



# IIT Madras

## BSc Degree

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## **Basic English**

**Professor Dr. Rajesh Kumar**

**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Indian Institute of Technology, Madras**

### **Direct and Indirect Objects**

Welcome to the class. Today, we are going to look at two things that we always hear about when we want to learn English or for that matter any other language that we are learning afresh as a new thing. These things are direct and indirect objects. We have heard a lot about objects, we have heard about the order of words in a sentence in English, we always say it is subject, verb and object.


We talk about two parts of a sentence; we say the subject is one part and predicate is another part. An object is part of a predicate and in the predicate what is very important is the verb, and it is the verb which determines whether or not it needs an object. So, though an object is also potentially a noun, there is a difference between subjects and objects. Today, we want to discuss a little bit about these things.

Let me add a footnote here. A lot of times, we do not want to pay attention to grammatical details. However, at this time I want you to understand that a little bit attention to grammatical details not for memorizing them, but simply for understanding these crucial details as the details of a sentence is going to be so helpful in learning the language that it will help us add accuracy to our language forever.

Now pause for a moment and think about it who does not want to sound accurate? All of us know that for effective communication accuracy grammaticality, good sentences are important, together they make us sound impressive, they make us sound good in short. Who does not want to sound good, who does not want to look good, who does not want to speak grammatical sentences? And in turn, you can also say nobody wants to make mistakes.


Now how do we come to the point that we do not make mistakes, do we need to memorize things absolutely not because memorizing is not going to make our sentences and therefore our language error-free. It is only our understanding of certain conceptual notations, certain conceptual things that are underlying language is going to help us make our language free from errors. And in that effort, it is important to know about objects. We have talked about a lot of aspects of sentences.

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Things to notice ...

- Sentences end with a full stops.
- All sentences will have subjects and predicates.
- Order of words in a sentence
  - [[Subject] (verb) object adverbs]]
- **Subject and verb in predicate agree with each other.** *Agree/Tense*



I want you to know a few things that is I want you to keep a few things in mind that sentences end with a full stop that we know very well, all sentences have subjects and predicates that is there are two parts of a sentence, and the order of words in a sentence is always a subject, a verb and then an object. So, subject and verbs in the predicate that is subject and predicate agree with each other, and so we need to know about tense, and we need to know about the agreement.

These things sound as big topics, big things, but they are pretty simple notions, pretty simple ideas in sentences and once we pay close attention to them, our sentences are going to be accurate forever. After that, we only need to learn whether or not we need to say something in a context. When we have a chance to speak what should we speak? How we organize them and what we say and what we do not say that is also crucial part, but once we need to speak, we also need to know because we want to be speaking grammatically, accurate grammatically correct sentences for that we need to know some of these details.

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## Subject and Object in Predicates

- John loves Mary.
- I like pizza.
- We like pizza.
- John likes pizza with his friends.
- John and Mary like pizza.



So, look at the subject and object distinction. So, we have 'John' as the subject 'Mary' as the object in a sentence like 'John loves Mary', 'I like pizza', we have 'I' as the subject 'pizza' as an object. 'We like pizza', 'we' is the subject 'pizza' is the object. 'John likes pizza with his friends'. So, 'John' is the subject 'pizza' is the object. What is with his friends, something else we will definitely discuss this as well. 'John and Mary like pizza'. Here, 'John' and 'Mary' together is the subject 'pizza' is the object.

So, this helps you understand the distinction between subject and object and you know that this in the sentence like 'John loves Mary', 'love' is the verb, 'I like pizza', 'like' is the verb, 'John likes pizza', again 'like' is the verb and 'John and Mary like pizza', 'like' is the verb.

