

Select The Linking Verb And The Predicate Noun Or Predicate Adjective.

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Understanding how to identify and select the correct linking verb along with the predicate noun or predicate adjective is fundamental to mastering English grammar. These components are essential in constructing clear and meaningful sentences, as they connect the subject with additional information about it. Whether you're a student, a teacher, or someone looking to improve your writing skills, knowing how to recognize and choose the right linking verb and predicate elements will enhance your sentence construction and overall communication.

In this comprehensive guide, we will explore what linking verbs are, how to identify them, and how they work with predicate nouns and predicate adjectives to form complete thoughts. We will also discuss common pitfalls, provide practical examples, and offer tips for mastering this aspect of grammar.

What Is a Linking Verb?

Definition of a Linking Verb

A linking verb is a type of verb that connects the subject of a sentence to a subject complement, which can be either a predicate noun or a predicate adjective. Unlike action verbs, which describe what the subject does, linking verbs serve as a bridge that links the subject to additional information about it.

For example, in the sentence "The sky is blue," the verb "is" connects the subject "sky" to the predicate adjective "blue," describing its state or condition.

Common Linking Verbs

Most linking verbs are forms of the verb "to be," but some other verbs can also function as linking verbs depending on their use in a sentence. Here is a list of common linking verbs:

- am
- is

- are
- was
- were
- be
- been
- being
- seems
- becomes
- appears
- looks
- feels
- smells
- tastes
- sounds

It's important to note that some of these verbs can also serve as action verbs depending on context. For example, "She looks happy" uses "looks" as a linking verb, but "She looks at the painting" uses "looks" as an action verb.

Understanding Predicate Nouns and Predicate Adjectives

What Is a Predicate Noun?

A predicate noun (also called a predicate nominative) follows a linking verb and renames or identifies the subject. It provides additional information about the subject by stating what it is or who it is.

Example:

- The winner is Alice.

Here, "Alice" is the predicate noun, renaming the subject "winner."

What Is a Predicate Adjective?

A predicate adjective follows a linking verb and describes the subject by giving more detail about its qualities or state.

Example:

- The flowers look beautiful.

In this sentence, "beautiful" is the predicate adjective describing "flowers."

How to Select the Correct Linking Verb

Matching the Verb to the Subject

When choosing a linking verb, consider the subject's number and person:

- Singular subjects typically take singular forms of the verb "to be" (e.g., is, was).
- Plural subjects take plural forms (e.g., are, were).
- For compound subjects, use a plural verb.

Examples:

- The cat is sleepy.

- The students are excited.

- The cake was delicious.

Using Verbs That Function as Linking Verbs

Some verbs like "seems," "becomes," "looks," "feels," etc., are used as linking verbs when they connect the subject to a predicate adjective or noun.

Examples:

- She seems happy.
- The night became cold.
- The soup tastes spicy.

Choosing Between Predicate Noun and Predicate Adjective

Deciding When to Use a Predicate Noun

Use a predicate noun when the sentence aims to rename or identify the subject. It is a noun or pronoun that provides a specific identity.

Guidelines:

- The predicate noun is often a noun or pronoun.
- It follows a linking verb and renames the subject.

Examples:

- My brother is a doctor.
- The capital of France is Paris.
- The winner was she.

Deciding When to Use a Predicate Adjective

Use a predicate adjective when the sentence describes the subject's qualities or state.

Guidelines:

- The predicate adjective is an adjective or adjective phrase.
- It follows the linking verb and describes the subject.

Examples:

- The stars look bright tonight.
- The cookies smell delicious.
- The children are tired.

Practical Tips for Correctly Selecting Linking Verbs and Predicate Elements

Test Sentences with "Is" or "Are"

A useful trick is to replace the verb with "is" or "are" and see if the sentence still makes sense.

Example:

- The sky is blue. (Predicate adjective)
- The teacher is a mentor. (Predicate noun)

Identify the Subject First

Always determine the subject before choosing the linking verb. Once identified, select the correct verb form based on the subject's number and person.

Check the Meaning

Ensure the predicate noun or adjective accurately reflects the intended description or identification.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Using action verbs instead of linking verbs, e.g., "She feels happy" (correct), versus "She runs happy" (incorrect).
- Misidentifying predicate nouns versus predicate adjectives.

- Choosing the wrong verb form that does not agree with the subject.
- Overlooking the context where certain verbs can serve as action or linking verbs.

Practice Exercises

To master selecting the correct linking verb and predicate element, try these exercises:

1. Identify the linking verb, predicate noun, or predicate adjective in the following sentence: "The dessert smells wonderful."
2. Choose the correct linking verb: "The children (is/are) playing outside."
3. Determine whether to use a predicate noun or predicate adjective: "The president was (a leader / confident)."
4. Rewrite the sentence with an appropriate linking verb and predicate element: "The flowers look."

