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THE TEACHING OF THE ENGLISH
PERFECT TENSES TO
SPEAKERS OF
SYRIAN ARABIC

by
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To My Mother

who taught me the first sounds
of English

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to prepare material for the teaching of the English perfect tenses -- expanded and non-expanded -- to Arab students. To meet this objective three things were necessary: a) Clarification of the degree to which grammatical studies of English are reflected in textbooks, b) Study of the functions of the English perfect tenses in their expanded and non-expanded forms, c) Examination of the points of agreement and disagreement between English and Syrian Arabic¹ in this linguistic area.

Investigation of the above led to the following findings:

1. The examined textbooks were very selective in dealing with the functions of the perfect tenses. Some functions were completely neglected, some others were comparatively thoroughly dealt with, and the rest fell inbetween.
2. The "perfect" indicates earlier but non-specific time.
3. The function of the expanded perfect form varies according to the nature of the verb. It is not used with point action verbs unless the predication is bound i.e., there is some sort

¹Syrian Arabic includes Arabic spoken in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine.

of time expression. When used with terminate verbs, it indicates repetition of the occurrence of the action. With durative verbs it indicates incompleteness of the action. The general implication of the use of the expanded form is the emphasis on the continuation and immediacy of the action.

4. The examination of the two languages in this area has shown that for each English perfect function studied there is a separate parallel Arabic form except when the present perfect form is used to indicate completed actions. In this case Arabic uses the past form to indicate the completion of the action. There is one qualification, however, to the parallelism between Arabic and English structures in this area. The parallelism holds true as long as the English form is used in a time-expression context. If the predication is void of time-expressions, a difficulty is expected in teaching it.

The teaching materials have been based on the above findings. The assumption is that materials built on those findings will be more effective in meeting the Arabs' problems in learning the English perfect tenses.

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INTRODUCTION

Presentation

The area of the English perfect tenses in general, and the present perfect in particular, constitutes a major problem for the Arab student learning English. Teachers of English are aware of the problem and have been trying to solve it by much drilling on the various uses of these tenses. But in spite of the extensive drilling, the Arab student still asks "have you seen him yesterday?", and infrequently says "I ate" in situations where the perfect would naturally be expected.

The reason for the Arab student's seeming inability to distinguish between the use of the past form and the present perfect is no doubt due, at least in part, to the interference of his native language. The structural and semantic area of the perfect tenses in English is an important point of divergence between English and Arabic. A comparison of the devices used in the two languages will increase our understanding of the problem of the learner. Drills based on that comparison will then be most useful in solving the problem.

The ultimate aim of this study is to develop material for the teaching of the perfect tenses. In compliance with this objective, the following plan has been worked out:

1. A study has been carried out to trace the functions of the expanded and non-expanded perfect forms. This was done by reviewing four grammar books: two traditional and two modern. To make ourselves acquainted with the most recent methods for teaching these tenses to foreigners, seven recently published textbooks have been reviewed. In this review care has been taken to expose what functions of the perfect tenses were considered and what functions were left out.

2. The above will yield conclusions as to the meanings of expansion and perfect. This is important because these conclusions will serve as a basis for building up the materials for teaching the expanded and non-expanded forms of the perfect tenses.

3. Since the teaching materials are meant for Arab students, they will be based on the comparison of the linguistic devices of the two languages in the examined area. A chapter will thus be devoted to the analysis of the Arabic forms that parallel the English perfect tenses. The analysis will include the corresponding forms to all but one of the main perfect tenses. Owing to the fact that the future perfect expanded will not be taught, it will be excluded.

4. The teaching materials constitute the main body of the fourth and last chapter. The exercises are graded in difficulty, the easier ones coming first, and the harder later. Extensive drilling will be provided for the points of divergence between the two languages. On the whole, the exercises

range from mere automatic drilling at the beginning, to drills used in real meaningful situations.

Choice of terms

The term tense has been traditionally used to refer to time as expressed by verbal elements. The number of tenses, according to traditionalists, has ranged between six and thirty two for verbs and verb-clusters. Recent writers believe that there are only two tenses in English: past and non-past. In this paper the term tense is used to mean any possible form that a verb cluster may take. Then by definition, we may have as many tenses as there are forms of verb-clusters. As such, form, and not time or action, is the basis for naming tenses.

The reason for using the term in this way is that it has still much currency in association with the commonly used six traditional tenses. Furthermore, the term is felt to be very convenient because of its familiarity to the foreign student.

Verbs that show any of the allomorphs of the past morpheme $\{-d\}$, i.e., $/-t/$, $/-d/$, $/er-/id/$ will be called the past forms. Any verb-cluster that contains any form of have will be called perfect. The verb-cluster that contains any form of will will be called future. Any verb-cluster that contains the past form of any auxiliary will be called past. A verb-cluster that contains any form of be + ing will be called expanded. The term continuous, however, may be used interchangeably.

According to the above, we may have the following

simple forms with their combinations:

The components

- 1- The base form
- 2- Have + part (i.e., past participle)
- 3- Be + ing (i.e., present participle)
- 4- Will/shall

Combinations

Tenses

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1- Base form alone: | leave | present |
| 2- Base form + {-d}: | left | past |
| 3- Have + part | : have/has left | present perfect |
| 4- Had + part | : had left | past perfect |
| 5- Be + ing | : is leaving | present expanded |
| 6- Be + ing + {-d} | : was leaving | past expanded |
| 7- Have+part+be+ing: | have been leaving | present perfect
expanded |
| 8- Had+part+be+ing: | had been leaving | past perfect expanded |
| 9- Will+base form | : will leave | future |
| 10- Will+have+part | : will have left | future perfect |
| 11- Will+be+ing | : will be leaving | future expanded |
| 12- Will+have+part+be+ing: | will have
been leaving | future perfect
expanded |
| 13- Would+base form: | would leave | past future |
| 14- Would+have+part: | would have left | past future perfect |
| 15- Would+be+ing | : would be leaving | past future expanded |
| 16- Would+have+part+be+ing: | would have
been leaving | Past future perfect
expanded |

CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Our review is made of two main parts: a review of grammar books, and a review of textbooks.

In the review of the former, care has been taken to include traditional points of view, represented by Jespersen's Modern English Grammar and Curme's Syntax, and modern points of view as seen in The English Verb by Joos and The Verb System In Present-Day American English by Robert L. Allen. In this review our interest is focussed on two points:

- a) How grammarians look at the perfect tenses, and
- b) How they deal with the difference between expanded and non-expanded forms.

The second part of the chapter is a review of seven selected text-books and an exposition of the methods followed for the teaching of the perfect tenses-expanded and non-expanded. The books were selected on the basis of the recency of their publication and wide usage; the assumption being that recent books take advantage of the latest findings and the fact of their being widely used reflects their value in the field of teaching.

Part I

A. Jespersen's Modern English Grammar

Jespersen defines tense as "the linguistic expression of time-relations, so far as these are indicated in verb forms", and distinguishes for the English verb two tenses, the present and the preterit, and two tense-phrases, the perfect and the pluperfect. Each of these tenses has a corresponding expanded form made by the addition of "be+ing" to the form of the tense.

As to the future tenses, simple and perfect, Jespersen believes they don't have fixity in form and function to be put at the same level as that of the above four tenses.¹ So if we disregard the future forms for the moment, we are left with the following four tenses and tense phrases: present, preterit, perfect, and pluperfect, with four corresponding expanded forms.

The perfect (present perfect tense), as conceived by Jespersen, is a present-past connector. As such, the perfect is studied through its relation to both the present and the past. The relation between the perfect and the present is manifest in the fact that "the perfect is an inclusive present, which speaks of a state which is continued from the past to the present." Its relation with the preterit is seen in the fact that "the perfect is a retrospective present, which looks upon the present state as a result of what has happened in the past."

¹Jespersen compares the two forms "will write" and "have written" and says that the latter is used for one purpose only, that of the tense called perfect, and conversely, the perfect is only expressed in this way; whereas the former may express volition as well as simple futurity and conversely futurity is expressed in many other ways as well.

Jespersen views the perfect as "in itself a kind of present tense" and emphasised the idea of the 'presentic character' of the perfect by studying some special cases which illustrate that trait. 'Have got' which has the perfect form, has to a great extent lost the meaning of an ordinary perfect and has become a real present". According to him, 'Is dead', which is a present form, "might in certain respects be considered a perfect of 'he dies'."²

The idea of 'inclusive present' derives from a wider idea which is 'inclusive time.' To Jespersen, there are three 'inclusive times': present, past, and future. He gives the following examples to illustrate this. "If we imagine a man who was married in 1910, speaking in the year 1930, he will say:

- i) I have been married (now) twenty years.--inclusive present.
- ii) In 1920 I had been married ten years.--inclusive past.
- iii) In 1940 I shall have been married thirty years.--inclusive future."

As is seen in the above example (i), the perfect tense is used to denote the inclusive present time.

As a retrospective present, the perfect "connects a past occurrence with the present state as having results or consequences bearing on the present moment." If the reference, however, was to sometime in the past without any indication of its connection with the present moment, the preterit is then

²Otto Jespersen, Modern English Grammar (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1961), Vol. 4, p. 54.

used. "Have you finished?" refers to the present moment (i.e., "Are you through?"), while "did you finish?" asks about some definite portion of past time. Jespersen contrasts the uses of the perfect and the preterit in the context of various time-expressions. He says that although the perfect is naturally used when the time indicated is not yet completed, the preterit may be used in this case when "some definite (past) part of this period is referred to (or implied)." So 'did you see her today?' implies (when you were coming here).

The perfect is used with 'just', "when 'just' refers to the time immediately preceding the present moment, 'After his death she suddenly left London, and has only just returned'." It is also used with 'always', 'ever' and 'never' when they "imply comparison with the present time". But when they indicate a definite time in the past, the preterit is used. "Were you ever in Paris?" would be used if someone had been telling of his past travels; it thus means "in the course of your travels." If the interest is specially in the present, "have been" is required: "You are becoming a great traveller, you've been everywhere. But have you ever been in Paris?"

The perfect is also used whenever "the reference is to the result as affecting the present day." Even when we speak of dead people the perfect is used if the effect of the act still has bearing on the present. "'Newton has explained the movement of the moon' (i.e., in a way that is still known, or thought to be correct, while 'Newton explained the movements

of the moon from the attraction of the earth' would imply that the explanation has since been given up)."

Jespersen distinguishes one more function of the present perfect tense. This tense "seems to imply repetition: 'When I have been in London, I have seen him pretty often' implies several stays." One would wonder here whether this function of the present perfect tense cannot be traced back to the idea of indefiniteness associated with this tense. The choice of the tense ultimately depends on the idea which the speaker wants to communicate. His choice of a preterit would have signified a definite act at a definite time in the past. And since in the above example there is no explicit time expression the definiteness would mean only one stay, because had it been more than one stay, there would have been nothing definite about it and the present perfect would have been used.

The pluperfect (past perfect tense), the other phrase-tense receives little of Jespersen's attention.

Jespersen³ says that the pluperfect indicates a before-past time (or retrospective past). But in many cases the preterit can do the same job. 'When he came from India, he was made a member of parliament', The pluperfect, however is required in: When he had read the letter, he burned it. When he had finished writing that book, he took a long rest." Jespersen does not say why it is so required.³

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³pp. 47 - 70.

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the conjunctions that are chiefly used with the pluperfect. He, however, mentions only four: when, after, before, and till.

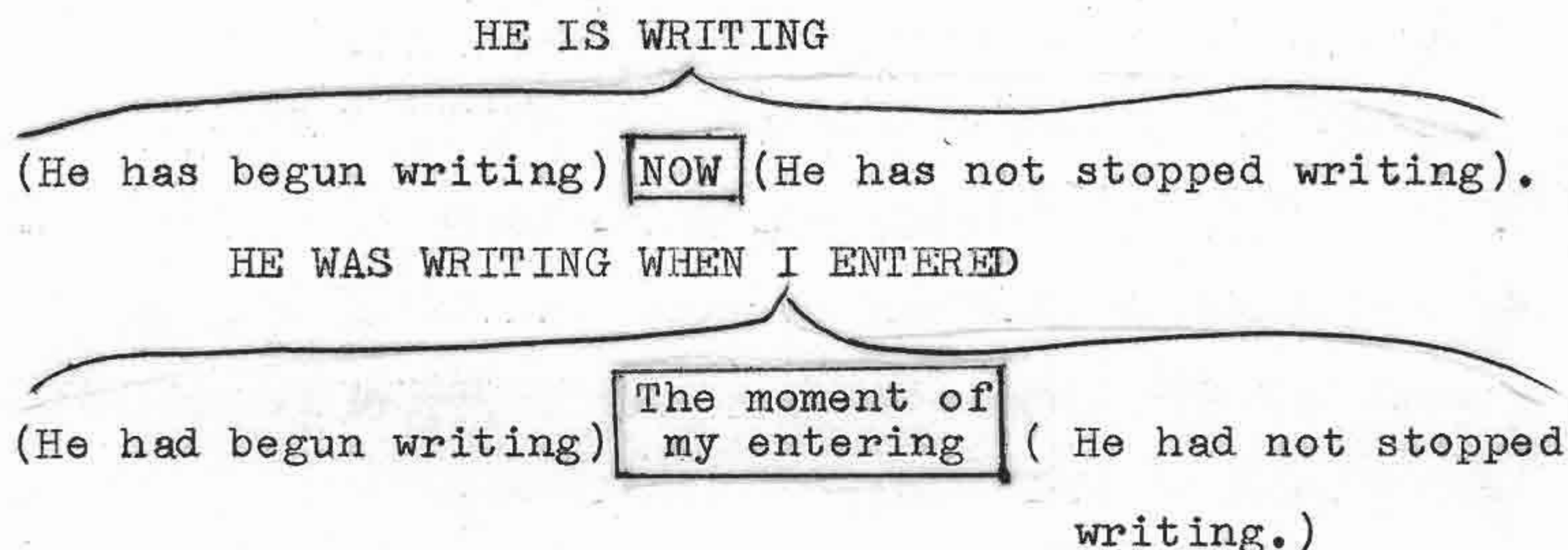
From a purely systematic point of view, and since the perfect and the pluperfect were classified by Jespersen under one category, namely that of phrase-tenses, one would expect the same general plan in the study of these two tenses. If the perfect is a retrospective present and inclusive present there is no reason why the pluperfect should not be a retrospective past and an inclusive past also. Jespersen deals with the pluperfect as a retrospective past only and forgets all about the second part. With the presence of such examples in English as: 'She told me that she had been ill since she came back from the seaside', and 'Since the first days of their acquaintanceship they had always been confidential', one would wonder why the inclusive use was not discussed.

The future perfect tense is, to Jespersen, the before-future. Except for a half page of quoted examples, little is mentioned about this tense in terms of function and use. Jespersen says "In less formal speech the simple perfect" will be used instead of the future perfect. In another place he says that the use of the future perfect in "I shall let you know as soon as I shall have heard from them" is 'pedantic' and 'the natural' one would be: 'I shall let you know as soon as I hear from them.'⁴

⁴p. 360.

