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FOREWORD

Keywords of English Grammar is a comprehensive dictionary of grammar, a resource which will engage the attention of university students and English teachers, examiners, syllabus designers and material writers. It is a guide to the grammar and usage of English for the advanced learners who are aware of the advantage of having a knowledge of grammar, of the capacity of analysing the meaning of language and of the ability of expressing thoughts clearly. It offers a descriptive approach to English grammar, based on the principles of systemic-functional grammar, cognitive linguistics and discourse analysis.

Keywords of English Grammar assumes some knowledge and practical ability of handling the language and seeks to help the user further the knowledge of English grammar through exploration and analysis, explicate the relation between form, meaning and use in context and shape an integrated vision of English and grammar. It attempts to solve the problem of the heterogeneity of grammatical terminology by largely avoiding theoretical and technical explanations and establishing correspondences between the traditional terminology and the jargons of various more recent theoretical approaches.

It describes the main patterns and function words of English and establishes connections between lexis, structures and functions. Lexis and grammar are seen as closely related, which makes this dictionary of grammar a halfway house between a grammar which does not ignore the meanings of words and patterns, and a dictionary which gives grammatical information.

When using a grammar book, it may be difficult to find the information needed. The arrangement of this dictionary of grammar supports the user by several systems of access. The meaning of the most important grammatical terms can be found in separate entries. To enable a facile search, the entries are organised in alphabetical order according to headwords. There are four kinds of entries:

- entries on words such as: *a/an, be, if, inside, should, when*, etc., and entries about parts of words such as *-re* or *-wise*;
- entries on grammatical terms, such as: “adjunct”, “determiner”, “subjunctive”, “voice”, etc.;
- entries on functions such as: “apologising”, “politeness”, “thanking”, etc.
- entries on aspects of the language used in speaking or writing, such as: “formal and informal language”, “names”, “punctuation”, “spelling”, etc.

The grammatical terms, the functions and the entries on language use have their headwords in uppercase, the words and parts of words have their headwords in lower case.

Most entries are organised along the dimensions of form, structure and uses. The long entries are divided into sections marked by subtitles and solid and white bullet points. Square brackets in the text enclose explanations. Comparisons of British and American English are made where the grammatical point in question is being discussed, and are signalled as *Br. E.* or *Am. E.*

Most entries have final cross-references which lead to alternatives or to entries which contain more information about the behaviour or the meaning of the respective word or pattern.

The language samples that exemplify the grammatical descriptions are instances of good usage, illustrative of present-day English. They have been taken from corpora of contemporary English via the search engines *sentenestack* and *omnilexica*. They are usually given with no editing at all, and, therefore, not only sound realistic but are realistic and have the features of natural examples. Many widely used non-standard forms are also included. The language samples are sometimes accompanied by notes on styles.

The pronunciation of some words, given between slant lines, is taken from *Cambridge English Dictionary* (online).

The entries are followed by a LIST OF IRREGULAR VERBS and an INDEX OF TERMS AND LEXICAL ITEMS WHICH ARE NOT HEADWORDS. The latter consists of a list of terms or words that are explained in other entries and a list of the entries where these terms or words can be found.

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The language samples have been provided by the linguistic search engines *sentencestack* and *omnilexica*.

The pronunciation transcriptions have been taken from *Cambridge English Dictionary* (online).

MAIN CLAUSE

A main clause is characterised by the presence of a lexical verb and at least one subordinate clause. The central parts of the main clause are the subject, the verb, and, depending on the verb, one or two objects, a predicative complement, or a mandatory adverbial. Optionally, there may be adjuncts and modifiers. Some of these parts can be filled by a subordinate clause:

That the virus took him so quickly¹/ shocked us²/. [(1) subject clause, (2) main clause]

John said¹/ that their story was a work of fiction²/. [(2), DO clause, (1) main clause]

I'll leave it¹/ to those who do understand²/. [(2), IO clause, (1) main clause]

As the sea climbed¹/, it wiped away the sand castles²/. [(1) adverbial clause, (2) main clause]

The workers¹/, who live in the suburbs²/, often complain about transportation¹/. [(1) main clause, (2) relative clause]

She sat down¹/ to make a start²/. [(1) main clause, (2) adverbial clause]

Main clauses can be declarative, interrogative or imperative:

What did you mean¹/ when you said that?² [(1) main clause, (2) adverbial clause]

Stand up for the issues¹/ you care about²/. [(1) main clause, (2) relative clause]

Some sentences may have more than one main clause. The coordinating conjunctions *and*, *or* and *but* may be used to join main clauses:

She went to the kitchen¹/ and / made some tea²/ for those who were late³/. [(1) main clause, (2) main clause, (3) IO clause to (2)]

A subordinate clause is dependent on the main clause, i.e., it needs to be accompanied by the main clause in order to make sense.