Answers:

1. Linking verb: smells; predicate adjective: wonderful
2. "are" (plural subject)
3. Predicate noun: a leader
4. The flowers look beautiful.

Conclusion

Mastering the skill of selecting the correct linking verb along with the predicate noun or predicate adjective is vital for constructing clear, precise sentences. By understanding the functions of linking verbs, recognizing when to use predicate nouns or adjectives, and applying the outlined tips, you can significantly improve your grammar proficiency. Practice regularly with varied sentences, and you'll develop an intuitive sense for choosing the right combinations to effectively communicate your ideas.

Remember, the key is to identify the subject first, determine its number, and then select the appropriate linking verb. From there, decide whether the predicate should be a noun or an adjective based on what

you want to convey about the subject. With time and practice, selecting the correct linking verb and predicate element will become second nature, elevating the quality of your writing and speaking skills.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a linking verb and how do you identify it in a sentence?

A linking verb connects the subject to a subject complement and does not show action. Common linking verbs include forms of 'to be' (am, is, are, was, were) and sometimes sensory or state-of-being verbs like 'look', 'feel', 'seem'. You identify it by checking if the verb links the subject to a noun or adjective that describes or renames it.

How can you distinguish between a predicate noun and a predicate adjective in a sentence?

A predicate noun renames the subject and is a noun or pronoun following the linking verb, while a predicate adjective describes the subject and is an adjective following the linking verb. To distinguish, ask whether the word after the verb renames the subject (predicate noun) or describes it (predicate adjective).

Can you give an example of a sentence with a linking verb and a predicate adjective?

Sure! Example: 'The sky is blue.' Here, 'is' is the linking verb, and 'blue' is the predicate adjective describing 'the sky'.

Can you give an example of a sentence with a linking verb and a predicate noun?

Certainly! Example: 'My brother is a teacher.' In this sentence, 'is' is the linking verb, and 'a teacher' is the predicate noun renaming 'my brother'.

Why is it important to correctly identify the linking verb and predicate complement in a sentence?

Correctly identifying the linking verb and predicate complement helps in understanding the sentence's meaning, ensures proper grammar usage, and improves writing clarity by accurately describing or renaming the subject.

Are all forms of 'to be' considered linking verbs?

Most forms of 'to be' (am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been) are used as linking verbs, but 'to be' can also serve as an auxiliary verb in compound verb forms. When used as a main verb connecting the subject to a complement, it functions as a linking verb.

How do you practice identifying linking verbs and their complements effectively?

Practice by analyzing sentences, identifying the main verb, and checking if it links the subject to a noun or adjective. Use exercises that involve replacing the linking verb with another verb or rephrasing sentences to reinforce understanding. Additionally, diagramming sentences can help visualize the relationships.

Additional Resources

Selecting the Linking Verb and the Predicate Noun or Predicate Adjective

Language is a complex, dynamic system, and understanding its components is essential for clear communication. Among these components, verbs play a central role, serving as the backbone of sentences. While many verbs denote actions, others serve a different purpose—they establish a state of being or condition. These are known as linking verbs. When combined with the predicate noun or predicate adjective, they form essential parts of a sentence's structure that convey identity, description, or classification. Grasping how to correctly identify and select linking verbs and their accompanying predicate nouns or predicate adjectives is fundamental for both learners and proficient writers aiming for grammatical accuracy and effective expression.

Understanding Linking Verbs: Definition and Function

What Is a Linking Verb?

A linking verb is a type of verb that connects the subject of a sentence with a subject complement, which can be a predicate noun or a predicate adjective. Unlike action verbs, which depict physical or mental actions performed by the subject, linking verbs serve as a bridge, establishing a relationship between the subject and additional information about it.

Examples of common linking verbs include:

- Forms of be: am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been
- Sensory verbs used as linking verbs: look, seem, appear, become, feel, smell, taste, sound
- Other linking verbs: remain, stay, turn, prove, grow, stay

Key Point: Linking verbs do not express action but rather state or condition.

The Role of Linking Verbs in Sentences

In a sentence, the linking verb relates the subject to a complement that provides more information about the subject's identity or condition. For example:

- She is a teacher. (Predicate noun: a teacher)
- The sky looks blue today. (Predicate adjective: blue)
- They became tired after the hike. (Predicate adjective: tired)

In each case, the linking verb "links" the subject to additional descriptive or identifying information.

Predicate Nouns and Predicate Adjectives: The Complements

Predicate Noun (Predicate Nominative)

A predicate noun or predicate nominative is a noun or pronoun that follows a linking verb and renames, identifies, or explains the subject. It provides a label or classification for the subject.

Examples:

- My brother is a doctor. (Predicate noun: a doctor)
- The winners were they. (Predicate noun: they)
- The main ingredient is sugar. (Predicate noun: sugar)

Characteristics of Predicate Nouns:

- They are always nouns or pronouns.
- They provide identification or classification.
- They follow linking verbs such as is, are, was, were, become, etc.