Jespersen deals extensively with expansion. His conception of expansion is based on 'the frame theory'. According to this theory, expansion does indicate duration of action or state, but represents time as lasting some time before, and possibly some time after something else. (See the section on overlapping, p. 29).

A representation of the frame theory can be seen in the following two diagrams:



"The action or state denoted by the expanded tense is thought of as a temporal frame encompassing something else."

On the whole, the use of the expanded form gives a certain emotional coloring to the sentence:

"You're always finding fault with me -- implies 'and you may go on (or will probably go on) finding fault' and thus gives vent to a natural irritability.

"She's always harping on that string.

"Now, that boy is again whistling his infernal melodies."⁵

⁵One would wonder whether the sentence 'you always find fault with me' does not carry the same emotional coloring and, thus, give vent to a natural irritability. The presence of

Jespersen distinguishes various modes for the use of the expanded perfect form. First it is "frequent with subjuncts like "all this day", which indicate a period which is not yet finished at the time of speaking". But the action or state indicated must be "of a durative character." Some of the examples he gives are: I have been drinking all night / I have been talking incessantly all night. This aspect of the expanded present perfect "cannot," he says, "be separated from the following instances of inclusive time: I have been for some time looking out for another companion / Eversince sunrise he has been standing on the steps."

Another use of the expanded perfect, as conceived by Jespersen, is to refer to the immediate past. In the example "I have been making some little trifling observations which interested and perplexed me much", the meaning is, Jespersen says, "recently."

In a third employment of the expanded perfect there is a distinct implication that the action itself is not yet

always in the above first two sentences, and again in the third, combined with the lexical meaning of some word (or words) in the sentences, is probably more responsible for the irritability and impatience felt to be present in the examples than is the use of the expanded form. If the use of the expanded form in the above examples is responsible for the emotional coloring, how can we explain the absence of such emotional coloring in the first of each of the following sentences:

- 1) He is writing letters. (Cf. He is always writing letters.)
- 2) The girl is crying. (Cf. That haggard woman is again
squealing.)
- 3) The students are making noise. (Cf. Those students are
always making noise.)

completed."⁶ Thus potentially transitive verbs without their objects are used in the expanded form because of the idea of incompleteness attached to it. "I have been reading", but they are not used in the perfect. However, Allen gives one context in which this may occur, and that is when the reference is "to such meaning as 'a little - some - experience of', as in the following examples: I've read, I've listened to the radio, I've watched television, I've played classical music on my record player -- but I haven't enjoyed anything as much as just sitting and doing nothing."⁷

Jespersen mentions another implication of the use of the expanded perfect, and that is of "repeated actions." This is shown in the following examples: "Where have you been meeting them?" / "How have you been spending your money?"

It is the belief of the present writer that the above implication is only slightly different from the durative aspect; the difference being that the durative matches the events to the whole period of time, while the repeated action matches them to their separate occasions.

As for the expanded form of the pluperfect, Jespersen distinguishes several uses that almost exactly correspond to those of the perfect:

⁶p. 193.

⁷R. L. Allen, The Verb System of Present-Day American English (Paris: Mouton and Co., 1966), p. 197.

- 1) With subjuncts, e.g. "Now the bell had been ringing all the morning."
- 2) Indicating some period not far from the time of the other action, e.g., "I knew he had been talking to you."
- 3) Denoting incompleteness, e.g., "I saw the book, in which I had been reading, at my side."
- 4) Repeated action, e.g., "He had first proposed to her when she wore an ugly pig tail, and off and on he had been proposing ever since."
- 5) Back-shifting, e.g., "They told me they had been musing..."⁸

⁸Jespersen, pp. 193 - 198.

B- Curme's Syntax

The tense-division we are going to encounter in this book is different from Jespersen's. Curme, though aware of the fact that "In each tense there is always a present or a past tense", divides English tenses into absolute and relative tenses. The present, The past, The present perfect,⁹ and The future are the 'absolute' tenses because they "express time from the stand point of the moment in which the speaker is speaking without reference to some other act". The past perfect and the future perfect are the 'relative' because they "express time relatively to the preceding absolute tenses".¹⁰

The main function of the present perfect tense, according to Curme, is to represent "an act as completed at the present moment". Stress on the auxiliary "emphasizes the idea of the reality of the attainment." 'I have finished it' said in answer to 'why don't you finish your work', is an example.

Because of the close relation of the perfect to the present, a historical as well as a grammatical fact, the present perfect "is usually employed when the time is felt as not wholly past" but has some relation to the present. 'My brother bought two hats this morning', but 'my brother has bought two hats this week.'

⁹Present perfect does not always express time from the stand point of the moment of speaking. In the sentence 'he says Jim has left' the act of leaving may express time relatively to the act of saying.'

¹⁰George O. Curme, Syntax (Boston: D.C. Heath and Co., 1931), p. 354.

Now, with the presence of the time expression 'this week' in the above example, one would ask whether the use of the present perfect has anything to do with one's 'feeling' "that the period in question is not yet closed."

Another function of the present perfect is of time past, but "where the reference is general or indefinite." 'John has been punished many times' (general statement), 'John was punished many times last year.' (definite).

The last of the functions distinguished by Curme is one of cold tone and detachment. 'Did you ever see anything to beat it' is said in a lively tone, whereas 'have you ever seen anything to beat it?' is said in a "calmer, more detached tone."

Curme does not deal with the expanded form of the perfect tenses separately from the non-expanded. He gives two examples, one expanded and the other non-expanded, to show that the present perfect may be used "to represent an act as still continuing." 'He has been working hard all day', and 'she hasn't left her bed for a week.' It is clear from the above two examples that the presence of the time expressions 'all day' and 'for a week' makes the function of the present perfect similar to its function in expressing the present-inclusive time mentioned before.

In compliance with the theory of relativity and absoluteness of tenses, Curme views past perfect tense in

terms of the time relationship that ties it to the past tense. Past perfect, he says, represents "A past action or state as completed at or before a certain past time." The time relation is the basis for the use of the past perfect tense; that is why "The past is used instead of the past perfect where some other idea overshadows that of the exact time relations," as in 'John was punished because he broke a window' where the interest is more in the fact of the breaking than in the fact that punishment occurred after the breaking of the window. Compare 'after he had finished the book, he returned it' where the interest is in the time relation between the two acts.

Future perfect tense does not receive much attention from Curme; due to its being very 'formal' and to the fact that it "has not yet become established in simple expression." In formal writing future perfect tense "represents that an action or state will be completed at or before a certain time yet future," but it is avoided in colloquial speech and "still more in the subordinate clause."¹¹

As for the expanded form of the perfect, it is not separately dealt with in Syntax. Expansion is studied under the durative aspect of the verb.

The function of the progressive expanded form, according to Curme, is to introduce the idea of continuation. Where the simple form is used to indicate a fact 'the town

¹¹Curme, pp. 354 - 372.

lies on a river' (a fact, a permanent situation), the idea of continuation is clear in the use of the progressive form; 'the wounded man is still lying on the ground.'

The progressive form, says Curme, is charged with feeling (sorrow, pleasure, complaint, praise, etc.). The difference between the following two sentences lies in the fact that the second is charged with "a tone of praise or censure", whereas the first is factual:

Recently John has done his work regularly. (Fact)

Recently John has been doing his work quite regularly, or very slovenly.¹²

¹²Curme, pp. 376 - 377.

Part II

A- Review of Joos' The English Verb: Form and Meanings

There seems to be no difference between the traditional and modern points of view as far as the tense division of the English verb system is concerned. Joos recognises, as Curme and Jespersen had done before him, the presence of only two tenses, for "a finite verb is either marked with -D or lacks that marker."

Although Joos comes out with two new terms for the past and non-past ("actual" for the unmarked, and "remote" for the marked), for convenience's sake, he uses the "non technical term" past tense in the traditional sense, but favours "actual tense" against "present tense".

The perfect tenses go in Joos under the name of "the perfect phase". The term 'phase', adopted from George L. Trager and Henry Lee Smith, Jr., An Outline of English Structure, "derives from the special relation between cause and effect, signified by verbs in the "perfect phase". This special cause-effect relationship can be well understood by studying cases lacking that relationship. In the "current phase", which lacks Have -N, "the effects of the specified events have either been simultaneous with their cause (this event) or have been not substantially delayed: "The judge came on swiftly" is the beginning of TRIAL,¹³ and the simultaneous effect is that he is

¹³Trial refers to Sybille Bedford's The Trial of Dr. Adams from which the data for Joo's study is taken.

seen to come, the immediate effect is that he is there." In other words, the current phase signifies an event "the principal effects" of which "are in phase" with it, as the "amount of moonlight is in phase with the phases of the moon." But in the case of the perfect phase one does not see the simultaneous occurrence of cause and effect, rather he sees the effects presented in a phase different from that which states their earlier-in-time causes. The fact that they are effects is not shown in their own verbs, but by the perfect marker on the verbs for the preceding events, and these perfect-marked verbs are there specifically for the sake of the events they designate. Even though they may have simultaneous effects, these perfect-marked verbs focus the attention on their delayed effects. It becomes clear then "that the meaning of the perfect phase is that the principle effects of the events are out of phase with it, which can only be true if they are delayed."¹⁴ Joos gives a graphic presentation of the "perfect phase":



Here a dotted line represents the "perfect phase" of the verb. Its dottedness signifies that the event is not

¹⁴Martin Joos, The English Verb: Form and Meanings (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), pp. 121-140.

mentioned for its own sake, but for the sake of its consequences. It thus focusses our attention not on the event designated by the perfect phase, but on the subsequent opportunities which will be accommodated within the solid line frame.

The vertical dotted line represents the abrupt diminution of the probability that a predication in the perfect phase is valid. It represents either an instantaneous event like "He has pronounced them man and wife" or else an event "viewed from afar so that its duration has sunk into insignificance", "Hannam has inspected the cupboard."

The high level dotted line represents a permanent probability that a predication is valid. It thus "represents any status verb or characterizing use of a process verb: 'He is a doctor of medicine and has practiced anaesthetics for many years'."

Events of the limited-duration sort that have still some significance at the moment of coding are represented by the curved dotted line. 'She is followed at once by another nurse ... who has been waiting her turn outside the court'. Because of the words at once the predication has been waiting is still significant at the moment of coding. If the interval between the action designated by the perfect and the moment of coding was long in a way as to make the dotted curved line sink into insignificance, had been waiting would be used instead.

The same cause-effect relationship exists in the use of

the past perfect. In the example 'The doctor told Mr. Sogno that Mrs. Morrel had promised him her Rolls-Royce in her will and she now remembered that she had forgotten this...' This relationship is obvious. "Mrs. Morell could not have remembered unless she had forgotten; and she could not have forgotten her promise unless she had promised."¹⁵

Thus from all that has been mentioned above, it can be concluded that according to Joos the main and only function of the perfect phase is to show that "the event presented in the perfect phase is not being presented for its own sake but only as a means for a separate end." Joos does not consider as meaning of the perfect phase the fact that it states events earlier than those stated by the current phase; this is only a connotative meaning. The real denotative meaning is a sort of a warning to the listener "to look for the important message elsewhere."¹⁶

As for the expanded form, Joos prefers the term "temporary aspect". To explain the concept, he refers to statistical terms (note that the graphs presented before are reminiscent of the statistical normal curve.) Joos' conception of the temporary aspect is explained on the basis of a validity pattern. In the sentence "I am hearing" for example, the use of the temporary aspect means that "assuming that the

¹⁵Joos, pp. 141 - 143.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 144.

predication is completely valid for the time principally referred to, then it is 99% probably valid... for certain slightly earlier and later times." This validity gradually diminishes to zero, the more we go into earlier and later times. The temporary aspect does not specify the nature of the event it designates (the event can be progressive or static, continuous or interrupted), but signifies something about the validity of the predication. This validity diminishes the further one goes into future or into past.¹⁷

This pattern of probability diminution can explain all forms of expansion with one modification that does not destroy the pattern. That is, the modification necessary in the case of the expanded perfect form. "In combination with marked phase, marked aspect signifies such a probability diminution only into former times, while towards subsequent times it does not consistently signify anything -- so in this direction the probability can diminish abruptly or not at all."¹⁸

Here again, a graph of the normal-curve sort may represent the temporary aspect:



In this graph the highest point reached by the dotted

¹⁷Joos, pp. 107 - 108.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 108.

line represents perfect validity, while the less high points represent the diminution of the probability that the predication is valid for times other than the principal time.

Part II

B- Review of Allen's Verb-System of Present-Day American English

This is the last part of the review of grammar books.

In this book Allen gives the traditional view of 'the verb system' as well as his own view. In the latter he re-analyzes the verb-system in terms of two kinds of time: the present, and the past.

Owing to its infrequent occurrence, the form "will have" was considered to belong to a sub-system on a level below that of the "past" forms and the "present" forms.¹⁹

Allen realises that the form have refers to a past time. But so does the past form of the verb. To show the difference between the function of the two forms he applies to verb-clusters a grammatical category that has been applied to noun clusters. The category is "definite" and "indefinite". (Allen prefers the terms "identified" and "non-identified" respectively). The following examples show the contrast:

a- 'I've been to Carnegie Hall only once'.

¹⁹Allen says that not one example of the form will have appeared among all the 4800 verb- and verbid-clusters examined by him. He concludes that an accurate analysis of the English tense system would consider this form as participating in a sub-system of the total verb system. See R. Allen's The Verb System of Present-Day American English (Paris, Mouton and Co., 1966), p. 150.

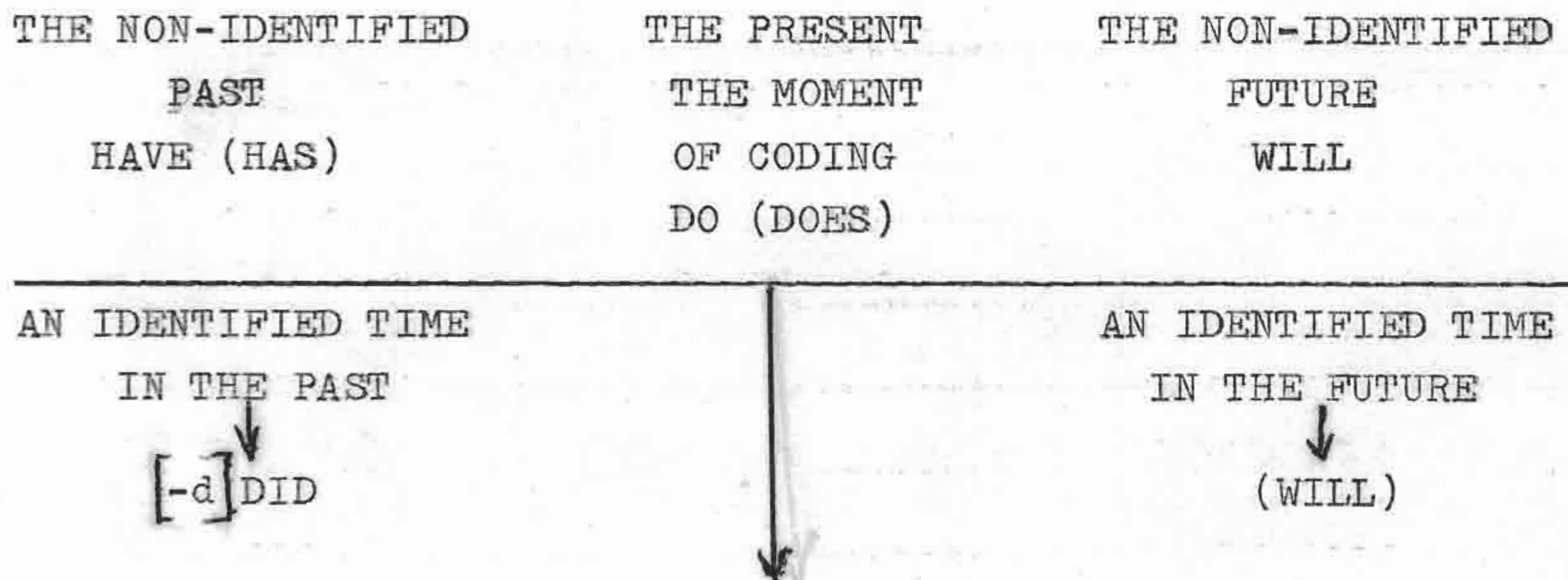
'Did you hear the New York Philharmonic?' (That is, on that same occasion).

b- 'I've been to Carnegie Hall only once.'

