

known more about some of the guests, the White House might have reconsidered inviting them. (NEWS)

## Grammar Bite F

### Copular verbs

#### Exercise 10: Identifying copular valency patterns

Many copular verbs can also be used with other valency patterns.

- Focus on the underlined main verbs in the sentences below.
- Identify the valency pattern of each verb: copular, intransitive, or transitive.

**1a** As the sun slanted lower in the afternoon sky, he grew restless and ordered the band to play. (FICT)

*grew = copular verb*

**1b** So I'm really not sure why we grow it. (CONV)

*grow = transitive verb*

**1c** They burned her eyebrows off, and they didn't ever grow back. (CONV)

*grow = intransitive verb*

**2a** It was the first time he had appeared in public since this incident. (CONV)

**2b** Gramm appeared relaxed and at peace with his decision. (NEWS)

**3a** Well he'll probably stay warm in the winter time then. (CONV)

**3b** So how much longer did she stay? (CONV)

**4a** The whole color scheme looked nice but it could have looked better. (CONV)

**4b** If you look out the window, you can see the leaves are starting to change. (CONV)

**5** Your breath smells fine—I don't smell your breath, so I don't even know it smells. (CONV)

**6a** He had been in radio since he went to Everett High School in Lansing, Michigan. (NEWS)

**6b** I think it's the biggest concert any one act has played, and the audience went wild. (NEWS)

**7a** Well, uh, I got hungry and wanted something to chew on. (CONV)

**7b** And I of course want to go and get the scrub brush and scrub those walls. (CONV)

**8a** Your hero is Dr Frankenstein, you've proved that tonight. (CONV)

**8b** Finding common ground often has proved difficult over the past two years. (NEWS)

## Synthesis exercises

### Exercise 11: Meanings associated with copular verbs

Resulting copular verbs all refer to a change of state. However, individual copular verbs differ in their specific meanings and their preferred collocations. This exercise focuses on three resulting copular verbs—*turn*, *come*, and *go*—and the adjectives which follow them in predicative position.

- Find the adjective complements of the resulting copular verbs in the following sentences. (The complement is underlined in the first example.)
- Make a list of the complements that occur with each verb.
- These complements represent the typical collocations of the three verbs. What meanings are shared by these adjectives following each verb? How would you describe the meaning differences among these three copular verbs?
- If you have access to a computer corpus of English, try to find additional adjectives which collocate with these three verbs, and see if they cover the same ranges of meaning as the adjectives in the examples below. Do they extend the ranges of meaning in any way?

#### **TURN**

- 1 I didn't realize he had twisted it that bad but it swelled up and turned purple. (CONV)
- 2 This year might be different 'cause I heard the pumpkins, they either turned yellow too soon, or they turned orange too soon. (CONV)
- 3 Now the picture has turned darker. (NEWS)
- 4 I blushed and turned pale. (FICT)
- 5 Onions are so flavorful, and as they turn golden brown in the pan, they really increase the flavor of food. (NEWS)

#### **COME**

- 1 The defense is coming alive. (CONV)
- 2 It was about this time that we seemed to come awake again. (FICT)
- 3 Think of all the things that come loose around the house. (NEWS)
- 4 The layers of secrecy have come unstuck with time. (NEWS)
- 5 You just sit down with a sponge and they come clean. (CONV)
- 6 Yeah. Maybe it will come true. (CONV)

#### **GO**

- 1 It's enough to make you go crazy you know. (CONV)
- 2 If I don't complain, I'll go mad. (CONV)
- 3 Yeah, otherwise you would go nuts. (CONV)
- 4 They go completely insane. (CONV)
- 5 This is what you call an experiment that went wrong. (CONV)
- 6 What if all their Burger King meat went bad because we turned off the air conditioning? (CONV)
- 7 Are those coals really cold?—You don't want them to go cold. (CONV)
- 8 They may have gone completely broke. (CONV)
- 9 The leaves go limp after this subterranean pest has nibbled at the roots. (ACAD)
- 10 The gun exploded <...>—I went deaf and into shock at the same time. (FICT)

## Exercise 12: Verbs with inanimate subjects

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In conversation and fiction writing, the subjects of English clauses typically refer to human beings. This is especially true of activity verbs, communication verbs, and mental verbs (see Grammar Bite B). However, authors of academic prose—and to a lesser extent of newspaper articles—regularly use such verbs with inanimate subjects.

- Underline all lexical verbs in the following sentences from academic prose.
  - For each verb, determine whether the (logical) subject is animate or inanimate. (Remember that the logical subject might not be stated with passive verbs.)
  - Suggest reasons for the use of inanimate subjects with these verbs in these written texts.
- 1** To date no one has produced a more succinct or more plausible definition of Conservatism, and certainly neither Honderich nor Eccleshall has provided an adequate alternative. In fact it seems to this reviewer that Quinton's framework offers essential support for Eccleshall's vision of Conservatism, in that the axioms Quinton describes provide for a specifically Conservative conception of political authority and social discipline. (ACAD)
  - 2** As is pointed out in International Rectifier's note AN-969m, power mosfets possess advantages over bipolar transistors for ignition circuits, chiefly because of the high voltages they must withstand when used in place of a conventional mechanical contact breaker. Power mosfets exhibit no secondary breakdown and can be avalanched to clamp excessive overvoltage due to leakage inductance or a disconnected HT lead. Also, they need no base drive, being voltage controlled. The note explains that the series resistance of the mosfet need not lead to inefficiency and a circuit performing at higher efficiency than the one using bipolars is feasible. (ACAD)
  - 3** Investigators did find that some male pilots 'exhibited hostility' toward Lohrenz, an F-14 pilot aboard the carrier USS *Lincoln*, but the report says it did not affect her performance. The 239-page report said that public interest in her case was a further hardship that placed her under additional stress and left her 'medically unfit to fly'. The leaked records indicated Lohrenz was having difficulty with carrier landings. (NEWS)