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**Verb Valency in English**

**A research project**

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**Abstract**

The present study attempts to carry out a significant revision of the definition of syntactic valence and aim to describe some of the grammatical functions for a more accurate treatment of this notion. The research aims at explaining to the readers what verb valency is and also to make them have access to some of the central ideas in this filed. This study is divided into three sections: section one is the introduction of the research and also presents some definitions and the types of Verb Valency. Section two is devoted to Verb Valency arguments and Valency patterns. Section three explains the Changing of Valency with its types. The research finally reaches the conclusion and there are also the references from which help has been taken.

**Section One**

**Introduction**

Valency is the amount and kind of connections that syntactic components can make with one another in a phrase . Also referred to as complementarity. According to David Crystal, the term "valency" comes from the study of chemistry, where "a given element may have distinct valences in different situations."

The concept of valency offers a representation of a sentence that consists of a basic element—typically the verb—and a number of dependent elements—also known as arguments, expressions, complements, or Valents—whose number and nature are governed by the valency given to the verb.

In addition to the quantity of Valents a verb must have in order to make a complete sentence, valent deals with the many types of sets of valent that may be used.

Basically, this research paper is devided into four sections and each section shows the significance role of verb valency in Syntax. The study focuses also on the difinition of verb valency and its types as it explains verb valency arguments.

Throughout this paper the readers also get to know about verb valency patterns and valence decreasing and increasing.

***1.1 Various Definitions of Verb Valency***

Many Semanticists define valency in different ways. For example, Herbst (1988: 265-301) states that Valency is a kind of ability that words need to form certain patterns with other sentence components.

The founder of valence theory, Lucien Tennière, defined valence in his masterpiece, Structural Theory of Syntax, and developed a series of grammatical theories based on this. Tesnière's definition of valence is considered central to modern valence theory. Since then, valence theory has been widely applied to grammatical approaches.

There are also Helbig and Schenkel who talked about verb valency.

Helbig and Schenkel (1978) argued that valence indicates an abstract relationship between a verb and other elements governed by it. They held the view that syntactic valency refers to the ability of a verb to open a certain number of slots around it and look for other elements to fill it.

Heringer's (1993a) view of valence was those verb characteristics were based on certain kinds of complement assumptions or requirements.

Fischer (1997) considered Valency as the ability of linguistic units to form larger sentences with certain sentence elements.

Hua (2004) regarded valence was thought to be the verb's ability to open up a series of spaces that could be filled with complements to find balance in a sentence. In my opinion, I compeletely agree that valency plays a crucial patrt in finding out how many arguments are their in a sentence in order to differentiate about valency and transitivity.

***1.2 Types of Verb Valency***

***1.2.1 Transitive***

A verb that indicates an action to be taken and is followed by an incomprehensible object is known as a transitive verb. Passive sentences frequently contain transitive verbs. In this case, the sentence structure is (subject + verb + direct or indirect object).

**Example:**

1- “I stopped the car”.

The verb "stopped" in the previous sentence is followed by an object "the car". Without the object, the statement would have been lacking in meaning.

***1.2.2 Intransitive***

Verbs that describe an action that is carried out but is not followed by an object are known as intransitive verbs. Without it, the statement makes sense. Intransitive verb sentences are not particularly complex. Intransitive verbs have the sentence pattern (subject + verb + word or phrase).

**Example:**

2- “The car stopped.”

There is no object associated with the verb "stopped" in this sentence. Without needing an object, the sentence is clear and conveys the intended meaning.

***1.2.3 Let's try to understand the distinction between a transitive verb and an intransitive verb by examining the following table.***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Transitive Verbs** | **Intransitive Verbs** |
| Require an object to make complete sense of the action being referred to. | Does not require an object to complete the sentence or make sense of the action being referred to. |
| Transitive verbs occur in sentences that follow the SVO, SVIODO, SVOC, SVOA, ASVO patterns. | Intransitive verbs usually occur in sentences with the pattern ASVC, SV, SVC, ASVA and so on. |
| A sentence that uses a transitive verb can be changed into a passive voice. | A sentence that makes use of an intransitive verb cannot be altered to form the passive voice. |
| Transitive verbs are followed by an indirect object or a direct object. | Intransitive verbs are followed by either an adjunct or a complement. |

**Section Two**

**Verb valency arguments**

In linguistics, the term "argument" has a different connotation than it does in everyday speech. An argument is a phrase or syntactic element in a sentence that contributes to the meaning of a verb when it comes to grammar and writing. It extends what the verb expresses, in other words, and is not a contentious term because it is widely used.