'Have you heard the New York Philharmonic?' (That is, have you ever -- but not necessarily on that occasion).

It can be seen from the above examples that the difference between past verb forms and present perfect forms "is primarily one of 'identified time' / 'non-identified time.'" Though both forms refer to a time past, the past form refers to 'identified time', whereas the present perfect form refers to 'non-identified time'. But Allen realizes that 'indefiniteness' is not the only context in which the Have form is used. In a footnote he gives an example of the peculiar use of Have with just, and mentions the obligatory use of any form of Have with time-expressions like 'by now', 'by then', 'since two years ago' etc.

The following diagram represents identified and non-identified times:

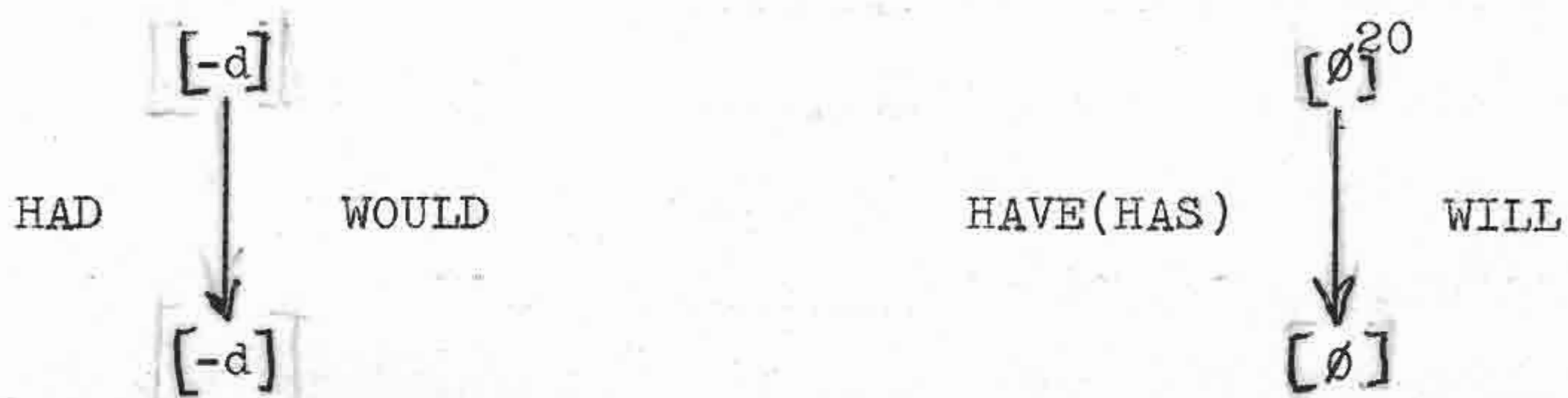


As you may see, in the above figure "the morpheme [-d] merely designates as identified some time within the total stretch of unidentified time covered by the auxiliaries 'have' and 'has'."

If we deal, as Allen suggests, with 'past' verb forms as forms separate from the 'present' verb forms we would have the following simple figure;

AN IDENTIFIED TIME IN THE PAST

THE MOMENT OF CODING



The above figure shows that there are two time-references (present and past) and three time-relationships (Earlier, Same, and Later), that have and has are used to show time-relationship in reference to the moment of coding, and that had is used to show time-relationship in reference to a definite (identified) past time.

On the basis of this function of the perfect forms to indicate 'earlier time', Allen explains why it is very common to omit had in clauses introduced by after. After "indicates the same kind of time-relationship that the auxiliary 'had'

²⁰The zero symbolizes verb forms that exhibit the 'third person singular morpheme [-s] and those forms that do not exhibit that morpheme.

would", so signaling 'earlier time' would be taken over by 'after' and "the use of 'had' ... would be redundant."

As has been mentioned before the form 'will have' belongs to a sub-system lower than that of the 'present' and 'past' forms. (See page 25 above). Allen devotes a section for the sub-systems where he studies the form 'will have' and the 'modals'.

This form can be represented in the last diagram by writing 'will have' to the left of the arrow under 'identified' will, to symbolize "time before an identified future time."

As to the use of this form, it can only be used in 'free',²¹ verb-clusters of which "the most typical example" is the verb-cluster functioning as "the main verb in a sentence." e.g.,

Mr. Dex won't be here at twelve o'clock. He will have gone to lunch by then.

Allen's study of the English verb system "originated as an attempt to analyze the differences between expanded and non-expanded verb-clusters." As a result of this analysis he came to believe that the primary difference between expanded

²¹A 'free' verb-cluster may occur in a clause introduced by one of the coordinators, e.g., Mr. Dex will be back at one o'clock, but I will have gone by then. It may occur also in a 'free' clause, that is a clause not closely bound to the rest of its sentence, and usually introduced by one of the following inclusions;

Although
as (because)
because
except

for
inasmuch as
since (because)
so (that)

Such (that)
though
while (although)
(See Allen, p. 177.)

and non-expanded verb clusters was one of 'incompleteness' as opposed to 'inclusiveness'." In other words, the form 'Be + ING' refers to a 'part of an action', whereas 'Have + v-n' refers to 'all of an action'.

In terms of the continuation of the action up to the moment of coding the non-expanded form is non-committal. In the example "The man drowned" the use of the non-expanded form would suggest that the act of drowning was finished. Then there is justification for believing that the predication expressed by the non-expanded form in "I have lived in New York for the last ten years" should indicate a completed predication. It is neutral as to whether "I" continue to live in New York or not. In order to add the additional information that "I" am still living in New York, the expanded form must be used: "I have been living in New York for the last ten years."

Allen believes that reference to duration is not a primary function of expansion. The main function of expansion in verb-clusters is to express "overlapping". The term "overlapping" is not intended to mean mere temporal overlapping, but "a grammatical device by means of which a speaker can show that he considers one event to be significantly related to another event, or to a point in time."

One type of overlapping is terminal overlapping. It is of two kinds: final and initial. The final is "regularly ex-

pressed by means of some form of Have plus been plus the ing form of the verb" and indicates that an Event continues up to, and possibly beyond, another Event or a point of time:

The launch had been drifting since 10 o'clock of the night before.

The initial is expressed "by means of some form of will plus be plus the ing form of the verb", and indicates that "an Event starts at, or a little before, another Event or point of time, and continues from that time on into the future."

I'll be working here for the next hour or two.

Another type is the concurrent overlapping in which "an interrelationship between two Events ... which are more or less co-extensive" is indicated:

Cathal had been handling setters when my own nurse was handling safety pins.

A third type is the concomitant overlapping in which the concomitants of an event overlap the moment of coding:

"You've been playing in the mud again."

The actual playing has not continued up to the speaking but its concomitants (mud on the hands and clothes) has.²⁰

²⁰Allen, pp. 159 - 170 and 204 - 214.

SUMMARY

It may be useful to give a summary here of the traditional and modern views in order to see things in perspective and thus be able to draw some conclusions.

Although the four grammarians agree that one use of the perfect tenses is to indicate earlier time, there is a discrepancy in their opinions as to the real meaning of these tenses. The following chart shows the traditional views:

	JESPERSEN	CURME
1) Uses of the past perfect	For actions finished before a definite point in the past.	For actions finished before a definite point in the past.
2) Uses of the present perfect	a. With present-inclusive time. b. For past actions that have results in the present. c. For actions completed at present. d. With time that is not yet completed. e. Emplies repetition.	a. For continued action in the present. b. For actions finished at an indefinite time in the past. c. For acts completed at the present moment. d. With time that is not wholly past but connected with the present. e. Used with a detached cold tone.
3) Uses of the future perfect	For actions finished before a definite point in future. (formal & pedantic)	For actions finished before a definite point in the future. (formal)

The chart clearly shows that there are no major divergences between Jespersen's and Curme's views. Except for function (e) of the present perfect the two views are almost identical.

As to the modern views, Joos distinguishes one meaning only for the perfect tenses. The perfect 'phase' designates actions having delayed results or consequences. It serves as a preparatory stage for later and more important events. Allen believes that the perfect tenses indicate unidentified (indefinite) time as opposed to definite time indicated by other tenses.

It can be seen from the above that the present perfect tense is a very complex one. But for teaching purposes, the following can be considered as its main functions:

1. It is used for completed actions in the past at an indefinite time.
2. It is used for completed actions at a time immediately preceding the present time.
3. It is used for completed actions in the past that have results still existing in the present.
4. It is used for actions that have begun in the past and still continue in the present.
5. It is used with a period of time that is not yet completed.

Expansion as studied through the function of the expanded perfect form, is explained by the four grammarians on four different bases:

JESPERSEN

CURME

ALLEN

JOOS

PEFECT	The frame	Continuation	Overlapping	Validity of
EXPANDED	theory.	of the action	(Interrela-	predication.
	(emotional	(Charged with	tionship of	for a certain
	coloring)	feeling)	the events)	time.

It can be concluded that grammarians agree on certain points and disagree on others. In the next chapter an attempt is made to investigate and put in order the functions of perfect and expansion.

Part III

REVIEW OF TEXTBOOKS

In the textbooks included in the review, the following has been noticed:

- 1- All the seven books (series and one-volume textbooks) introduced the simple before the perfect, and the non-expanded before the expanded.
- 2- With the exception of one series -- English for Today -- the form "will have + past participle" as a future perfect, has been practically ignored. Furthermore, as a modal perfect, it has hardly been treated on par with the other modals.
- 3- There is disagreement among textbook writers on the weight given to each of the tenses. While present perfect tense is given primary importance in all books, the other tenses range from almost insignificance (as in Learning English) to a value almost equal to that of the present perfect tense (as in English for Today).
- 4- There is disagreement also on the approach to the teaching of these tenses. Two series, English This Way and English 900, introduce the tense in a piece of conversation and teach it by repetition drills or through a reading passage. The approach is inductive, and not until later is the grammar properly introduced. It is then that "the student may be expected to learn to talk about grammatical structures he has learned, using conventional grammatical tenses."²¹

²¹English Language Services, Inc., English This Way ("Teacher's Manual and Key"; New York, The Macmillan Company, 1963), p. 7.

The other books introduce the tense after giving a short note on its uses.

The following is an attempt to show the various methods followed by these seven textbooks.

ENGLISH THIS WAY:²²

This is a series of twelve books that covers a six-year study. The approach is inductive. The authors assume that there is little need anywhere in the course for presenting grammar rules or lengthy grammatical explanations.

The method for teaching a tense in this series can be briefly described as follows:

1- A context is presented to be utilized in teaching the tense, e.g., This is 1963. Mary moved to Center City in 1960. She is still living there.

2- Questions are asked by the teacher in such a way as to require the use of the form of the tense to be taught (the present perfect expanded in this case). e.g.,

When did Mary move to Center City?

-- She moved there in 1960.

How long has she been living there?

-- She has been living there for three years.

-- She has been living there since 1960.

3- Practice comes next, based on substitution drills and conversational pieces. In units to follow, various techniques --

²²English Language Services, Inc., English This Way (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1963).

question tags, filling blanks, making new sentences -- are used to reinforce the learning of the new item. As for the uses of tenses, they are presented in the grammar section of Book 7, which is the beginning of the fourth year of study. The book mentions three different uses for the present perfect tense and one for the "progressive". The present perfect tense is used:

a- to express an action which began in the past and is still going on,

b- to express an action at an indefinite time in the past, and

c- to express an action that was completed just before the moment of speaking or writing.²³

The past perfect (simple and progressive) is used to express actions or events that happened before something else did, or before a definite time in the past. The emphasis, however, is on the continuation of action in the case of the progressive form.²⁴

The form "will have" is classified as a modal perfect, and its share of all the drills is only one sentence in an exercise where the student is asked to put "have" after the modals in a list of about ten tenses.

ENGLISH 900²⁵

This is a series of six books each of which is supposed

²³ English This Way, book 7, pp. 80 - 95.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 96.

²⁵ English Language Services, Inc., English 900 (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1964).

to cover a year of study. The approach is also inductive and the method is not very different from the one described above. Many drills of various kinds -- substitution, question-answer, fill-in-the-blanks, insertion (insert already or yet in their proper places in the sentences) -- distributed along several units constitute the whole body of tense presentation. A note about the difference between the use of the past tense and the present perfect is mentioned in book 5 of the series. The note tells the student to use the past form of the verb with time expressions like 'last week', 'a week ago' and the 'have' form with adverbs like 'never', 'already', and time expressions like 'since 1957' and 'for many years'.²⁶

The teacher's manual, however, has something to say (presumably to the teacher) about the use of the present perfect tense. This tense, it says, is used:

- a) to denote an activity begun in the past and continuing in the present.
- b) when the speaker is referring to a period of time that is not over yet.
- c) when the speaker is referring to the immediate past.²⁷

As for the use of the past perfect tense, the manual says it is used to describe the first in time of two completed actions in the past.²⁸

²⁶ English 900, book 5, p. 58.

²⁷ Ibid., Teacher's Manual, p. 78.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 90.

What is to be noted here is the absence of the form 'will have'. Although 'will' is studied under 'modals', and although all the other modals are studied in their 'M²⁹ + Have' form, 'will have' is completely ignored. It is also worth mentioning the fact that the present perfect continuous is introduced at the very end of the series (Unit 3, Book 6) without any special drills to practice its use.

ENGLISH THROUGH PATTERNS:³⁰

As its title indicates, this book views the language as made of patterns which, when mastered by the learners, will help them to handle an unlimited number of sentences based on these patterns.

The method followed is to start each lesson by introducing the new item to be taught and explaining something about its form, function, and use.

The only two uses mentioned for the present perfect tense are:

- a) To indicate an action beginning in the past and continuing to the present, and
- b) To indicate an action completed in the past at no definite time.