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## Verbs and Objects

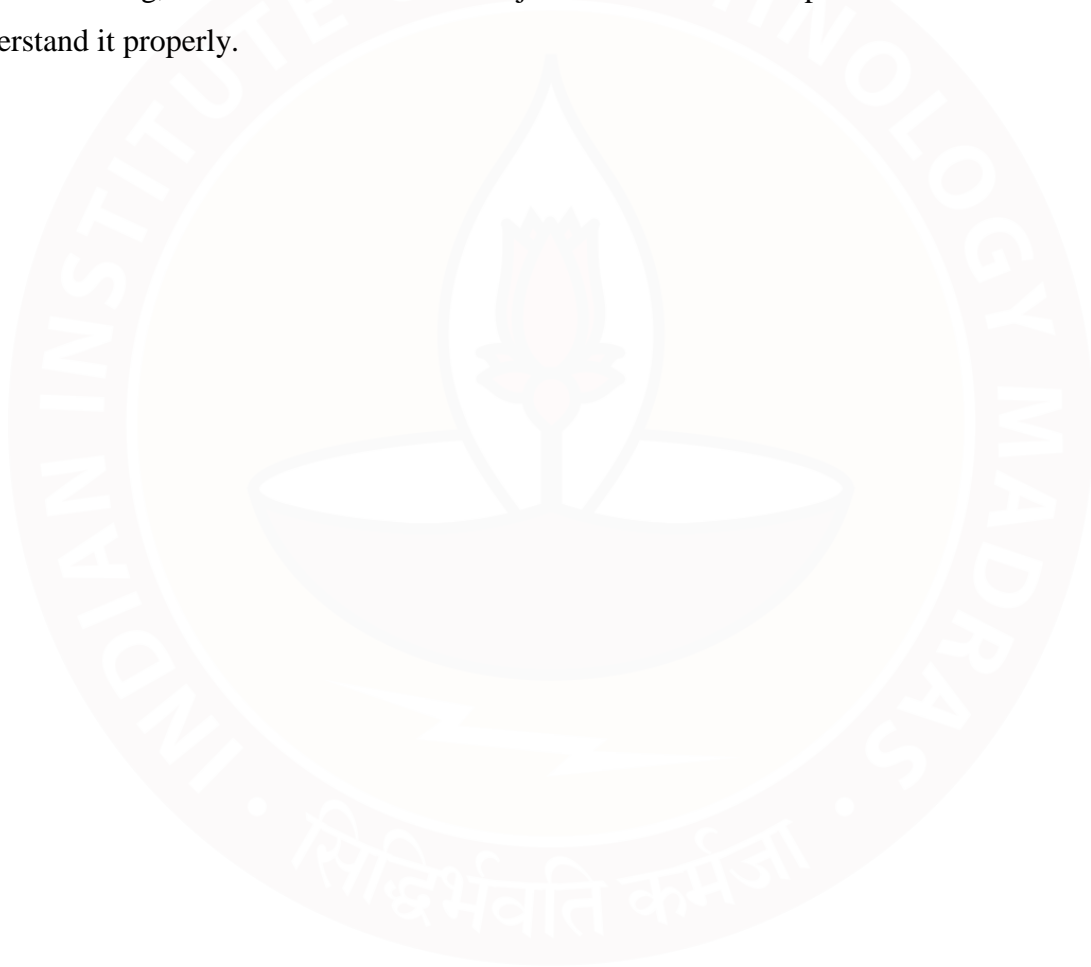
- Some verbs do not have objects.
- Some verbs have one objects.
- Some verbs have two objects.
- Some verbs must have something but they are not objects.

