

Transitive, Intransitive and Linking Verbs

Depending on the type of subject/complement, verbs may be transitive, intransitive, or linking.

Transitive verbs: the meaning of a transitive verb is completed without a direct object, as in the following examples.

ENCOURAGE

He encouraged me.

CREATE

She created a masterpiece painting.

ENCOURAGE

She encouraged me.

CREATE

She created her own path.

Intransitive verb: the meaning of an intransitive verb cannot be completed.

He travelled worldwide around the world.

The intransitive verb "travel" cannot stand alone, as in the example "He travelled" will not be correct, because it does not have a complement.

* Many verbs can be either transitive or intransitive, depending on their context or the meaning. In the following pairs of sentences, the first sentence uses the verb transitively and the second sentence uses the verb intransitively.

Example:

He travelled to the mountains. (transitive: he used "travel" with a complement "to the mountains")

In the example, the verb "travel" takes a direct object, the noun phrase "to the mountains".

Example:

He travelled to the mountains. (intransitive: he used "travel")

In this example, the verb "travel" does not take a direct object.

Example:

She travelled worldwide around the world. (transitive: she used "travel" with a complement "worldwide around the world")

When the verb "travel" is used as an intransitive verb and does not have a direct object.

Example:

Every spring, Bill travels to his favourite fishing spot. (transitive: he used "travel" with a complement "to his favourite fishing spot")

In the sentence "Every spring, Bill travels to his favourite fishing spot", the verb "travel" is used as an intransitive verb.