The drills on this tense are of two types:

²⁹M stands for any modal verb.

³⁰Robert T. Howling, Robert T. Axelby, and David E. Eskey, English Through Patterns (Beirut, Khayats, 1963).

1- Conversion: e.g. I needed new shoes two years ago and I need them now.

I have needed new shoes for two years.

2- Substitution drills based on the contrast between the present and past tenses:

e.g.: He has completed his work already.

Yesterday: He completed his work yesterday.

The present perfect continuous emphasizes, the book says, the continuation of the action in the present. The same types of exercises are used with the addition of one more: making questions. e.g., T- he - work (where)

S- Where has he been working?

Past perfect simple and continuous receive less attention and much less drills. The type of drills is nevertheless the same: Conversion and making questions. The form 'will have' is not included, neither as a modal nor as future.

MASTERING AMERICAN ENGLISH:³¹

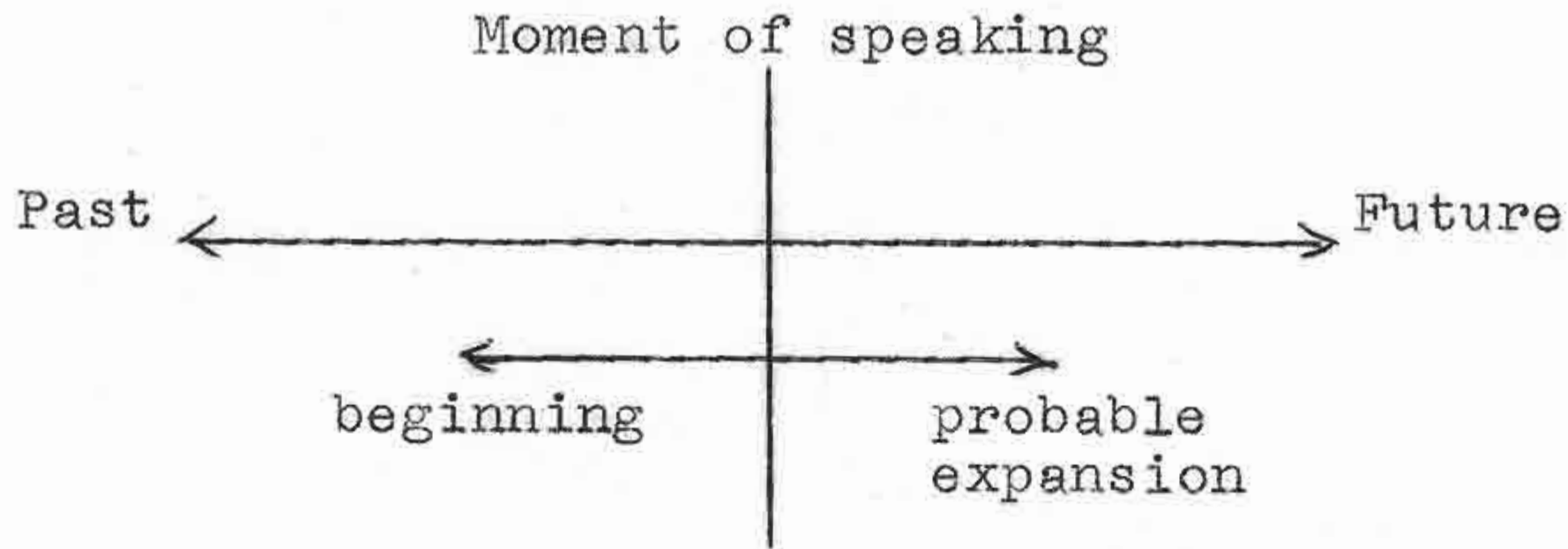
This book is different from the previous three books in two respects:

1) The definition and explanation of the tenses are comparatively lengthy.

2) A visual technique is used to explain certain tenses. The following figures show three of the four uses of the present

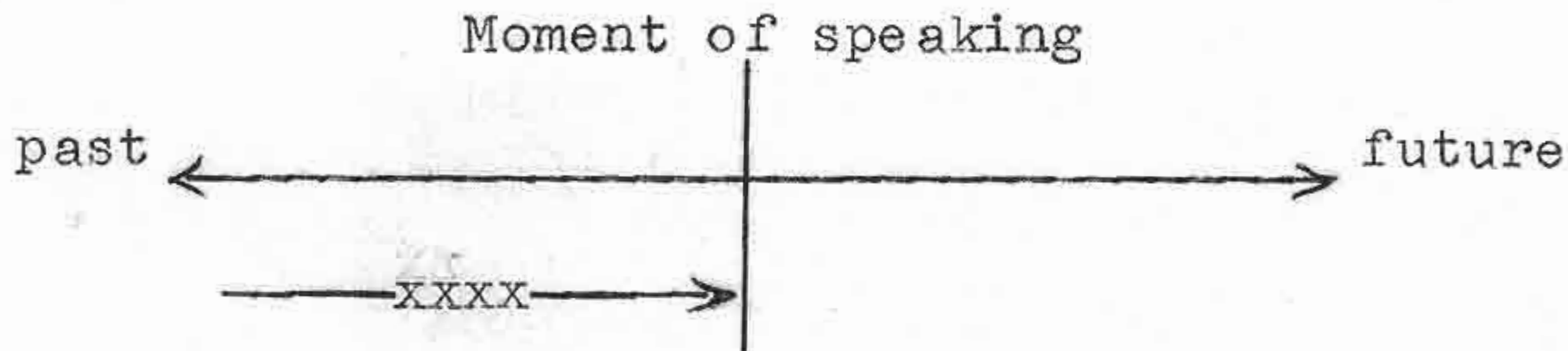
³¹Rebecca E. Hayden, Dorothy W. Pilgrim, and Aurora Quiros Haggard, Mastering American English (E.C., New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1956).

perfect and one of the past perfect:



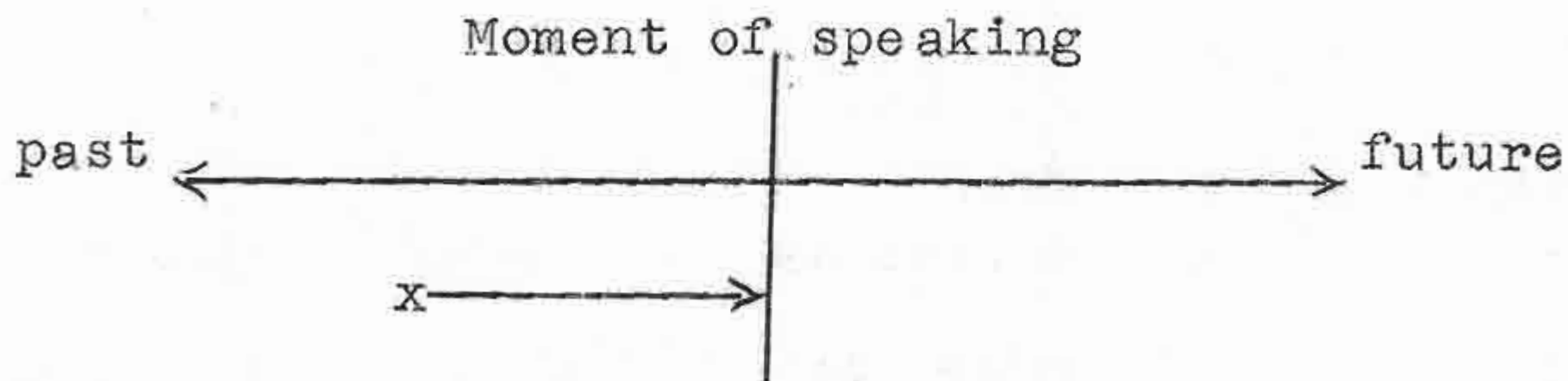
I've lived here for ten years.

This figure represents activities that began in the past, have continued up to, and may extend beyond the moment of speaking.



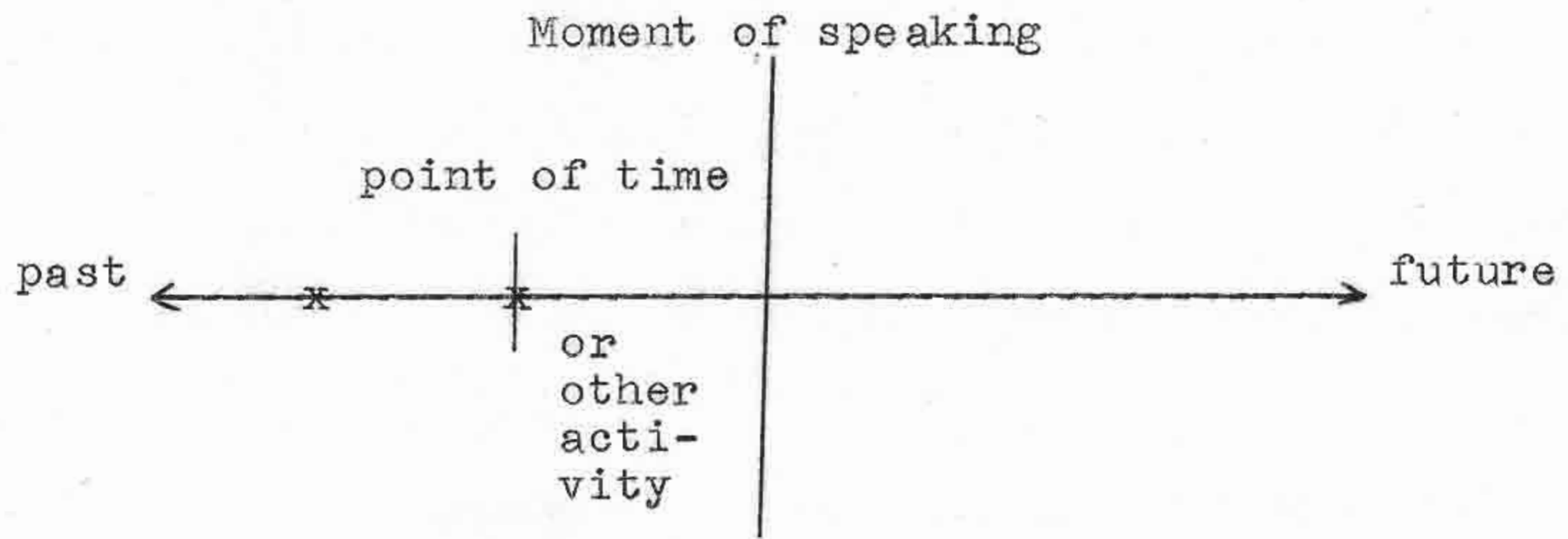
they've been to Miami several times.

The figure represents activities that have existed or have occurred sometime in the past before the moment of speaking.



They've just come in.

This figure represents activities that have been completed a relatively short time before the moment of speaking.



He'd taught before he came here.

This represents an activity which occurred either before another activity in the past or before a point of time in the past.

The progressive forms emphasize the continuous nature of the activity but are not represented in figures.

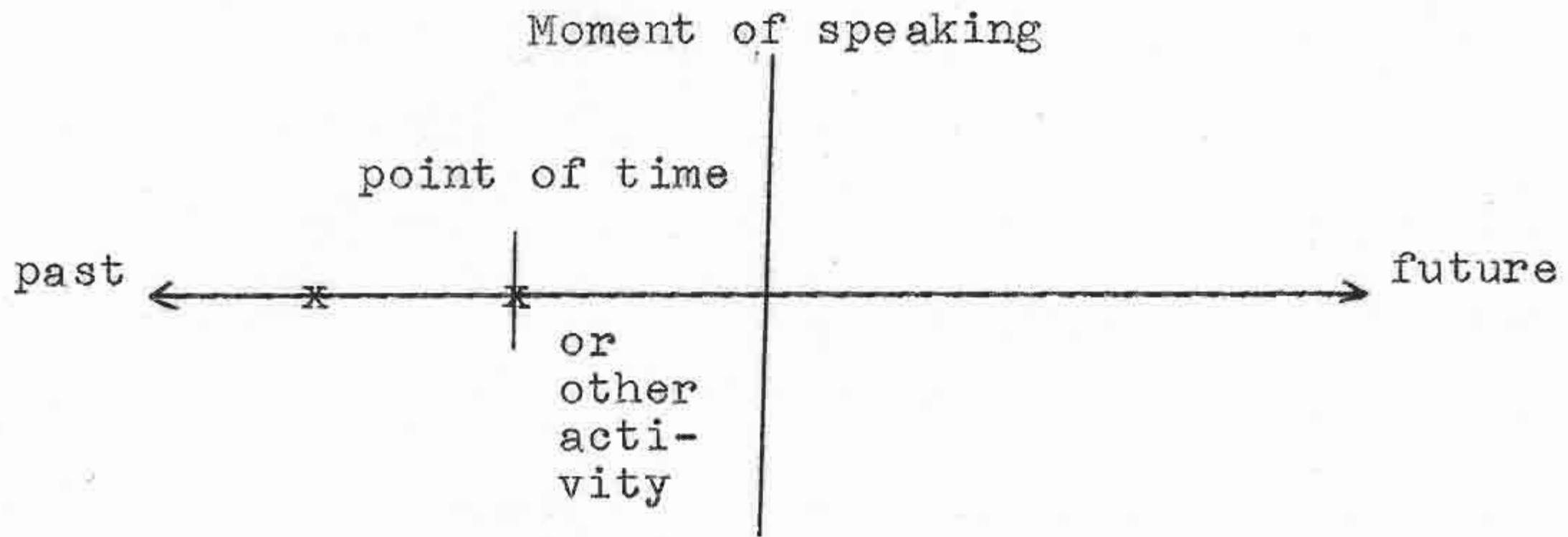
The past perfect progressive, the future perfect, and the future perfect progressive tenses are hardly mentioned and they are not studied because "they are not considered essential for the foreign student except perhaps on the recognition level."³²

The exercises are of the types: question-answer, correct the verb in brackets; but they are not prepared for oral practice because there is a space provided for the answers to be written.

ENGLISH SENTENCE PATTERNS:

This book by Lado and Fries presents a very systematic technique for the teaching of tenses. After mentioning the uses of the tense, it gives a lot of oral drills to meet each

³²Ibid., footnote, p. 95.



He'd taught before he came here.

This represents an activity which occurred either before another activity in the past or before a point of time in the past.

The progressive forms emphasize the continuous nature of the activity but are not represented in figures.

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ENGLISH SENTENCE PATTERNS:

This book by Lado and Fries presents a very systematic technique for the teaching of tenses. After mentioning the uses of the tense, it gives a lot of oral drills to meet each

³²Ibid., footnote, p. 95.

of the uses. There is nothing new about the uses of the simple and continuous tenses; they are very much like the ones described above in the other books.³³ This book, however, refers to the different verb-clusters by their forms and never by their meaning or use.

It is noteworthy that the book drills the students on the use of 'after' and 'before' with simple past tense before the introduction of the past perfect tense. It is the writer's view that students must first be drilled on the use of the past perfect tense with such adverbs and then may be trained to omit the form 'had - v-n' where there is no danger of being misunderstood or ambiguous. There is no seeming difference between the following two sentences:

He ate breakfast before he went to school.