Verbs in English often need one to three arguments. The valence of a verb is determined by how many arguments it demands. Sets can have optional components known as suffixes in addition to predicates and their arguments.

There are three types of arguments, according to Van Valin and LaPolla (1997) and Van Valin (2005): direct, indirect, and conjunctional argument.

***2.1 Argument types***

a. Direct arguments

b. Oblique core arguments

c. Argument-adjunct

An argument that is not marked morphologically or introduced by a preposition is known as a direct argument. On the other hand, in English, oblique core arguments are characterized by non-predicative prepositions, but they can also occur in core without prepositions. Argument addition is characterized by predicate prepositions, and it cannot take place without this in the core. They stand out from oblique core arguments, which can appear to be direct arguments against the core, in this regard.

Prepositions appear to be the same as prepositional particles at first glance, but they differ from prepositional particles in that they either share an argument with the main predicate or contribute to the verb's logical structure. In addition, argument appendages differ from distorted core arguments in that, unlike distorted arguments, their prepositions are predicative. This indicates that the verb's logical structure does not determine the argument's meaning when an argument auxiliary proposition is used.

***2.2 Valency patterns***

The simultaneous selection of one or more complements in conjunction with a verb acting as a valence carrier is known as a valency pattern. As a result, it is a strictly formal unit that ought to be distinguished from mixed categories like structure, which are thought of as pairings of form and meaning. A valence bearer is an other-complement containing element whose form is determined by the verb because the verb has a valence and the realization of that valence is dependent on the verb's valence. Even though they might have some effect on the choice of the pattern, adverbs that are not required by the verb or determined by its form do not belong to the pattern. In Engel's (1977) and Engel and Schumacher's (1976) Kleines Valenzlexikon deutscher Verben, as well as in the form of so-called sentence construction schemes for the provided patterns, the concept of patterns is also presented. used to learn about dictionaries like the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary , which is the seventh edition. In addition, patterns are becoming increasingly important in current valence approaches (for instance, Herbst and Schuller 2008, Fall 2009). Projects like the Erlangen valence pattern bank (cf.) also demonstrate this. 1.1).

The sentence's other components are determined by the sentence's main verb. The verb valence pattern is the pattern of sentence elements. The mandatory component of the sentence that comes after the verb in the sentence is the pattern. such as subject-predicate, direct object, and indirect object). A subject is included in every valence pattern, and optional adverbs can always be added.

***2.2.1 There are five major valency patterns:***

***2.2.1.1 Intransitive***

Pattern: subject + verb (S + V). Intransitive verbs occur with no obligatory element following the verb.

**Example:**

3- He sleeps.

S. V.

***2.2.1.2 Transitive***

Pattern: subject + verb + direct object (S + V + DO). Monotransitive verbs occur with a single direct object.

**Example:**

4- I received a letter.

S. V. DO.

***2.2.1.3 Ditransitive***

Pattern: subject + verb + indirect object + direct object (S + V + IO + DO). Ditransitive verbs occur with two object phrases--an indirect object and a direct object.

**Example:**

5- Chris gave Tracy his last piece of chweing gum.

S. V. IO. DO.

***2.2.1.4 Complex transitive***

Patterns: subject + verb + direct object + object predicative (S + V + DO + OP) or subject + verb + direct object + obligatory adverbial (S + V + DO + A). Complex transitive verbs occur with a direct object (a noun phrase) which is followed by either (1) an object predicative (a noun phrase or adjective), or (2) an obligatory adverbial.

**Example:**

6- They painted their house purple.

S. V. DO. OP.

7- He put his hand on the child's shoulder.

S. V. DO. OA.

***2.2.1.5 Copular***

Patterns: subject + verb + subject predicative (S + V + SP) or subject + verb + obligatory adverbial (S + V + A).