Predicate Adjective

A predicate adjective describes the subject of the sentence. It follows a linking verb and provides a characteristic or quality of the subject.

Examples:

- The flowers smell fragrant. (Predicate adjective: fragrant)
- The night grew dark. (Predicate adjective: dark)
- She seems happy. (Predicate adjective: happy)

Characteristics of Predicate Adjectives:

- They are adjectives.
- They describe the subject.
- They follow linking verbs like is, seems, becomes, feel, etc.

How to Select the Correct Linking Verb

Choosing the appropriate linking verb depends on the tense, number, and mood of the sentence, as well as the intended meaning.

1. Recognize the Subject

Understanding whether the subject is singular or plural influences the choice of linking verb:

- Singular subjects typically pair with singular forms: is, was, seems.
- Plural subjects pair with plural forms: are, were, seem.

Example:

- The cake is delicious. (Singular subject: cake)
- The students are eager. (Plural subject: students)

2. Match the Verb to the Tense and Mood

The verb must reflect the correct tense and mood:

- Present tense: is, am, are
- Past tense: was, were
- Future or other forms: adapt accordingly

Example:

- The weather looks promising. (present)
- The results were disappointing. (past)

3. Consider the Meaning and Context

Sometimes, different linking verbs can convey subtle nuances:

- Seem suggests appearance or perception.
- Become indicates a change of state.

Example:

- She seems upset. (appearance)
- He became a leader. (change of role)

Choosing the Correct Predicate Noun or Predicate Adjective

Once the linking verb is selected, the next step is to identify or choose the appropriate predicate noun or predicate adjective that matches the subject's identity or condition.

1. Determining the Predicate Noun

A predicate noun should rename or classify the subject:

- Ensure the noun makes sense in relation to the subject.

- Confirm that it logically fits the context.

Examples:

- The winner is John. (Predicate noun: John)
- The main ingredient is salt. (Predicate noun: salt)

2. Determining the Predicate Adjective

A predicate adjective should describe the subject:

- It must be relevant and accurately reflect the subject's condition or qualities.
- Use adjectives that match the subject's characteristics.

Examples:

- The sky looks blue. (Predicate adjective: blue)
- The children are excited. (Predicate adjective: excited)

3. Ensuring Agreement and Correct Usage

Agreement in number and case is vital:

- For predicate nouns: singular or plural nouns, matching the subject.
- For predicate adjectives: adjectives that correctly describe the subject.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid:

- Using a predicate noun when a predicate adjective is required, or vice versa.
- Choosing a predicate noun that does not align with the subject's identity.
- Selecting an adjective that doesn't logically describe the subject.

Practical Applications and Examples

Analyzing Sentences for Correct Linking Verbs and Complements

Let's examine some sentences to identify the linking verb and the predicate complement:

1. The dog is a loyal friend.

- Linking verb: is
- Predicate noun: a loyal friend

2. The wine tastes delicious.

- Linking verb: tastes
- Predicate adjective: delicious

3. The children became tired after playing.

- Linking verb: became
- Predicate adjective: tired

4. The scientist proved the hypothesis correct.

- Here, "proved" is a causative verb, not a linking verb.
- For a proper linking verb:

The scientist is the expert.

- Linking verb: is
- Predicate noun: the expert

Transforming Sentences with Correct Linking Verb and Complement

- Original: The sky looks blue today.
- Corrected (if needed): The sky is blue today.
- Here, "looks" functions as a linking verb, but using "is" emphasizes a more definitive state.

- Original: She seems happy.
- Alternative: She is happy.
- Both are correct; choice depends on nuance.

Implementing in Writing and Communication

Effective use of linking verbs and their complements enhances clarity and precision in writing. Here are some guidelines:

- Identify the subject clearly to determine the appropriate linking verb.
- Select the correct linking verb based on tense, number, and meaning.
- Choose the proper predicate complement—noun or adjective—that accurately describes or renames the subject.
- Maintain grammatical agreement to avoid confusion.

Practical tips:

- Test the sentence by replacing the predicate with a pronoun or a noun to see if it still makes sense.
- Use substitution with the verb "to be" to verify predicate nouns and adjectives.

Conclusion

Mastering the selection of linking verbs along with predicate nouns or predicate adjectives is fundamental to constructing clear, grammatically correct sentences. Recognizing the function of linking verbs as connectors that establish relationships between the subject and its complement allows writers and learners to craft precise descriptions, classifications, and expressions of state or condition. Whether analyzing existing sentences or constructing new ones, attention to agreement, context, and meaning ensures effective communication. As language continues to evolve, understanding these core grammatical structures remains essential for anyone seeking to communicate with clarity and confidence in both written and spoken forms.

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