

TASK [4] What type of an action are you?

Semanticians, i.e. linguists who study meaning of simple units and complex expressions in natural languages, often need to create sets to primitive (very basic) labels to be able to describe abstract knowledge on the meaning of word and phrases that native speakers possess. One example of such an undertaking is the description of the meaning verbs in terms of four basic semantic features [STATIVE], [DURATIVE], [TELIC] and [VOLUNTARY], which describe the basic properties of actions denoted by the verbs.

[±STATIVE]: this feature tells us whether the situation denoted by the verb involves a change [-STATIVE] or not [+STATIVE]; it is said that the [-STATIVE] (or dynamic) situation requires the input of energy, whereas a [+STATIVE] situation does not

[±DURATIVE]: this feature tells us whether the situation goes on in time [+DURATIVE] or occurs at a moment in time (punctual/instantaneous) [-DURATIVE]

[±TELIC]: this feature tells us whether the situation has an endpoint or goal which is necessary for the situation to be what it is [+TELIC] or has no necessary conclusion [-TELIC]

[±VOLUNTARY]: this feature tells us whether the situation is a matter of an agent's voluntary or willful (intentional) action [+VOLUNTARY] or not [-VOLUNTARY].

Knowing which semantic features are used to characterise verbs and what these features mean, for each of the verbs in the sentences 1-10 in the table below determine the values [+] or [-] of the features.

Pay close attention to the whole sentence, do not base your decision only on the verb.

e.g.

Sentence	STATIVE [+ / -]	DURATIVE [+ / -]	VOLUNTARY [+ / -]	TELIC [+ / -]
Carry resembles her mother.	+	+	-	-
John built a house.	-	+	+	+

Sentence	STATIVE [+ / -]	DURATIVE [+ / -]	VOLUNTARY [+ / -]	TELIC [+ / -]
1/ John danced a tango.				
2/ Tom pushed the cart into the barn.				
3/ Tina has lived in L.A. for three years now.				
4/ Terry has seen three UFOs already.				
5/ Kally usually pinches Mark on the shoulder.				
6/ Adam has been coughing the whole morning.				
7/ Greg ran all day, yesterday				
8/ The soldiers marched the park.				
9/ The ball rolled down the hill.				
10/ A bomb exploded yesterday in a shopping mal.				

TASK [4] What type of an action are you?

KEY

Sentence	STATIVE [+ / -]	DURATIVE [+ / -]	VOLUNTARY [+ / -]	TELIC [+ / -]
1/ John danced a tango.	-	+	+	+
2/ Tom pushed the cart into the barn.	-	-	+	+
3/ Tina has lived in L.A. for three years now.	+	+	+	-
4/ Terry has seen three UFOs already.	-	-	-	+
5/ Kally usually pinches Mark on the shoulder.	-	-	+	+
6/ Adam has been coughing the whole morning.	-	-	-	+
7/ Greg ran all day, yesterday	-	+	+	-
8/ The soldiers marched the park.	-	+	+	+
9/ The ball rolled down the hill.	-	+	-	-
10/ A bomb exploded yesterday in a shopping mal.	-	-	-	+

POINTS:

TOTAL 20 pts

½ point for each correct answer.