

Ask about English

Raise/rise

A question from Alice in France:

'Raise' and 'rise' – it's difficult to use them. Will it be possible to explain these two verbs in BBC learning English? Thank you.

Amos Paran answers:

Well, the basic meaning of the two verbs, 'raise' and 'rise', is almost the same – moving up, from a low position to a higher position, either physically or metaphorically.

The difference between them is a grammatical one. 'Raise' needs an object, and 'rise' cannot take an object. So, for example, I can say that I personally think that the government of this country needs to raise taxes (and 'taxes' is the object of the verb); another way I can say that is that I think that taxes need to rise. We are always talking about the need to raise standards (and 'standards' is the object of the verb) – another way of saying it is that standards need to rise.

Hope this helps!

Audio available online at:

www.bbclearningenglish.com/radio/specials/1535_questionanswer

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