Copular verbs are followed by (1) a subject predicative (a noun, adjective, adverb, or prepositional phrase) or (2) by an obligatory adverbial."

**Example:**

8- Hana seems very happy.

S. V. SP.

9- I 'Il keep in touch with you.

S. V. OA.

**Section Three**

**Changing valency**

Most languages have some verbal derivations that affect predicate arguments.Typically, they may reduce or increase the number of core arguments; altern-atively, the number of core arguments may be retained but their semanticroles altered.Passive and antipassive prototypically apply to transitive verbs and derive intransitives, with the original O becoming S in a passive and A becoming S in an antipassive. Causative and applicative prototypically apply to intransit-ive verbs and derive transitives, with S becoming O in a causative and A in an applicative.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Prototypically**  **applying to** | **(a)**  **argument ressignment** | **(b)**  **argument ressignment** |
| **(i)** Transitive | O becomes S, passive | A becomes S, antipassive |
| **(ii)** Intransitive | S becomes O, causative | S becomes A, applicative |

***3.1.1 Valency reduction***

There are several valency-reducing derivation types, each of which will be covered in turn: (1) Passive and Anticausative; (2) Antipassive; (3) Reflexive and reciprocal . We'll comment on the word "middle" before we wrap up.

***3.1.1.1 Passive***

We work in terms of the following criteria for a prototypical passive.

(a) Passive is used to create a derived intransitive from an underlying transitive sentence.

(b) The passive's underlying O changes to S.

(c) The fundamental A non-core case, adposition, or other marking indicates that an argument serves a peripheral function; this argument can be omitted, albeit the inclusion of it is always an option.

(d) A passive construction is explicitly marked formally, usually by a verbal affix or a periphrastic verbal construction.

There are some languages that have a derivation that meets the criteria (a), (b), and (d), but the underlying A must be left out (although it is understood that there was an underlying A argument, i.e., there was some agent who affected the patient). An "agentless passive" is this. Several languages have a valency-reducing derivation where the derived verb's S matches to the underlying O and where the underlying A is not indicated or implied by any markers. This is frequently referred to as an "ant causative" because it is essentially the opposite of a causative. Assuming that "S: O" means that "Sof the derived intransitive corresponds to O of the underlying transitive," the following three scenarios can be summed up:

**Example:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| (i) Protypical  Passive | S : O original A becomes a peripheral argument and may either be included or omitted | ‘the glass was fallen  (by John)’ |
| (ii) Agentless  Passive | S : O original A not stated (but understood to be in underlying structure | ‘the glass was fallen’  (implied: by someone) |
| (iii) Anticausative | no A stated or implied | ‘the glass fell’ |

***3.1.1.2 Antipassive***

Syntactically, ant passive is similar to passive, except O and A are switched. That is, the following characteristics of a prototype ant passive:

(a) The antipassive forms a derived intransitive and applies to a clause with a transitive underlying.

b) The antipassive's S is the underlying A.

c) A non-core case, adposition, or other mark indicates that the underlying O argument enters a peripheral function; This argument doesn't have to be included, but it can be left out.

(d) An antipassive construction bears some explicit formal marking (similar basic possibilities to those of a passive construction). There may be a patientless antipassive with no stated underlying O that corresponds to an agentless passive.

It's possible that the syntactic iconicity of passive and antipassive is misleading. They make very unique semantic impacts, as a matter of fact. An antipassive construction downgrades the original O argument and focuses on the underlying A argument—that the referent is participating in an activity that involves a patient (the underlying O argument) without giving much thought to the identity of the patient. As a result, while antipassive focuses on the activity itself (i.e., the agent performing the activity), passive typically focuses on the resulting state (i.e., the effect that the agent has had on the patient).

We should now investigate whether the aforementioned passives and anticausative possibilities (i–iii) all have correspondents where S: A. These would apply to the basic transitive clause "Lara [A] ate the apple [O]":

**Example:**

(i′) The typical S: A peripheral "Lara [S] ate (the antipassive argument and may either be apple [peripheral])" that is included or omitted from an original O.

(ii′) S without patients: A not stated original O, but the antipassive "Lara [S] ate" is known to be present (implied: something) or the fundamental structure).

(iii′) [Senior Correspondent:] "Lara [S] ate" was stated or implied by a no O.