He had eaten breakfast before he went to school.

But the omission of 'had' may sometimes cause ambiguity or indicate a meaning that is not intended. Compare the following two sentences:

I supposed he'd written to you.

I supposed he wrote to you.³⁴

ENGLISH FOR TODAY:³⁵

This is the only book in the selection which gives

³³This book is the source of English Through Patterns studied above.

³⁴R. L. Allen, Op. cit., p. 169.

³⁵The National Council of Teachers of English, English For Today (New York: The McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962).

equal weight to all tenses. The interesting thing here is the mathematical conception of the expanded perfect tenses. If the form for the expanded perfect is 'have - been - v-ing' which is a combination of the present progressive form and the present perfect form, then the meaning of the expanded perfect form must be the total meaning of the present progressive and the meaning of the present perfect tense.

The exercises start with demonstration, then move to the familiar types of substitution, question-answer, and repetition drills. Here is an example on the presentation of the present perfect tense:

Don is going to eat the apple.

He's eating the apple now.

He's just eaten it.

then the other types of drills follow.

LEARNING ENGLISH:³⁶

This book as its authors say, is based on the contrastive analysis of English and Arabic. Present perfect tense is drilled very heavily although only one of its uses is mentioned: that is, its use with general time expressions. The rest of the perfect tenses are studied under 'other perfect tenses'. The expanded forms are similar to the non-expanded forms in use, but they emphasise the idea of the continuation of an action. The form 'will have' is neither studied as a

³⁶Walter Lehn and William Slanger, Learning English (Cairo, The American University in Cairo Press, 1960).

modal perfect nor as a future perfect proper. The drills are the same as the ones described in the other books, but the question-answer type predominates.

Summary

Textbooks, by the mere fact that they are written for practical purposes, emphasize the applicable and useful. The textbook writer always finds himself in a position where he has to compromise and use his own judgment in order to choose the useful for his teaching material and discard what is inapplicable, truthful as it may be.

In all the above textbooks, the emphasis on present perfect tense is predominant. The reason for this perhaps is the high frequency and great use of the form have + past participle in speech and writing.

But of the various functions of this form, the one for actions that have started in the past but still continue into the present is common to all books. Discussion of the other functions vary. Two of them are of high frequency: the use of the present perfect form for actions that have happened at an indefinite time in the past, and its use for actions finished in the immediate past.

The use of the present perfect with general time expressions was emphasized in one textbook only,³⁷ and the use of the present perfect for a period of time that is not over yet was mentioned in English 900 only.

All other shades of meaning of the present perfect

³⁷ See the review of Learning English above.

were avoided. The emphasis seems to be on the uses that the foreign student can easily grasp and handle. This was perhaps the reason why, in presenting the expanded form of the present perfect, all the textbooks equated its functions with those of the non-expanded form with only a slight modification in meaning: that the expanded form emphasises the continuation of the action.

On the ground of the scarcity of its occurrence, the past perfect expanded was treated very briefly by some textbooks. One textbook³⁸ completely ignored it. The meaning emphasized again is the continuation of the action.

"Will have" received the least attention. It has been ignored in most textbooks on the assumption that it is very formal and that the form "have" is used instead in everyday speech in most contexts.

³⁸English 900 does not have any drills on the past perfect expanded.

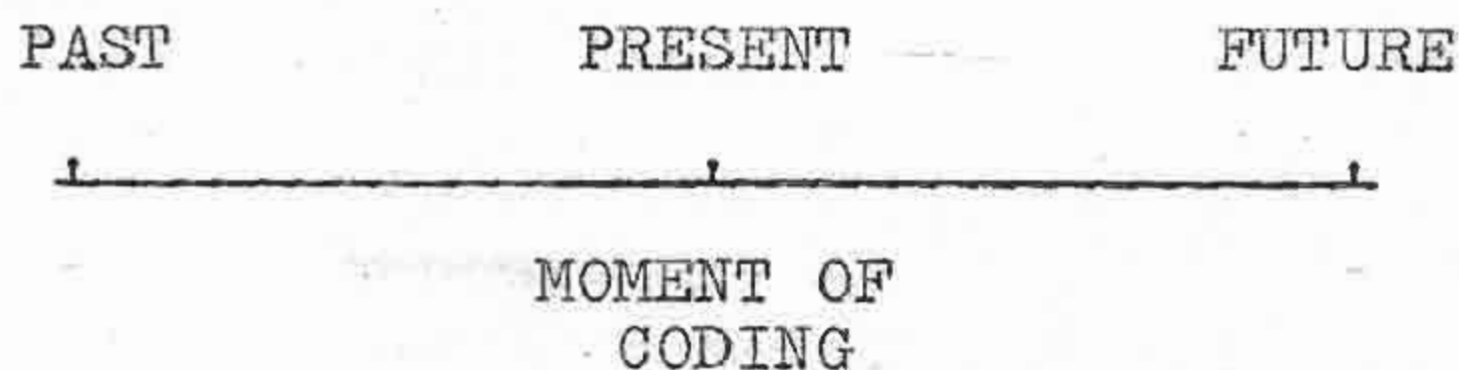
CHAPTER II

THE PERFECT TENSES -- EXPANDED AND NON-EXPANDED

A- Perfect tenses and their relations to three reference-times.

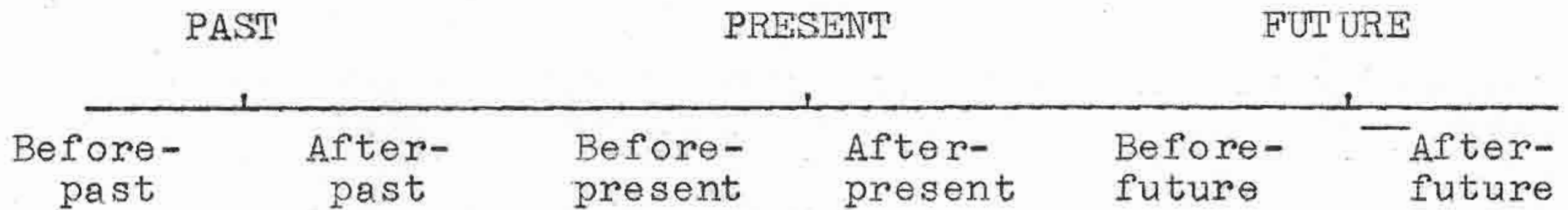
Our interest in this section is in the use of the different perfect forms to express time.

Time is conceived of as made up of three kinds of time 'past', 'present' and 'future'. Within each of these 'times' a moment of time can be chosen to be a reference-point. The reference-point in the present is, of course, NOW 'the moment of coding'. If we represent each point by a dot, we will have the following diagrams:



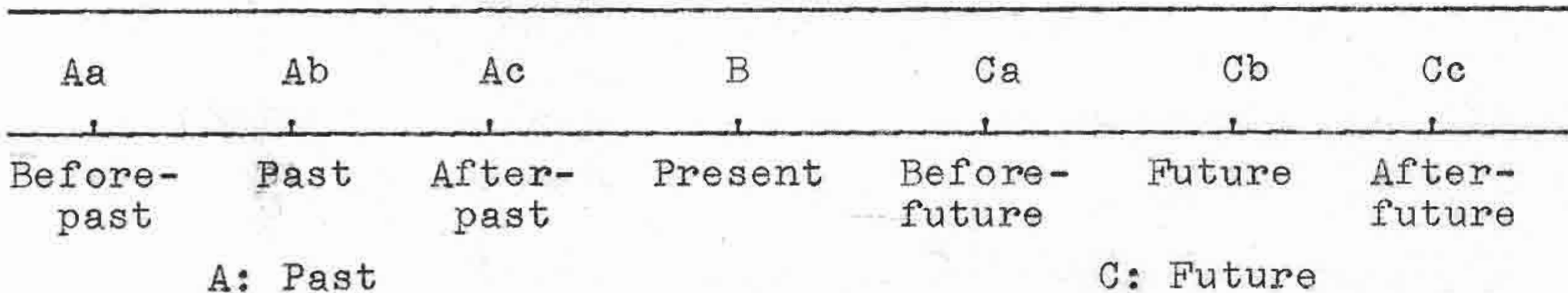
The speaker, however, may choose to refer to an action as happening either before, at the same time as, or after each of the three points of reference, thus we will have nine fundamental points of time:¹

¹As a result of his conception of time as having two parts, the past and the future, separated by the present moment which "like a mathematical point has no dimension, but is continually fleeting", (Jespersen's Modern English Grammar p. 1), Jespersen represents the fundamental points as following (Jespersen, p.2):



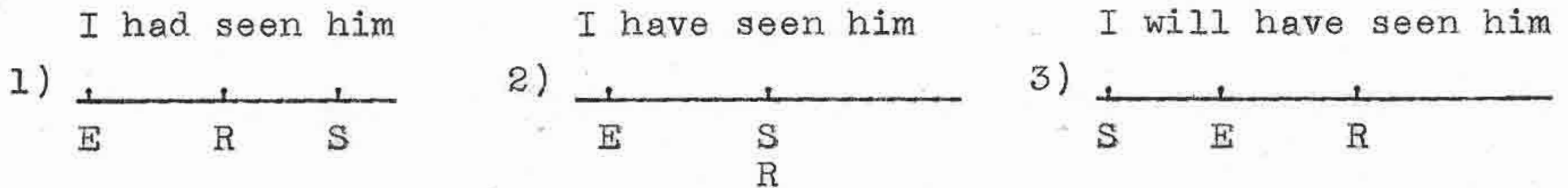
English uses, among other things, verb forms to indicate time and/or time-relationships. The past morpheme { -d } is used to indicate a past time, the base form, with certain limitations, to indicate the present time, and 'will' to indicate future time. The perfect form is consistently used to indicate times earlier than the foregoing times.

If we represent the event designated by the perfect form as E, the reference point as R, and the moment of coding (the moment of speaking) as S, we will have the following diagrams:²

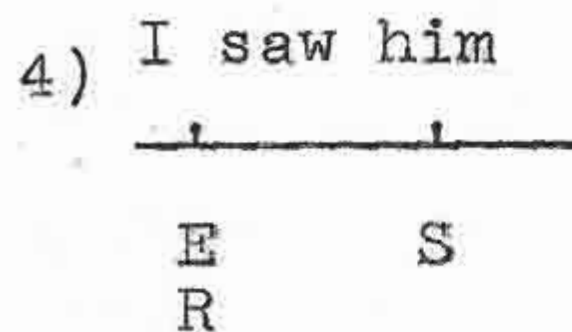


But Jespersen's conception of the present moment as a fleeting point in time, if philosophically true, is not so in practice. In our everyday behavior, and language is behavior, we act on the assumption that 'present' is a static moment, that 'past' and 'future' are two points, one on each side, the first moving away from present and the second towards it. This is manifest in our language behavior; we speak of 'the coming days', and wait for 'the days to come', Don't we sadly look back and see how 'days have elapsed', and watch the past 'running out of sight?'

²The symbols are taken from Reichenback's Elements of Symbolic Logic (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1947).



If we graphically represent an event designated by the use of the past form of the verb, we will have the following:



By comparing diagram (4) with the above three diagrams (1, 2, & 3) we notice that in diagrams (1, 2, & 4) the event E is placed before the moment of speaking S. That is to say that E in the three diagrams 1, 2, and 4 belongs to the time before-present, while in 3 it belongs to the time after-present. How are we then to differentiate the three E's which belong to the past? That is, which E is expressed by which form?

There seems to be no difficulty in distinguishing the events -- and the forms that express them -- represented in diagram 1. Events here are placed in reference to a point in the past which, in turn, is seen in reference to the moment of speech. The past perfect form is used to indicate such actions:

The train had left when he arrived at the station.

It is fairly clear that the past form may also be used to express this sort of time-relationship. This is common when there is a clue to indicate that one event occurred before another event in the past:

I met him before he came here.

Placing R (in diagram 1) at a point different from each of the points of E and S made it easy for us to identify the form which expresses E. But the case is not so with diagrams 2 and 4, where R is superimposed on either E or S. Thus if we disregard R for the moment, we see that E stands in the same relation to S in diagram 2 as in diagram 4. Both E's are placed in the past. Can there be a demarcation line that separates the areas of the two E's? As they stand, the two diagrams do not show how far into the past the area of before-present goes, neither do they show how far to the right the area of past stretches. This is so because the English verb elements per se do not indicate ranges of time, they indicate, instead, times and time-relations. English uses other devices to indicate lengths of time. The perfect form may indicate periods of time that range from the immediate past as in "I've just arrived", to infinity as in "The earth has revolved for millions and millions of years". So it can be seen that the areas of before-present and past, overlap and intermingle. What events, then, does the perfect form designate, and what events does the past form designate? The answer, to quote R. L. Allen, is that the past form "merely designates as identified sometime within the total stretch of unidentified (i.e. indefinite) time covered by the auxiliaries have and has."³ So, "I have seen him" refers to a before-present time that is indefinite, while "I saw

³R. L. Allen, op. cit., p. 164.

him" refers to a definite time in the past like yesterday or an hour ago. It is not necessary for the definite past point to be explicitly indicated; it can be implied or be within the common experience of the two speakers.

What has been said about time and time relationship in the case of the above diagrams, can also be said in the case of diagram (3). All the 'time' after the present may be indicated by the use of 'will'. 'Will' may indicate time in the immediate future, as in "I'll be back in a minute", or far away from the present, as in "I'll never forget that."

The form "will have" is used to express indefinite time before a definite point in the future:

"I'll have left by five o'clock."

"Will have" may indicate any time between the moment of speaking and five o'clock.

As time-indicators, the perfect forms express time seen as stretching from an indefinite point in time up to the point of reference. This can be represented by the following figure:⁴

⁴The figure is adapted from J. Millington Ward's The Use of Tenses in English (Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1954).

The circle represents time indicated by the use of the perfect form and the vertical line indicates the reference point. Time is seen as moving from left to right. Whenever the circle touches the line from the left side, then it is a perfect time, i.e., time expressed by a perfect form.

N.B. The reference point can be any point in the past or present or future.

B- Expansion in the perfect tense.

This section is an attempt to trace the different meanings that expansion adds to verb-clusters. The method of discovery we are going to follow is that of minimal contrast. From each context wherein expansion occurs two minimally different sentences are contrasted. The contrasted sentences will be different from each other only by the presence of the marker be + ing. Any noticeable difference in meaning between the two sentences will then be attributed to the difference in form. i.e., to the presence of be + ing.

Expansion in verb-clusters is indicated by the presence of the form 'be + ing'. This form is 'versatile', as Twaddell says, because its contribution to the meaning of the predication varies according to the nature of the verb: whether it is durative, non-durative, repeatable etc.⁵

But not all verbs willingly welcome this versatile form. Thus in terms of their acceptance or non-acceptance of expansion, verbs can be divided into two groups: 'status verbs' and 'process verbs'.