Intensive  
transitive

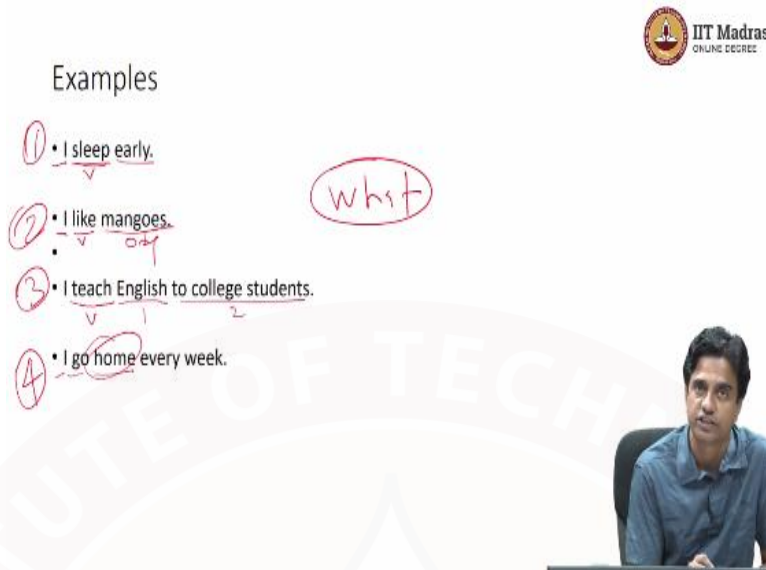


Moving ahead, we would we want to know what is the relationship between a verb and objects. So, as we know, every sentence must have a subject, and every sentence must have a predicate, but every sentence, it is not a requirement for every sentence to have an object. In other words, every verb does not need an object. So, when we pay close attention to a wide range of sentences, we see some verbs do not need an object.

Here, we are talking only about the object. Now we are shifting our attention to only objects because we know that every sentence will need a subject anyway. So, some verbs do not need any objects, some verbs need one object, some verbs need two objects, and some verbs must have something, but there are not like objects. We need to unpack this information and understand it properly.



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Examples

- ① • I sleep early. ✓
- ② • I like mangoes. (whif)
- ③ • I teach English to college students.
- ④ • I go home every week.

So, look at the examples now. We have a sentence like 'I sleep early'. 'I' is the subject, and 'sleep' is the verb. Early tells us about the time when I sleep, but it is not an object like the way we see in the following sentence when I say 'I like mangoes'. So, 'I' is the subject, 'like' is the verb and 'mangoes' are objects. So, how do we know this is an object we are going to talk about that in a minute.

When we say a sentence like 'I teach English to college students'. A verb like 'teach', here verb is 'teach' then you have two things English as one and to college students is two. So, a verb like teach appears like it has two objects in it; it requires two objects. So, look at the next sentence. In the next sentence 'I go home every week'. 'I' is the subject, 'go' is the verb, 'home' is not the object, but we must say something here.

So, we cannot simply say I go. So, 1, 2, 3, 4 these four sentences are examples of these four things that I have told you earlier that some verbs do not need objects. Some verbs need one object, some verb needs two objects, and some verbs need something, but they are not objects. So, basically, we are talking about when there is no object this is called intransitive. No object, intransitive. And when you have one or two objects, they are called transitive that is at right here I need the focus of your attention.

Remember, objects are associated with verbs. So, transitive and intransitive are the natures of a verb. So, if a verb is transitive, it requires objects. If a verb is not transitive, it does not require objects very simple. So, if there is an object in a sentence, then this is a transitive



verb. If there is no object in the sentence, then that is an intransitive verb. So, in these four examples, which is a transitive verb and which is an intransitive verb? This first one and the fourth one are intransitive verbs because they do not need an object. The way two and three needed. So when we say 'I like mango' we can always check I like what? The answer to this question what comes from the word the noun mango. I like what? I like mango.

So, if you have a verb and if you question that verb with only this question what and when you get an answer to this question, then your verb is transitive. So, we can say I like can we question like verb like. Yes, with this question word what we can question I like what and the moment when you decide you can ask a question then that question will need an answer also and whatever is the answer of that question is your object. I like what? I like mangoes.

Can I question sleep with the same question what? Probably not. Can I say I sleep what? This is an example of an intransitive verb if we cannot ask a question than we do not expect an answer, and therefore this is an intransitive verb. So, as I said 1 and 4 are examples of intransitive verbs. Can I ask the same question what with the word go? I go what we cannot. So this is also an intransitive verb, but as I said in a word like go, we must say something I go home.