See: **CLAUSE, EMBEDDED CLAUSE, MATRIX, SUBORDINATE CLAUSE, SUBORDINATION, SUPERORDINATE CLAUSE**

MAIN VERB

The term “main” verb often replaces that of “lexical” verb. “Main” verb does not mean “verb in a main clause”, as both main and subordinate clauses contain a main verb. Actually, every clause, with the exception of the verbless ones, has a main verb. A main verb follows any other verbs in the verb phrase (i.e., the auxiliary or auxiliaries), and carries most of the meaning.

Main verbs can be joined by conjunctions:

I looked but saw nothing at all.

I was singing and playing guitar and drums.

I hope to read and to learn more from Vigilant.

Main verbs may have finite or non-finite (infinitive or participial) forms:

I understand that you are upset. [*understand, are* – finite main verbs]

He was waiting for us to say something. [*waiting*, finite main verb in the -ing participle form]

Caesar was assassinated in the Forum. [*assassinated*, main verb in the -ed/ -en participle form in a finite passive verb phrase]

I want you to retract your absurd accusation. [*to retract*, main verb in the to- infinitive]

Main verbs contrast with the auxiliary verbs. There are, however, borderline cases, when it is not easy to tell a main verb from an auxiliary one:

I'm going to stay here for a week.

The child is going to be handsome when he grows up.

I'm coming to think that he is not a good arbiter of neutrality here.

Despite diverse histories, universities came to look even more like one another.

In these examples, the verbs *go* and *come* do not have their normal motion meaning. *Go*, in *be going to* has taken over a future meaning, while *come* indicates the beginning of an action or state of affairs.

Furthermore, in some informal constructions, *go* and *come* have their normal motion meaning, but appear in the same clause as another verb, the result being one clause with two main verbs, which goes against the usual understanding of the term “main” verb. The two verbs can have only uninflected forms, imperative or infinitive, with no agreement or tense markers:

Go tell the boys we'll be right out.

I think I'll go get my cup of coffee over here.

We want people to come sit on the porch and have a drink.

She asks if he can come see her.

NOTE

- The verbs *be*, *have* and *do* (the primary verbs) can be either main or auxiliary verbs.

See: **LEXICAL VERB, REGULAR VERB, IRREGULAR VERB, PRIMARY VERB, VERBLESS CLAUSE**

make

Make is an irregular verb, with the form *made* for both the past tense and the -ed/ -en participle. It has a range of meanings, from “create”, “construct”, to “prepare”, “produce” and “force to”. *Make* introduces several constructions:

○ *make* + direct object NP (or *for* + oblique object NP). *Make* is used in this construction to suggest the construction or production of objects or substances, including drinks and meals:

Grandma used to make all her clothes.

He made his own breakfast.

I shall have a draft made for you by next week.

The secretary will make an appointment for you.

Make is commonly used transitively with an object noun phrase to suggest that a particular action is performed: e.g., *They have made a promise.*

Nouns commonly used with *make* to suggest an action are: *appeal, apology, appointment, arrangement, assumption, attempt, bed, breakfast, cake, (phone) call, change, choice, claim, charge, coffee, comment, complaint, concession, confession, contribution, date, decision, difference, dinner, effort, enquiry, error, excuse, friends, fuss, guess, impression, journey, law, list, loss, love, lunch, mess, mistake, money, noise, note, offer, plan, point, profit, progress, promise, protest, recovery, remark, signal, sound, soup, speech, start, statement, success, suggestion, tea tour, trip, visit, wish.* Most of these nouns have a related verb, e.g., *to make an appeal vs to appeal, to make a decision vs to decide, etc.*

○ *make* + direct object NP + adjective (object predicative complement). *Make* has a result meaning when it introduces an adjective complement, e.g., *Exercising makes me thirsty.*

○ *make* + direct object NP + NP (object predicative complement). In this use, *make* can be a factitive verb of appointment:

They made him team leader for the coming training session.

The king made her his courtesan.

○ *make* + NP (subject predicative complement). *Make* can be used instead of *be* with jobs or roles, e.g., *He'll make a good husband.*

○ *make* + indirect object NP + direct object NP, e.g., *Can I make you tea or coffee?*

○ *make* + direct object + adjective/ NP (object predicative complement) + *for* prepositional phrase (OO), as in: *You're making it difficult for both of us.*

○ *make* + direct object + V (bare infinitive). *Make* can suggest causing or forcing someone to do something. In the active voice, causative *make* is followed by a bare infinitive, and in the passive voice by a *to*-infinitive:

They made me work an extra weekend.

I was made to smoke outside the building.

make, do, create

Each of these verbs tends to collocate with certain noun objects and may cause difficulties with several meanings.

Both *make* and *do* can collocate with object noun phrases. While *make* emphasises the result or end product, *do* emphasises the performance of the activity, e.g., *make a tour vs do a tour, make a salad vs do a salad.*

I did some calculations for the project before I realised they had made a serious mistake.