Status verbs are those which resist expansion "until they are absolutely forced to accept it".⁶ And when they accept it they acquire a very special meaning. The examination

⁵W. F. Twaddell, The English Verb Auxiliary (Providence R.I., Brown University Press, 1960) p. 7.

⁶Joos, op. cit., p. 116.

of such special meanings will be left out of consideration because it is beyond the scope of this study. These verbs can be classified under the following categories:⁷

1. Verbs of perception: hear,⁸ see, smell, taste...
2. Verbs which express knowledge or belief or an opinion, a doubt, a hope, a supposition: know, think, doubt, suppose, hope...
3. Verbs which express love, liking, preference, objection, dislike, loathing: love, worship, adore, prefer, abhor...
4. Verbs which express wish, desire: want, wish, desire...
5. Verb 'to be' when it expresses a state.
6. Certain miscellaneous verbs; consist of, belong to, matter...

Process verbs can be subdivided into: point-action verbs, terminate verbs, and durative verbs.

In the following section we will see what semantic function the form 'be-ing' performs upon the verbs in the three subgroups.

Point-action verbs: Verbs such as begin, start, commence, break out, come, burst out, leave, stop, finish, quit, etc., are called point-action because they call attention "not to an act as a whole, but to only one point, either the beginning

⁷This classification is taken from J. Millington-Ward's The Uses of Tenses in English (London: Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 1955), pp. 10 - 16.

⁸The verbs see and hear may be used in the expanded form when they mean interview and give an audition to, respectively.

or the final point".⁹

A characteristic of this type of verbs is that in their perfect form, they accept expansion only in what I will call "bound predication." 'He's been coming' does not occur, but 'he's been coming half an hour late for the last week' is perfect English.

When the expanded perfect form is used (that is when the predication is bound) the attention is focused on the continuation of the action.¹⁰ Furthermore, the implication is that the action may probably continue in the immediate future.

1. (a) He's come to see me every morning this week.
(b) He's been coming to see me every morning this week. (It is probable that he will be coming to the end of the week.)
2. (a) The train has left an hour late for the last three days.
(b) The train has been leaving an hour late for the last three days. (It will probably do so in the following few days.)

In each pair of the above sentences the first sounds more reportorial and the second more forceful.

Terminate verbs: These are verbs such as motion, wince, at, hit, shoot, wink at, take, throw, sigh, stumble, fall, flash, shatter, etc., which indicate that the action began,

⁹Curme, op. cit., p. 377.

¹⁰All the textbooks that have been reviewed mention the point. See p. 46 above.

and terminated within a very limited time.

The use of the expanded perfect form with such verbs indicates repeated (frequent) occurrence of the action designated by the verb. The non-expanded form is unmarked, i.e., non-committal as to whether the act is single or repeated.

1. (a) He's motioned to me. (non-committal; may be one, may be more.)
(b) He's been motioning to me. (Repeated occurrence).
2. (a) He's winked at me.
(b) He's been winking at me.

Two things are noteworthy here:

1. The meaning of repeated occurrence may be expressed in a predication of the non-expanded form, but only by a means, other than the verb, such as an adverb of frequency or a time-expression.

He's often winked at me.

He's winked at me for half an hour.¹¹

But now the question arises as to the difference between the use of the expanded and non-expanded forms in this latter case. The answer perhaps, lies in the emotional coloring felt in predications in the expanded form. The non-expanded form conveys the idea of detachment and matter-of-

¹¹The same means is used with point-action verbs to indicate repeated occurrence of the action. e.g., She has often opened the window and sat watching the street.

factness, whereas the expanded form charges the predication with feeling.¹² Compare the following two sentences;

Wages have fallen for the past two weeks. (Matter of
fact statement.)

Wages have been falling for the past two weeks. (Said
with dismay.)

2. The expanded form, by its emphasis on the iterative aspect of the verb, matches the repeated occurrences of the actions to their separate occasions. As such, it is more natural, hence more forceful, to use the expanded form with time-expressions.

He's been winking at me for half an hour,
is probably more forceful and natural than

He's winked at me for half an hour.

Durative verbs:

Verbs such as wait, look for, watch, sleep, live, read, do, and walk are called durative because duration is an inherent quality in their lexical meanings. Actions designated by such verbs start and continue along the range of time until a clue sets limitation to their duration.

With these verbs the form be + ing, because of its meaning of "limited duration" emphasizes the idea of duration and sets its limitation also.

¹²See Curme's Syntax, p. 360 for the meaning of detachment conveyed by the use of the non-expanded perfect form, and p. 376 for the emotional coloring conveyed by the use of the expanded form. See also Jespersen's Modern English Grammar, p. 180.

The expanded form of some of these verbs may indicate the incompleteness of the action as opposed to the completion of the action indicated by the use of the non-expanded form.

(1) I've lost the book which I've read.

I've lost the book which I've been reading.

In the first example above it is clear that the second verb-cluster (have read) refers to a completed action (i.e., I have finished reading the book). But in the second example the action of reading is not yet completed.

It is not always that the expanded form indicates incompleteness of the action. In certain situations, when used with some durative verbs, it indicates completed actions just as the non-expanded form does.

(1) I've been sleeping for two hours.

I've slept for two hours.

(2) I've been looking for you everywhere.

I've looked for you everywhere.

The completion of action is indicated by the fact that the speaker is awake now (in the first pair of sentences), and that he has found the one he has been looking for (in the second pair).

What is the difference then, if any, between the use of the two forms in this case?

The difference, the writer believes, is probably limited to the forcefulness and the emotion conveyed by the

use of the expanded form.¹³ The non-expanded form is factual and neutral as to the feeling of the user.

Another case related to the topic is the use of the two forms with some other durative verbs to indicate the continuation of the action in the present. The verb 'live' is an example. In all the textbooks that have been reviewed in this study there seemed to be a tendency to consider both, 'I've lived here for the last two years', and 'I've been living here for the last two years' parallel as far as continued action in the present is concerned. Robert L. Allen, however, states that in terms of the continuation of the action, it is only the expanded form that is 'marked', whereas the non-expanded form is 'non-committal' i.e., neutral.

But for the convenience of the foreign student of English, this minor difference can be ignored, since both forms, in this case, refer to an action that is still continuing in the present.

The use of the form "be + ing" is highly correlated with time expressions that emphasise a limited duration of

¹³A score of native (American) speakers were asked to comment on the difference between the two sentences in each pair above. They all admitted the presence of a difference, and unanimously explained it on the basis of forcefulness and 'lack of formality' felt in the use of the expanded form. Professor James Redden, of the CELRT at A.U.B., said, when asked about the difference between I've slept for two hours and I've been sleeping for two hours, that the former is more of a matter-of-fact statement, and the second implies immediacy of the action. However, Professor Daniel Cook, of the English Department at A.U.B. does not fully agree.

time. It is as if these time expressions would indicate in the time-scale the section along which the expanded form pins down the designated activities. Time expressions like "all day", and "all year" are very often used with the expanded form.

Additional implication observable in all the above uses of the expanded form is that of "recent time". Jespersen gives the following two examples to show the contrast:

"I've been making some little trifling observations which interested and perplexed me much...".

(The meaning is "recently").

"I've made some little trifling observations...".

(Refers to his whole life).

But it is obvious that this last function of the expanded form has no entity by itself, for it is concomitant to the first two functions.

The chart on the next page is a summary of the contrast between the two forms when used with different types of verbs.

Verb

Non-expanded Form

Expanded Form

I've seen him.
(Completed action)

Does not occur normally
(Special meaning: Repeated occurrence)

1- Point action

He's left.
(Completed action)
The train has left an hour late this week.
(Factual)

The train has been leaving an hour late this week.
(More forceful - possible duration in future)

2- Terminate
a) Without time expressions
b) With time expressions

He's hit the dog.
(Neutral)
He's hit the dog for an hour.
(Factual)

He's been hitting the dog.
(Repeated occurrence)
He's been hitting the dog for an hour.
(More forceful - emotional)

3- Durative
Group a

He's read the book.
(Completed action)

He's been reading the book.
(Incomplete action)

Group b

He's slept for one hour.
(Factual)

He's been sleeping for one hour.
(More forceful - emotional)

Group c

I've lived here for five years.
(Continuation of the action in the present)

I've been living here for five years.
(Continuation of the action in the present)

CHAPTER III

ARABIC STRUCTURES FOR NOTIONS EXPRESSED BY THE ENGLISH PERFECT TENSES

A basic assumption in this study is that some of the Arab's difficulties in learning English stem from the different behaviours of the two languages. A comparison of the two behaviours may reduce the difficulty. This comparison would pinpoint the differences and similarities of the two languages in the examined area. Teaching material based on the findings can then be developed.

Since the problem studied in this paper is the perfect tenses, this chapter will be concerned with the linguistic structures which Arabic uses for the notions expressed in English by the use of the perfect forms. One of these, the future perfect expanded, with its Arabic parallel, will be excluded from this comparison. This will leave us with five perfect tenses: three non-expanded (past, present, and future), and two expanded (past and present).

Past Perfect

English uses the past form of have plus the past participle of the verb to refer to an activity that took place before another activity in the past or before a point of time in

the past. (See page 31 above). To express this relationship Arabic¹ uses the past form of k-n (be) with the appropriate subject inflection, followed by the past form of the verb also with the appropriate subject inflection.

/kən ʔəkəl wəʔt+l iʃiit/

He had eaten when I came.

When there is no fear of any ambiguity as to which of the two actions occurred first -- as when ʔəb+l (before) or bə9d (after) is present in the sentence -- only the past form of the verb is used.

/ʔəkəl ʔəb+l maʔiʃiit/

He ate before I came

The omission of the k-n form in this case parallels the omission of 'had' in included clauses introduced by 'after'. (See page 27 above).

It is clear from the above that Arabic, like English, possesses a distinct structure for expressing the time-relationship "before past" as contrasted with simple past. One will therefore expect little difficulty in teaching Arab students the use of the had form, especially when these parallels are made use of in the instructions. The main task is to drill the students on the English form so that they will recall the

¹Arabic here refers to colloquial Arabic, since it is the everyday speech habits that constitute the student's point of departure, and it is these habits that interfere with the learner's attempt to acquire the new habits in the target language.

form had with the same spontaneity with which they recall the Arabic form.

Present Perfect

The actions expressed by the use of have + past participle in English are of two types: complete and incomplete. Complete actions can be finished in the immediate past (He's just eaten) or at an indefinite time in the past (He's eaten). Arabic does not distinguish either of these two notions from those expressed by simple past:

He's just eaten /həlləʔ ʔəkəl/

He's eaten /ʔəkəl/

While the presence of a definite past time-expression changes the English form, it does not cause any change in the Arabic form:

He ate an hour ago /ʔəkəl min saa9a/

It can then be seen that the Arabic past form has a wide range that requires the use of two forms in English, the present perfect and the past. Thus great care has to be taken in teaching this aspect of the present perfect tense. The students must first be taught the other uses of the present perfect and then introduced to this aspect. Extensive drilling is essential since the students would tend to use the past form where the present perfect would be expected.

As for the incomplete actions, they are not only expressed by the use of the English present perfect non-expanded,

but also, with negligible difference, by the use of the present perfect expanded. (See page 59 above). Arabic has one distinguishing form (the S-R form) that parallels the English expanded and non-expanded forms. But the use of this form in Arabic has one limitation: it is conditioned by the presence of a time-expression.

a- He's lived here for the last two years.

/SəRLu 9aay+š sintæn hɔ:n/

b- He's been living here for the last two years.

/SəRLu 9aay+š sintæn hɔ:n/

The form is made of the past form of S-R (become) -- or more correctly perhaps (come to be) -- followed by the preposition l (for) inflected according to the subject, followed by the verb in the agentive form. When there is no time-expression, however, the behavior of Arabic varies. To express a notion indicated in English by the use of the perfect non-expanded, Arabic uses the past form of the verb:

He's lived here.

/9aaš hɔ:n/

And to express the notion indicated by the use of the perfect expanded form, Arabic uses the past form of k-n plus the agentive form:

He's been living here.

/kæn 9aay+š hɔ:n/

What adds to the complexity of the problem is that this

Arabic form corresponds also to the English past expanded form:

He was living here.

/kən ʔaay+š hɔ:n/

But why complicate the problem when one can easily avoid it? The present perfect, expanded and non-expanded, that indicates incomplete actions can be presented to the student in time-expression contexts only. Sentences like "I've lived here" and "I've been living here" can be ignored in teaching, except for comparison's sake perhaps. One can then concentrate on the greatest difficulty in teaching the present perfect, that is its use to indicate complete actions. Here the teaching technique must provide for special exercises which will clear up the confusion between the use of the past form and the present perfect form. The emphasis must be on the non-pastness of the form, and on its close relation to the present.

Future Perfect

English uses the form will have to indicate actions that will be finished before a definite point in the future (See page 31 above). To express the same idea, Arabic uses the present form of k-n (be) with subject inflection prefixed by the morpheme { b }, followed by the past form of the verb inflected according to the subject also.

He'll have eaten by five o'clock.

/bikvun ʔəkəl ssaz ʔa xəmsi/

This tense will not receive much emphasis on the

ground of its low frequency of occurrence. Furthermore, no difficulty is expected to arise in teaching it, since it has a parallel form in Arabic.

Past Perfect Expanded

English uses the expanded form of the past perfect to indicate the continuation of the action up to a definite point in the past. The Arabic form for expressing the meaning indicated by the use of this English form is made of the past form of k-n (be), inflected according to the subject, followed by the present form of the verb with subject inflection, and prefixed by the morpheme {ma}:²

He'd been eating when I came.

/kən mayakul la^{ma} +i^{ya}it/

But this Arabic form can also be used as a parallel to the English past expanded form:

He was eating when I came.

/kən mayakul la^{ma} +i^{ya}it/

Owing to the fact that this Arabic form is parallel to two English forms, the teaching of the past perfect expanded may

²'ma' is the prefix added to process verbs to emphasise the continuation of the action up to a certain point of time, or to indicate the repeated occurrence of the action. Process verbs are those liable to be interrupted and willfully stopped or ended, such as /d-r-s/ (study), /k-t-b/ (write), /ʔ-k-l/ (eat), /q-f-z/ (jump). Status verbs take the agentive form in the expanded form. /9-s/ (live) becomes /9aay+s/ (living, liver), /q-9-d/ (sat) becomes /qaa9+d/ (sitter), /n--m/ (sleep) becomes /naay+m/ (sleeper).

not be easy to handle. But the situation will not be so if the past perfect expanded is presented with time-expressions. The presence of time-expressions dictates the addition of S-R form to this structure.

He'd been eating for two hours when I came.

/kən SəRLU saa9tæn mɔyaaku1 lamma +ʃiit/

Thus the combination of k-n and S-R forms will be parallel to the English past perfect expanded, while the form k-n by itself will be parallel to the English past expanded form.

Thus, teaching the past perfect expanded with time-expressions is not expected to cause difficulties, since Arabic has a special form as its parallel.

Present Perfect Expanded

Generally English uses this form to express the continuation of the action up to the present moment. We have set forth the Arabic equivalent form when used with verbs of the 'live' sort. (See present perfect above, and footnote on page 67). For the present perfect expanded form of other types of verbs, Arabic has a different structure:

He's been eating for two hours.

