to convey'. This might

[5] A lkins I. The Hazards o f Translation. Geneva, 1980 (300p)

suggest that it is not the same verb we are looking at in all these cases and especially they are not the same verb as in (138b). If this is true then it could be that the ability of the preposition to move might be lexically restricted by the verb: some verbs allow it, others do not. Of course, this still does not explain why those that do allow the preposition to move only take 'simple' PP complements, which contain just the preposition and so we cannot be said to have solved all the mysteries of phrasal verbs here. In fact we have probably only just scratched the surface and it has to be admitted that phrasal verbs present many very difficult problems for analysis under any set of assumptions. We will therefore leave this topic at this point and be content with the meager understanding of them that we have gained.

1.4 Verbs with clausal complements

A class of verbs which are often traditionally lumped together with transitive verbs are verbs which have clausal complements:

(139) a) Theo thinks [Sally is smart]

b) Wanda wants [Larry to leave]

c) Bob believes [Tim to be tall]

d) Harry hopes [for Fiona to fall in love with him]

e) Tony tried [to look innocent]

f) Albert asked [why Wendy went]

As can be seen from the limited data in (139), there are a wide range of possibilities for clausal complements. Some verbs take finite clause complements (139a), while others take non-fmite complements of various kinds (139b-e). Some complements are declarative (139a-e) while others are interrogative (139f). The possibilities are determined by the verb, as we would expect. An obvious question to ask is where the clausal complement sits with respect to the verb. There are a number of possibilities. In some ways the clausal complement is rather like an object, which is what leads traditional grammars to conclude that these verbs are transitives. For instance, many of

these verbs can appear with an object, sometimes with a similar meaning to the clausal complement:

(140) a) Sam said something Sam said [that Tim is tall]

b) Albert asked the time Albert asked [what the time was]

Moreover, some of these verbs can undergo passivisation, and as we have seen, in English, only the transitive verbs can passivise:

(141) a) it was believed [that Tim is tall]

b) Chris was considered [to be clever]

This might lead us to the conclusion that they should be treated like objects and be placed in the specifier of the VP, with the verb moving to a light verb position to precede it.

There are however, a number of problems facing this analysis. First, when a verb takes both a DP and a clausal complement, invariably the DP precedes the clause:

(143) a) I asked [him] [where to get off]

b) I told [him] [that I would write a letter]

c) I persuaded [him] [that the moon was made of cheese]

d) I promised [him] [to be good]

In each case of the above, if the DP followed the clause it would be ungrammatical.Moreover, if there is a PP complement and a clause, the PP tends to precede the clause:

(144) a) it seems [to me] [that the gudgeon pin is broken]

b) I shouted [at him] [to get out of the bath]

c) we demand [of you] [that you tell the truth]

If we consider the thematic roles assigned to these arguments, typically the DP arguments receive a goal -role: the one to whom the event described by the verb is directed. The clause has a theme -role. We saw with dative/double object verbs, the goal argument sits in the complement position of the thematic verb, but may move in order to get Case. If this is what is going on here, then the structure should be:

(145) they asked me to pay

In this, the verb moves from light verb to light verb and the DP moves to the specifier of the first light verb to get Case from the higher one. A similar structure would have to be supposed for the PP arguments. However, this structure does not seem to reflect the event structure of such verbs, which seem to consist of just two events:

(146) e = e1 ® e2 : e1 = they did something

e2 = I was asked to pay

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A second problem is why the PP argument would undergo the same movement as the DP as PPs do not need Case and do not normally undergo this kind of movement. Hence it appears that there is not much to recommend this analysis. If we want to maintain the UTAH we cannot just assume that the arguments start off in different positions, however. So we want to keep the basic structure of the VP as it is in (145). We need to simplify the light verb structure, getting rid of one of these to match with the event structure and finally we need to find a way of getting the PP in front of the clause that does not assume that it undergoes a similar movement to DPs.

One way to get the PP in front of the clause without moving the PP would be to move the clause backwards, perhaps to adjoin to the VP or v'.Do we have any evidence that clauses can undergo the supposed movement and any motivation for it to take place in this instance? Actually, there is some evidence that certain   clauses   can   undergo   a   backward   movement: (149)   a   the announcement [that the prime minister had resigned] was broadcast on the radio b the announcement was broadcast on the radio [that the prime minister had resigned] In this example, the bracketed clause is the complement of the noun announcement and hence is part of the DP subject, as is clearly the case in (149a). In this clause not only does not appear to be part of the subject, but it is right over the other side of the clause from the subject. It seems therefore

that the clause moves towards the back of the clause and therefore that backward movement of clauses is a possibility.[6]

But why would the clause have to move backwards in a structure like? Note that the clause occupies a position to which Case is assigned: the light verb assigns accusative Case to the specifier of the VP. There is an old idea, dating back to Stowell (1981), that clauses avoid Case positions. While it might seem that clauses occupy similar positions to DPs, there are a number of reasons to think that this is not so. For example, we do not get clauses in the complement position of prepositions, a position to which Case is assigned:

(150) a she spoke about [her theory]

b) she spoke about [that brontosaurs are thin at both ends and fat in the middle]

Moreover, while it might look as though clauses can occupy subject positions (to which Case is assigned), there are observations which indicate that sentence subjects are not in the same position as DP subjects:

(151) a) did [Ursula] upset you?

b) did [that Ursula got drunk] upset you

(152) a) this theory, [I] just can't accept

b) this theory, [that the space probe found no pizzerias on Mars] disproves

The data demonstrate that certain things which are possible when there is a DP subject, are not possible with a clausal 'subject'. For instance, the auxiliary can move to the front of the clause to form a question in (151a), but not in (151b) where there is a clausal subject. In (152a) we can see that an object can be moved to the front of the clause in what are called topicalisation structures, but not when the subject is clausal (152b). These observations might suggest that the clausal subjects are in a position which prevents the relevant movements and that DP subjects sit in a different position which does not interfere with them. Obviously the DP subjects sit in Case positions, as required by the Case filter and therefore our conclusion is that clausal subjects do not sit in the

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[6] Blokh M .Y. A Course in Theoretical English Grammar. M oscow 'V isshaya shkola' 1983 (383p)

Case position that the DP subject sits in. All this might be accounted for if we assume that clauses avoid Case positions and this would warrant the clause moving out of its D-structure position in (147) into a position that is Caseless. We therefore assume the following principle: the Case avoidance principle clauses avoid Case positions

CONCLUSION

To summarise this fairly long discussion of the structure of the VP, we can conclude that strict adherence to the UTAH and the assumption that there is isomorphism between event structure and VP structure leads us to sometime quite surprising but enlightening analyses of the central part of the clause. The VP itself seems a hive of activity, with verbs and arguments moving about from position to position which obviously complicates its description. However, the reasons for the movements themselves are fairly straightforward. The verb moves to support the abstract light verbs which have a bound morpheme status, DP arguments move to Case positions and clausal arguments move away from Case positions. Once such things are understood, some rather mysterious properties of VPs become demystified. Phenomena such as passivisation, double object alternation, the there construction, cognate objects and phrasal verb constructions are given a fairly satisfying analysis which we can take as encouraging for this approach.

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