***3.1.1.3 Reﬂexive/reciprocal***

With transitive verbs, there are two fundamental ways to express reflexive and reciprocal across languages. The first is to use a reflexive or reciprocal pronoun in the O slot to keep the transitive structure. In both accusative and ergative languages, it appears that the O slot, rather than the A slot, is where reflexive and reciprocal pronouns go.) Utilizing a verbal derivational suffix, from which an intransitive stem with reflexive or reciprocal meaning is derived, is the other approach. The coreferential A and O for a reflexive (S =A=O) and the set of participants for a reciprocal are indicated by the S of this derived verb.

In current linguistics, the term "middle" is used in a bewildering variety of contexts. Greek's "middle voice," which means "that the "action" or "state" affects the subject of the verb or his interests," was used in the traditional sense (Lyons 1968: 373). Since Keyser and Roeper (1984), linguists with various formalist predilections have used the term "middle" in a completely different sense to describe constructions in English and other languages in which a non-subject argument is moved into the subject position when an appropriate adverb is present, such as "Bureaucrats bribe easily."

***3.1.2 Valency Increasing***

This requires bringing an argument closer to the heart of the matter. The most typical devices for increasing valency are the applicative and the causal.

***3.1.2.1 Causative***

One more argument is typically present in the caused predicate than in the causal predicate. Therefore, the causative is transitive if the event that was caused is intransitive. The causative is ditransitive when the caused event is transitive.

**Example:**

10- I wish my dad would let me go to the party.

***3.1.2.1.1 The characteristics of a prototypical causative are:***

(a) A derived transitive is formed when the causal applies to an underlying intransitive clause.

b) In the causative, the argument in the underlying S function (the causee) enters the O function.

c) In A function, a brand-new argument—the causer—is introduced.

(d) The causative construction is explicitly formalized in some way.

We can observe two significant characteristics of causatives here for comparison with applications. The first is that intransitive verbs always form transitive if a language has a causative derivation. A transitive will also be subject to a causative derivation in some languages, but not all. The fact that the new argument—the causer—cannot typically be included in the underlying intransitive is the second characteristic.

***3.1.2.2 Applicative***

A valency-increasing operation is an applicative derivation. In the canonical case, it adds an object argument that is semantically a Goal.

Depending on whether an applicative derivation applies to an intransitive or transitive clause, there are two typical schemas.

***EITHER***

(a) A derived transitive is formed by applying the applicative to an underlying intransitive clause.

b) The application's A function receives the argument from the underlying S function.

c) The O function incorporates a peripheral argument that could be explicitly stated in the underlying intransitive.

(d) An applicative construction is marked explicitly, typically with an affix or other morphological process that applies to the verb.

**Example:**

11- Horst loads hay on the trolley.

***OR***

(a) Applicative applies to an underlying transitive clause and maintains transitivity; however, the O function is filled by an argument with a distinct semantic role.

(b) The fundamental A argument remains unchanged.

c) In an O function, a peripheral argument that could be explicitly stated in the under-lying intransitive is incorporated into the core.

(d) The argument that was in the O function is moved out of the core of the clause and into the periphery (where it can be omitted).

e) An applicative construction is marked explicitly, typically with an affix or other morphological process that applies to the verb.

A "dative applicative," is identified by the prefix im-; The argument that enters the O function can be, among other things, a benefactive (such as X in "she is singing for X" or "he is making a doll for X"), a calefactive (such as "she is cheating on X"), or a source (such as "she is running from X") (Aikhenvald & Dixon, 2010).

Example:

12- She is cheating on her boyfriend.

**Conclusion**

In this paper the researcher has tried to offer some proper definition of the criteria that determine the notion of syntactic valence. Moreover, verb valency is an essential aspect of English grammar that plays a critical role in sentence structure and meaning. It refers to the number and type of complements that a verb can take, and these complements are necessary for a sentence to convey its intended meaning.The study describes the types of verb valency and how to use transitive and intransitive verbs giving examples. In addition, the research explains significant points about verb vanlency arguments as it gives information about the five major valency patterns. Finally, the study reaches the explanation of Valency changing which includes the reduction and increasing syntactic valency.

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