/SəRLU saa9tæn mɔyaaku1/

The form is made of the past form of S-R followed by the preposition l (for) having the subject inflection, followed by the present form of the verb having the subject inflection and prefixed by the morpheme {mə}.

If no time-expression is present, however, Arabic uses a k-n form which is, as seen above, equivalent to two other English forms, the past and past perfect expanded:

He's been eating

/kən məyaakul/

The only way out of this messy multifunctional form is to introduce the expanded form of the perfect with time expressions. This will leave us with two Arabic parallel forms:

S-R form for the present perfect,

/SəRLu saaɣtən məyaakul/

He's been eating for two hours.

and S-R form combined with k-n form for the past perfect expanded:

/kən SəRLu saaɣtən məyaakul/

He'd been eating for two hours.

Summary

By word of summary, we can say that little difficulty is expected in teaching the past perfect tense, since Arabic has the k-n form as parallel to it. One function of the present perfect (i.e., for completed actions) has no special form in Arabic as its parallel. The past form is used instead. Thus extensive drilling and much attention will be focused on this function. Since the other function of the present perfect has the SaaR form corresponding to it in Arabic, little, if any, difficulty is expected in teaching it. The expanded form for the above two tenses has the Arabic SaaR form also. In teaching it, emphasis will be on its use with time-expressions, since this is the only context in which the SaaR form is used.

Arabic has the kuun form as parallel to the English perfect form. Little difficulty is expected in this area, and the aim in teaching the form will have, however, does not go far beyond the recognition level.

CHAPTER IV

TEACHING MATERIAL

A- The Present Perfect Tense

We have seen¹ that the form HAVE + PAST PARTICIPLE is used to indicate:

1. Completed actions in the past at an indefinite time.
2. Completed actions at a time immediately preceding the present time (moment of coding).
3. Completed actions in the past that have results still existing in the present.
4. Actions that have begun in the past and still continue in the present.
5. A period of time that is not yet complete.

Except for some special cases, such as I've got, all the above uses of the present perfect tense can be classified under two main categories:

A- The use of the form have + past participle to indicate past complete actions that have bearing on the present (this would include the first three uses).

B- Its use with time extending from the past up to the

¹See page 32 above.

present moment (this would include the other two uses).

In this study, the teaching material has been prepared in such a way as to include all the uses of this tense classified under the above two categories with their sub-divisions. But this is not all that is to the point. The present perfect tense is difficult for the student to understand, presumably because of interference from his native language. The Arab student often finds it hard to distinguish between the uses of the present perfect and the simple past. He uses the past form of the verb to refer to things that are exclusively in the domain of the present perfect tense. In other words, the English present perfect is, to the Arab student, a simple past tense. Any technique for teaching the present perfect tense to Arab students must not then overlook this fact, or else it will fall short of its objectives.

Special exercises, therefore, have been prepared in compliance with the concept of the non-pastness of the present perfect. Since these exercises are specially prepared for the solution of a problem peculiar to Arabs, it is best to have it as the first point of attack.

The Non-Pastness of the Present Perfect Tense

It seems self-evident that a tense named present perfect is not past. But this seeming certainty fades into confusion and ambiguity when we observe that this "present" tense always signifies actions that have begun in the past. Here lies the difficulty of the present perfect tense: while it has one foot in the past, it has the other in the present.

Our immediate teaching objective, then, at this stage, is to build up the concept of the non-pastness of the present perfect tense. The attainment of this objective wholly depends on the fulfillment of one condition: that the students be taught and exposed to the past tense in connection -- and only in connection -- with time-expressions. The fulfillment of this restriction serves our purpose in three different ways:

1. Past tense will be strongly associated with time-expressions, the absence of which then requires the absence of the past tense, and naturally, calls for the use of a different tense -- the present perfect in this case.

2. The two tenses will thus be clearly shown to be different and to have different uses.

3. Different as they are, the two tenses will be felt to have something in common, which will later enable the students to understand the close relationship between the present perfect and the past tense.

Before carrying out any of the following drills, the teacher tells the students what he is expecting them to do.

He writes sentences of the following type on the blackboard:

1. I saw that movie many times last year.
2. I read Oliver Twist two years ago.
3. We met our teacher yesterday.
4. We had our lunch at twelve.
5. I wrote my homework last night.

With the palm of his hand, the teacher covers the time-expression at the end of the first sentence. The students are to respond,

1. I have seen that movie many times.

Then he does the same with the second sentence; the students would respond,

2. I have read Oliver Twist.

And so on to the end of the exercise.

This part of the procedure needs extensive drill so that students' responses may be as spontaneous as possible. The teacher must aim at perfection at this stage because complete mastery of the present perfect structure at the mechanical stage is essential for its mastery at higher levels.

When the students are giving the desired response with the desired speed and spontaneity, the teacher may start with an exercise like the following:

1. I (see) this movie many times last year.
2. I (see) this movie many times.
3. He (write) a letter yesterday.
4. He (write) a letter.

The students here are required to supply the correct tense of the verb in parentheses. This exercise is slightly more difficult than the one before it. Here the students are forced to select the tense and not merely to mechanically echo their teacher.

To carry the drill a little further, the teacher can practice his students on the following type of substitution drill:

Model: I saw the movie yesterday.

Examples: Have seen I have seen the movie.

John John has seen the movie.

Last year John saw the movie last year.

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. We | 6. he |
| 2. yesterday | 7. last night |
| 3. have seen | 8. they |
| 4. the game | 9. she |
| 5. watched | 10. has seen |

In this drill the students are required to make a double change where necessary. It is clear they will not be able to do so unless a complete mastery of the structures in the previous two exercises has been attained.

The first stage is presenting the present perfect tense was a sort of negative stage, the objective being purely to make students realize that present perfect is not a past tense. We have shown what present perfect is not, but we haven't

yet shown what it is, how it functions, and what various uses it has. It is time now for the positive part of the procedure, at the end of which the students should have complete mastery of this tense and an insight into the way its system functions.

One point on which all grammarians agree is that the present perfect links, in some way or another, a past action with a present state of things. This past-present relationship can be either explicit or implicit. It is explicit when the present perfect is used with time expressions that clearly extend from the past to the present.² It is implicit when the present perfect expresses completed actions in the past that have bearing on the present (a trait more characteristic of telic verbs) or action that start in the past and continue into the present (a trait more characteristic of atelic verbs).

These explicit and implicit manifestations represent the core function of the present perfect tense. In dealing with them the teacher should start from the explicit manifestation and move to the implicit one. The material for this stage, in compliance with this principle, will put emphasis on the explicit part first.

Present Perfect Tense With Time Expressions:

The teacher can sensitize his students to the present-past relationship by examples using the same time-expression

²Time-expressions like since, by now, for (when not used to express a definite period at time in the past), this morning or this afternoon (when spoken in the morning or in the afternoon respectively), this year, etc...

with both present perfect and simple past:

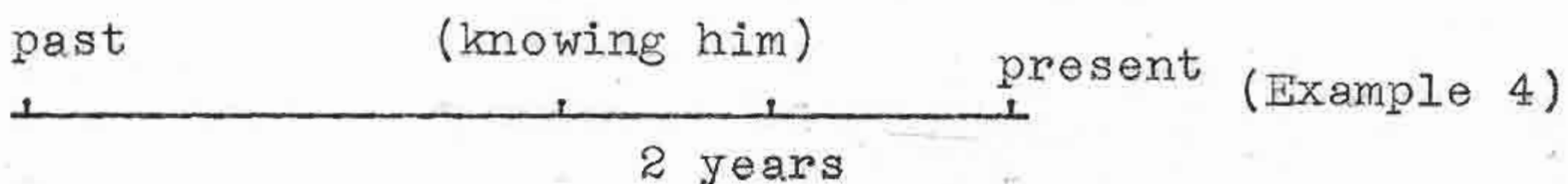
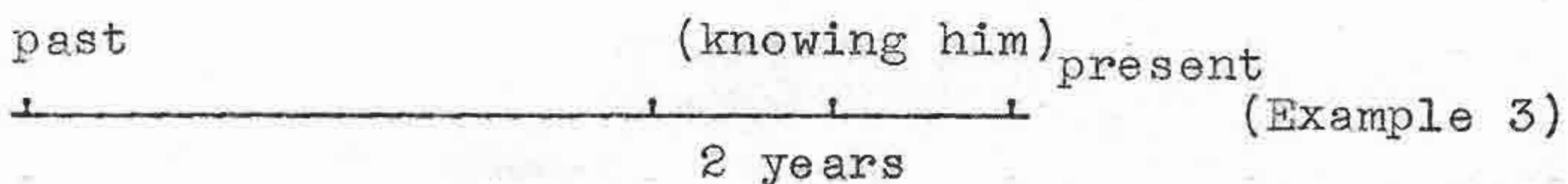
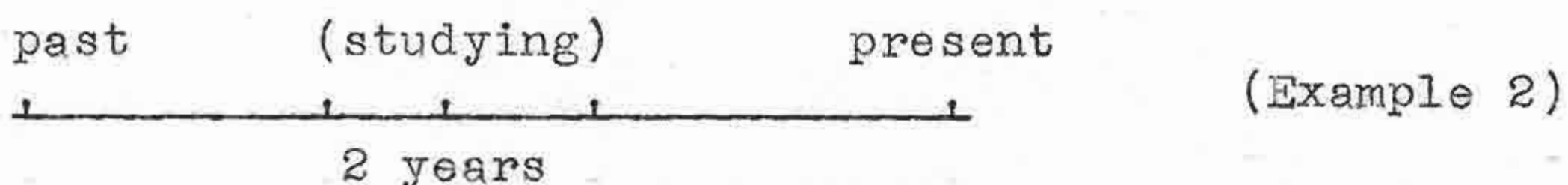
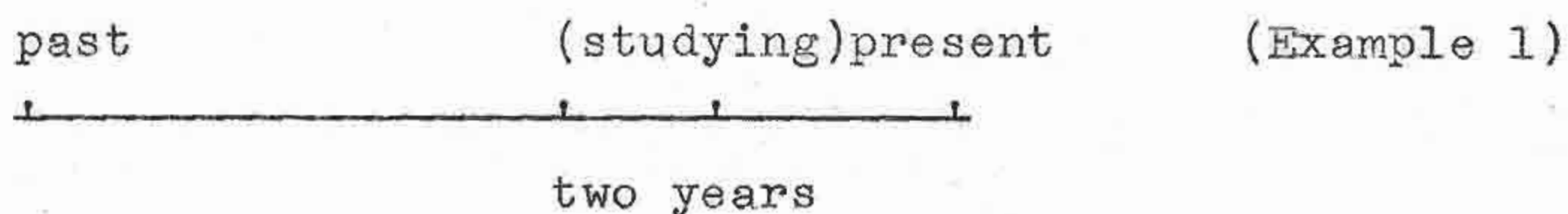
I have studied English for two years.

I studied English for two years and then gave up.

I have known him since two years ago.

I knew him two years ago.

Diagrams representing these time-relationships can be drawn on the board to give visual reinforcement to the presentation:



When the time-expression expressed by 'for' is inclusive of the present (example 1) present perfect is used; but when it covers a period of time that is wholly past (example 2) the past form is used. In examples 3 and 4 the time-expression 'ago' is used with both. But in the first, it is used in connection with 'since' that covers a time extending from a definite point in the past to the present, a thing that determines the choice of the present perfect tense. In the second,

'ago' represents a definite point in the past that has no connection with the present, hence the choice of the past simple tense.

The drills in this part must all emphasize this relationship between the past and the present. Special care must be taken in the choice of time-expressions to be used in the drills.

All time expressions must be present inclusive. To put 'so far' on par with 'recently', as Lado and Fries do in their English Sentence Patterns, is to confuse the implicit manifestation with the explicit one.

Drill No. 1:

Model: I have studied English since 1960.

Examples: We We have studied English since 1960.

Practice We have practiced English since 1960.

1. she

7. you

2. they

8. practice

3. teach

9. I

4. he

10. they

5. speak

11. we

6. she

12. she

Drill No. 2:

Model: He has worked for the last two years.

Examples: She She has worked for the last two years.

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| 1. we | 6. I |
| 2. studied | 7. he |
| 3. they | 8. travel |
| 4. you | 9. they |
| 5. practice | 10. you |

In the above two drills the time-expressions 'since' and 'for' are clearly present inclusive. A drill built on the contrast between past-time expressions and present inclusive ones will be very helpful in emphasizing the past-present relationship.

Drill No. 3:

Model: I have practiced English for two years.

Examples: Yesterday I practiced English yesterday.

"Since ~~this~~ I have practiced English since ~~this~~ morning" morning.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. last night | 7. practice |
| 2. study | 8. before I came |
| 3. for the last two years | 9. last Monday |
| 4. speak | 10. since 1960 |
| 5. last week | 11. five years ago |
| 6. for two hours now | 12. for the last five years |

The difference between since and for must be emphasized. Since is used to signify a beginning point of time, whereas for signifies a range of time. A drill on the difference between the two will have a double benefit: it

will clear up the confusion in the usage of these two, and students will be practicing the perfect form with them.

Drill No. 4:

Fill in the blanks with since or for:

1. I have known him _____ two years.
2. They have studied English _____ the last five years.
3. We have not seen him _____ last Monday.
4. Jim has not played football _____ he was a child.

In the above four exercises, the main objective was to make the students grasp the past-present relationship shown by the use of present perfect tense with time-expressions that are present inclusive and which explicitly show this relationship. To help the students see this relationship in perspective, the teacher can drill them on the following sort of exercise:

Drill No. 5:

	I saw him at 8 o'clock.
	I saw him at 12 o'clock.
Twice today	I have seen him twice today.
	He bought a hat yesterday.
	He bought a hat this morning.
Two hats this week	He has bought two hats this week.
	I gave them a present a month ago.
	I gave them a present two months ago.
Two presents this year	I have given them two presents this year.

1. read / English papers
2. write / novels
3. study / Spanish
4. practice / tennis
5. play / football.

The use of the present perfect with present inclusive time-expressions shows that the action is spread along the range of time from the past to the present moment (the moment of coding). This of course includes actions that have started in the past and still continue in the present. This idea of the continuation of the action up to and/or into the present can be clearly shown by structures containing the time-expressions 'yet, ever, never'.⁴

I haven't seen him yet.

means that the case of (not seeing him) is still valid at the moment of coding.

After this has been explained to the students, the following drills can be carried out:

Drill No. 7:

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------|
| Model: | I've met him today. |
| Examples: Yet | I haven't met him yet. |
| Never | I've never met him. |
| 1. see | 3. teach |
| 2. yet | 4. she |

⁴These time-expressions show that nothing has occurred to change the state of things.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 5. never | 9. yet |
| 6. we | 10. she |
| 7. invite | 11. never |
| 8. visit | 12. they |

Drill No. 8:

Model:

Have you ever met him?

No, I've never met him.

Yes, I have. I've met him.

Examples: T - Read/that book

S1 - Have you ever read that book?