So, this is something else, but not an object of the verb go. So, a verb like go and sleep do not require an object, a verb like like, eat, teach, read, play these verbs need objects. So, I pause here, and I want you to do a piece of exercise again since we are discussing at the level of the sentence I want you to take 20 sentences, copy 20 sentences from some text. You can copy them from a piece of the book from a newspaper or any other place.

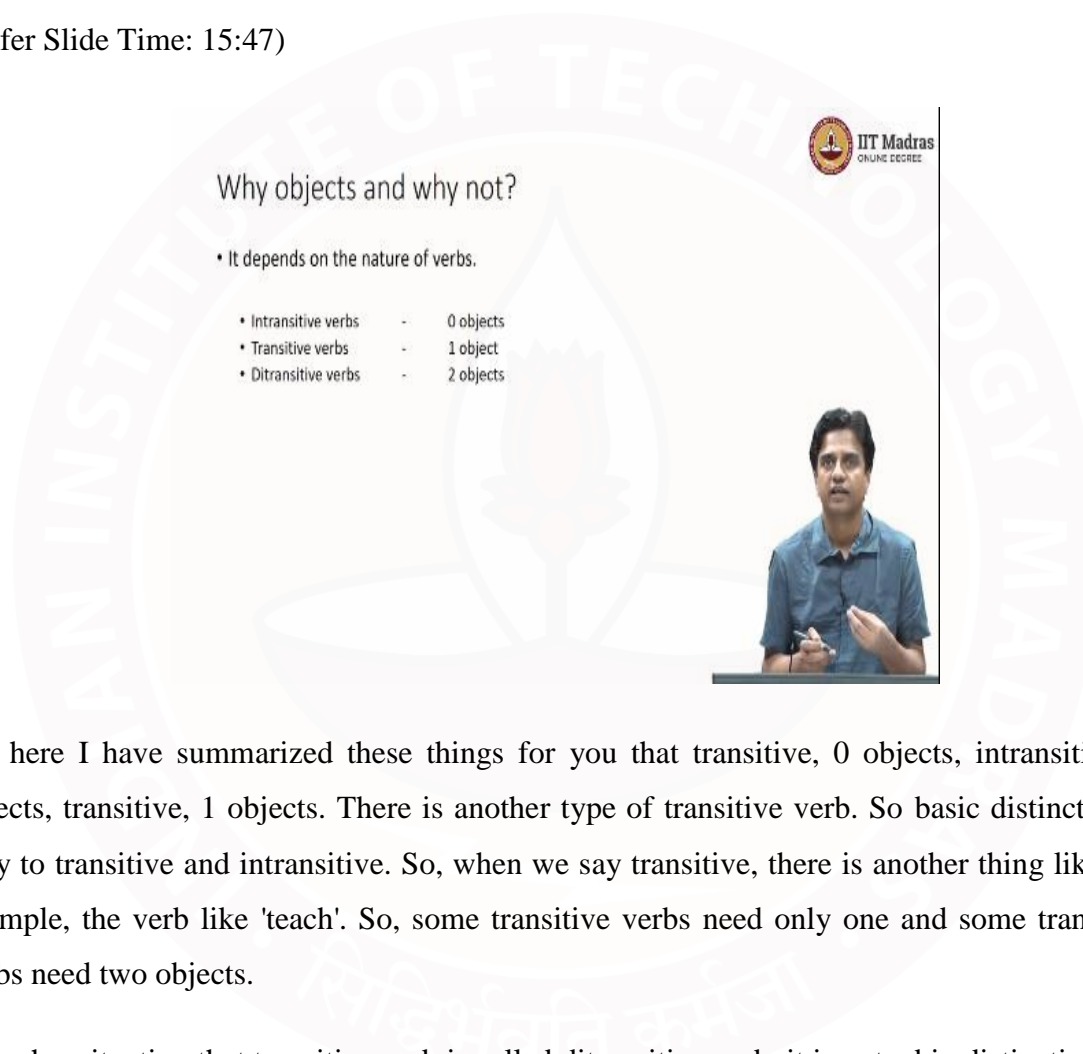
Underline verbs in all the sentences first check whether all sentences have verbs or not. Identify verbs in those 20 sentences and then do this exercise with what. Ask the question "what" for each one of the verb and see how many of them are transitive verbs and how many of them are intransitive verbs. Trust me you will help yourself learn this intricate embedded complexity of English sentence without any effort. It will stay with you forever, and you will never make this kind of mistake hereafter.

