Some verbs require a word or phrase after them to complete their predicate. This word or phrase which completes the predicate of a verb is called its **complement**. A verb which joins a subject with its complement is called a **linking or copular verb**. Such a verb is also called a **verb of incomplete predication**.

The most common copular verbs are **be** and its forms (is/am/are/was/were), **act**, **become**, **feel**, **appear**, **grow**, **taste**, **sound**, **remain**, **look**, **turn**, **went**, **ran** etc.

The complement that follows a copular verb may be a **noun**, an **adjective**, an **adverb** or an **adverbial phrase**.

- He is an **engineer**. (Noun)
- They are our **neighbors**. (Noun)
- Those are **clouds**. (Noun)
- The food is **delicious**. (Adjective)
- His performance was **superb**. (Adjective)
- The program was **entertaining**. (Adjective)
- God is **everywhere**. (Adverb)
- He was **in the next room**. (Adverbial phrase)
- She remained a **spinster**. (Noun)
- The crowd turned **violent**. (Violent)
- That sounds **interesting**. (Adjective)
- She went **abroad**. (Adverb)
- John ran very **fast**. (Adverb)
- He acted in a **treacherous manner**. (Adverbial phrase)

Copular verbs do not normally take objects, but sometimes they are used transitively.

- She **acted** well. (Here the copular verb acted merely links the subject she with the complement well.)
- She **acted her part** well. (Here the verb acted has an object (her part). It is, therefore, used transitively.)
- I was feeling unwell. (Copulative use because the verb is followed by a complement, and not object)
- The doctor **felt the patient’s pulse**. (Transitive use because the verb felt has an object)
- The proposal **sounds** interesting. (Copulative use because the verb is followed by a complement, and not object)
- The general **sounded the bugle**. (Transitive use because the verb has an object)