So, you identify a transitive verb; you help yourself learn the transitive and intransitive distinction in English. Once you have done this exercise, you have already answered your own question that those which are transitive verbs are also going to have objects then read further and identify objects of those transitive verbs in those 20 sentences for yourself. Like I

have done this with you, I have these four sentences I question each one of them with what I see I cannot question sleep with what, but I can question like with what, I can question teach with what, but I cannot question go with what.

So, sleep is intransitive, like is transitive, teach is transitive, but go is intransitive. So, go does not need an object teach needs an object, like needs an object, sleep does not need an object. This is what helps us understand the transitive and intransitive distinction in English.

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Why objects and why not?

- It depends on the nature of verbs.

• Intransitive verbs	-	0 objects
• Transitive verbs	-	1 object
• Ditransitive verbs	-	2 objects

So, here I have summarized these things for you that transitive, 0 objects, intransitive, 0 objects, transitive, 1 objects. There is another type of transitive verb. So basic distinction is only to transitive and intransitive. So, when we say transitive, there is another thing like, for example, the verb like 'teach'. So, some transitive verbs need only one and some transitive verbs need two objects.

In such a situation that transitive verb is called ditransitive verb, it is not a big distinction. So, the basic distinction is transitive, intransitive, but within transitive, we can say one or more objects. So, the one which requires one object is simply transitive, and the one which requires two objects is called a ditransitive verb. For example 'like' is a transitive verb and 'teach' is a ditransitive verb. It has only one object like has only object, teach has two objects.



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When we have two objects ...

- 1<sup>st</sup> is called Direct Object (DO)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> is called Indirect Object (IO)

- I gave my a book.
  - I gave a book to my friend. (IO)
  - I teach English.
  - I teach English to college students.
- DO      IO



Now when you have two objects the first one that is the object which answers the question what is called a direct object and the second one is the one that you are left with is called indirect object. So, let me explain this to you with examples of a few verbs. So, I say, 'I gave my book'; it sounds like an incomplete sentence. So, you need to say I gave a book to my friend. So, a book is one object and to my friend is another object. So, which one of the two answers the question what, I gave what. The one that answers this question what is a book. Therefore, a book is a direct object and to my friend is an indirect object.

Similarly, when I say I teach English, it sounds a little incomplete. We need to say I teach English to college students. In other words, we need to say teach whom and what. Teach what and whom. So, again what is direct object and to whom is the indirect object. So, if you do this exercise that I have asked you to do take. Take examples of 20 verbs, 20 sentences, identify verbs in them and identify which one is a transitive verb, which one is an intransitive verb and then further once you have decided about the transitive and intransitive check their objects.

If you do this simple exercise twice, you have internalized for yourself. You have helped yourself with 4 very tricky and complex looking things that appears very complex, it becomes very simple for you, it becomes a piece of cake for you, it becomes so easy and you observe once this becomes easy for you then all difficulties related to this will go away from

your language and based on that when we started speaking based on that when you read something you always pay attention to these things.

If even though you do not want your attention will go to these things and in a totality fashion they start yielding result in terms of accuracy of your language and as you always know forever that such accuracy makes your language impressive. So, please pay attention to this and what you will end up learning is the distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs and direct and indirect objects. Thank you.