S2- No, I've never read that book.

S3 - Yes, I have. I've read it.

1. see/him
2. study/lesson two
3. visit/Jim
4. meet/John
5. read/this book

This last drill, or at least part of it, will prepare the students, without their being aware of it, for the second part of our procedure namely the use of the present perfect for completed actions at an indefinite time in the past. The reader must have noticed that the affirmative responses lack time-expressions which, so far, the students have been using with the perfect form. So students will have been practicing: I've met him, I've studied the lesson, and I've visited him.

The Use of the Present Perfect Tense

For Completed Actions in the Past

When the present perfect is used to express actions that are completed in the past the focus of interest is not on the time at which the action took place but on the present results of that past action. If the time had been of any interest to us, it would have been stated (or implied) and the past form of the verb would have been employed.

One of the functions of the present perfect form is to express the delayed effects of a past action. Joos believes that this is the one and only function of the present perfect form. He says, "The perfect-marked verbs are there specifically for the sake of the effects of the events they designate."⁵

Now to make the students sense this relationship between the present and a completed action in the past, it is better that they be drilled first on the use of the present perfect tense for completed actions at the time immediately preceding the present time.

The teacher first gives the following demonstration: He moves towards the door and says "I'm going to the door." Then he slowly starts opening the door saying "Now I'm opening the door." When the door is open, he says "I've just opened the door."

⁵Joos, op. cit., p. 140.

With the action completed before their eyes (the opening of the door), the students can associate it with the present effect of that action (the door is still open).

Drill No. 1:

T - Jim, write a sentence on the board.

T - What's Jim doing?

S - He's writing a sentence on the board.

T - What's he done?

S - He's just written a sentence on the board.

The same thing can be repeated for various activities in the classroom. If the teacher thinks a simpler exercise is more appropriate at this stage he can do the exercise in the following manner:

John open your book.

What have you done?

I've opened my book.

Jane, read a sentence.

What have you done?

I've read a sentence.

Drill No. 2:

Please open the door. (goes to the door but does
not open it)

Has he opened the door yet?

No, he hasn't.

(opens the door)

Has he opened the door?

Yes, he has. He's just opened it.

This type of exercise can be repeated for various activities in the classroom like: go to the table, write a sentence on the board, read a paragraph, open your book.

'Already' can be practiced now. More often than not present perfect is used with 'already'.⁶

Drill No. 3:

Please tell them to move the desk.

They've already moved it.

John, write a letter to your mother.

I've already written one.

Jim, why don't you eat your apple?

I've already eaten it.

Jane, why don't you buy a book?

I've already bought one.

In the first two exercises above, the students have been witnessing the completion of the actions performed, and have seen also the present states of these actions. The emphasis being on those actions completed at the time immediately preceding the present time. In exercise No. 3, with the introduction of 'already', the students are no longer witnessing the process of completing an action. Instead they are faced

⁶It is reported by Allen that a common tendency in modern American English is to use past simple tense with 'already', see Allen's The Verb System of Present Day American English, p. 157, footnote 51.

with the result of a previous action with their interest focused on the effect rather than on the action that caused such an effect.

The following exercises emphasize the present results of completed actions in the past, and the idea of the action itself and when it took place are completely overshadowed by their present features.

Before starting the drills, the teacher can make a demonstration to insure the students' understanding of the new relationship.

There is blood on my collar. I've cut my face.

I don't have my pen. I've lost it.

My stomach is full. I've eaten a big lunch.

Drill No. 1:

You've studied well, haven't you?

Yes, we have. We've studied very well.

I've lost my pen, haven't I?

Yes, you have. You've lost it.

You've met Jim, haven't you?

Yes, we have. We've met him.

Drill No. 2:

Correct the form of the verb between brackets:

1. We know Shakespeare very well. We (read) many of his plays.
2. Do you know John? Yes, I (meet) him many times.

3. Do you know John? Yes, I (meet) him the first time yesterday.
4. He is not here, he (leave) for Europe.
5. Napoleon (fight) many battles.
6. I can't eat anything now. I (have) my lunch.

B- The Present Perfect Continuous

In the section on expansion in chapter 3, it was shown that the present perfect expanded form has the following main functions:

1. It indicates repeated occurrence of the action designated by the verb.
2. It indicates incompleteness of the action.
3. With either of the above two functions, it indicates recent activity.

It has been further shown that the feature which permeates all the functions of the expanded forms is the continuation of the action (or concomitant thereof) up to the present time. Whether the action is progressive or static, continuous or interrupted,⁷ the use of the expanded perfect form indicates that it continues up to, and probably beyond, the moment of coding.

As for the above three functions, it is obvious that the third one is of a complexion different from that of the first two. While the first two have to do with the nature of the verb, the third is related directly to time. The third function can thus be taught as an implication of the first two.

The first task of the teacher in teaching this tense is to drill his students on the continuous aspect of the form, and then move gradually to the finer shades of meaning which are connected with the nature of the verb.

⁷ Action in this form can be seen as either progressive or static on one side and either continuous or interrupted on the other, e.g., climb, stand, live and buy respectively.

The Continuous Aspect of the Present Perfect Form

Before he starts drilling his students, the teacher explains to them that the Arabic 'SaaR' form is equivalent in function to the present perfect continuous form. The teacher may give one or two examples, if he thinks it is helpful.

I've been reading for two hours.

هرې ساعته لوستنه

I've been studying since the morning.

هرې ساعته درس نه لوستنه

To familiarize the students with the new form, the teacher drills them on the following:

1. Repeat after your teacher:

- a. I've been reading for two hours.
- b. We've been studying English for three years.
- c. We've been working on this lesson since the morning.
- d. The teacher has been teaching since 1960.
- e. We've been practicing this form for ten minutes.

2. Substitution drill:

Model: How long have you been studying?

Example: Write How long have you been writing?

1. Read.
2. Talk.
3. Lie down.
4. Write letters.
5. Walk.
6. Speak English.
7. Speak Arabic.
8. Play football.
9. Sit here.
10. Live here.

The first exercise serves as a warm-up, and the second

activates the students to use the 'ing' form when they are supplied with the base form.

The use of the present perfect continuous with 'since' and 'for' helps to show in a clear way the continuation of the action along the indicated period of time.

Fill in the blanks with for⁸ or since:

1. They've been reading _____ two hours.
2. We've been studying English _____ 1963.
3. I've been talking _____ fifteen minutes.
4. He's been writing letters _____ one hour.
5. He's been writing letters _____ the morning.
6. She's been sleeping _____ 8 p.m.
7. They've been playing _____ three hours.

Now a more active role is asked from the students. In the following exercise the teacher describes a situation to which the students respond with the present perfect expanded form.

Now it is ten o'clock.

Example: T - It started to rain at 8 o'clock, and it is still raining.

S - It's been raining for two hours.

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| 1. We / Study grammar. | 5. He / Teach. |
| 2. You / Write. | 6. We / Sit. |
| 3. Jim / Read. | |
| 4. They / Play. | |

⁸Although some of the sentences may occur without for, it is advisable to teach them with for only at this stage.

To insure automatic and spontaneous response, the teacher practices his students on the following two exercises:

Model: They've been studying English for
a long time.

Example: Two hours They've been studying English for
two hours.

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. since 1963 | 7. for two months |
| 2. for two weeks | 8. since January |
| 3. travel | 9. practice English |
| 4. we | 10. he |
| 5. study grammar | 11. since the morning |
| 6. read stories | 12. play football |

It is probably safe at this stage to introduce the present perfect continuous form without time-expressions. If there is a danger that the students may confuse it with the Arabic k-n form, the teacher may temporarily drop the idea, but make use of the following exercise at a later stage. The exercise is of the conversation sort and can be practiced by two students at a time.

STUDENT A

Have you been living here?

STUDENT B

Yes, I have.

I've been living here.

studying English

reading your lesson

writing your homework

working hard
playing games
looking for me
watching the teacher
studying your lesson
listening to music
sitting here
waiting for her

The Use of the Present Perfect Continuous

To Indicate Repeated Occurrence of the Action

In the contrast between the functions of the expanded and non-expanded forms, it has been shown that the former marks repetition of the action. The drills in this section are mainly concerned with this point, and are constructed in such a way as to review the present perfect tense.

The teacher starts by saying sentences in the non-expanded form to which the students respond with the expanded form:

1. He's hit the dog.
2. I've stumbled.
3. They've fallen.
4. The light has flashed.
5. He's shattered the window-glass.
6. She's sighed.
7. He's taken my pencils.
8. Jim has shot the birds.

The teacher explains that the use of the expanded form indicates repeated occurrence of the action, and present the same exercise in a different manner:

Example: Has he stumbled?

Yes, he's been stumbling for ten minutes.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. fall | 6. for two hours |
| 2. shoot the birds. | 7. for a long time |
| 3. since 8 o'clock | 8. take my money |
| = 4. sigh | 9. he |
| 5. she | 10. hit the dog |

The Use of the Present Perfect Continuous

To Show Incompletion of the Action

With most durative verbs, present perfect expanded indicates the incompletion of the action. This can be shown by drilling the students on the contrast between the expanded and non-expanded forms.

Model: He has talked for one hour and he's still talking.

He's been talking for one hour.

Example: T - It / rain.

S1 - It has rained for one hour and it's still raining.

S2 - It's been raining for one hour.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. We / study | 3. Jim / eat |
| 2. They / play | 4. You / read |

5. He / teach

9. You / watch

6. I / sit

10. He / slept

7. We / write

11. We / wait

8. John and Mary / walk

12. Jim / talk

In the above drill students will practice the present perfect continuous and review the present perfect at the same time. In the following drill they are drilled on the contrast between the simple past and the present perfect continuous.

Substitution Drill:

Model:

We've been working on this lesson for
30 minutes now.

Example: Yesterday: We worked on this lesson yesterday.

1. since Monday

8. do this exercise

2. read the story

9. we

3. they

10. speak only English

4. do their homework

11. for the past six weeks

5. two hours ago

12. practice this pattern

6. since the class began

7. for five minutes now

C- Past Perfect Tense

The form had + past participle is used to indicate that an action was finished before another action in the past or before a definite point of time in the past.

But it has been shown that the past form of the verb is used instead of the past perfect form when there is no ambiguity as to which of the two actions happened before the other.

The procedure to be followed here is to drill the students first on the use of the perfect form whenever a before-past time is indicated, and then to drill them on the use of the past form of the verb whenever this is possible.

Drill No. 1:

Model: T - The program started at nine o'clock. They arrived at ten o'clock.

S1 - The program had started before they arrived.

S2- They arrived after the program had started.

1. Mary arrived at the station at eight. The train left at seven.
2. They finished the game. It rained later.
3. I met John in the morning. I met Jim in the afternoon.
4. They went to the movies yesterday night. They went to the seashore yesterday afternoon.
5. Jim got up at seven o'clock. Fred called at 6:30.

6. The teacher came at eight. The students left five minutes earlier.

7. The visitors arrived at seven. They had their supper at six.

The aim of the above exercise is to make students see the relation between the past form and the past perfect. In the following exercises the aim is to make the students' responses brisk and spontaneous.

Drill No. 2:

Model:

Jim had read the story before he came to class.

Example: Write the homework

Jim had written the homework before he came to class.

1. have breakfast

6. check the mail

2. study the lesson

7. have coffee

3. visit a friend

8. is happy

4. play football

9. drive his car

5. study French

10. play tennis

Exercise:

Use after and before in the following sentences:

Example: He'd written his homework. He came to class.

After he'd written his homework, he came to class.

He'd written his homework before he came to class.

1. They'd eaten lunch. They climbed the hill.
2. We'd waited for an hour. We left.
3. Jim had bought a new car. He had an accident.
4. He'd slept for two hours. He went on a trip.
5. We'd studied very hard. We passed.
6. They'd finished working in the garden. They felt tired.
7. John had written his homework. He studied his lesson.
8. They'd washed their hands. They ate dinner.
9. She'd met him. She came here.
10. We'd read a story. We left the class.

It is advisable to drill the students on the use of the past perfect tense with time-expressions other than after and before. This is so because past perfect form is less common with before and after than with the others.

Drill No. 3:

Model: He'd finished when you came.

Examples: called He'd called when you came.

left He'd left when you came.

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. eaten | 6. written his homework |
| 2. read the lesson | 7. had supper |
| 3. studied | 8. slept |
| 4. got up | 9. run away |
| 5. arrived | 10. cut down the tree |

Drill No. 4:

Model: I had never seen a big city until
I came to Beirut.

Example: a football game I had never seen a football
game until I came to Beirut.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. a museum | 4. tall buildings |
| 2. a tramcar | 5. a university |
| 3. wide streets | |

At this stage the teacher can explain to his students that with before and after it is more common to use the past form of the verb. Before and after are clear indicators of the time relationship between the past and before-past, thus the use of the past perfect form with them would be redundant.

The following two drills practice the use of the past form with before and after.

Drill No. 5:

Model: He went to school after he
studied his lesson.

Example: had breakfast He went to school after he had
breakfast.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. wrote his homework | 4. left the house |
| 2. read a story | 5. bought a book. |
| 3. finished the assignment | |

Drill No. 6:

Model: Before Mary went to bed,
she ate a sandwich.

Example: washed her hands Before Mary went to bed,
she washed her hands.

Example: a football game I had never seen a football
game until I came to Beirut.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. a museum | 4. tall buildings |
| 2. a tramcar | 5. a university |
| 3. wide streets | |

At this stage the teacher can explain to his students that with before and after it is more common to use the past form of the verb. Before and after are clear indicators of the time relationship between the past and before-past, thus the use of the past perfect form with them would be redundant.

The following two drills practice the use of the past form with before and after.

Drill No. 5:

Model: He went to school after he
studied his lesson.

Example: had breakfast He went to school after he had
breakfast.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. wrote his homework | 4. left the house |
| 2. read a story | 5. bought a book. |
| 3. finished the assignment | |

Drill No. 6:

Model: Before Mary went to bed,
she ate a sandwich.

Example: washed her hands Before Mary went to bed,
she washed her hands.

1. swept the floor
2. cleaned the house
3. had a bath
4. washed the dishes
5. helped her mother

D- The Past Perfect Continuous Tense

Past perfect continuous tense functions in the same way as the present perfect continuous with one difference only: the former indicates an action in reference to a definite point in the past.

Owing to the extensive drilling they had on the uses of the present perfect continuous, the students are not expected to find difficulty in learning this tense. In all the following exercises a past reference-point is explicitly indicated in order to reinforce the students' understanding of the behavior of the past perfect tense. Before he starts the following two drills the teacher tells his students that this form is equivalent to the Arabic k-n S-R combined form.

Substitution Drill:

Model: They'd been sleeping for an hour
before he came.

Example: Studying They'd been studying for an hour
before he came.

1. waiting
2. eating
3. drinking tea
4. writing
5. reading
6. walking
7. talking
8. fighting
9. playing
10. swimming

Substitution Drill:

Model: The boys had been playing for ten minutes when the storm began.

Example: Half an hour The boys had been playing for half an hour when the storm began.

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. one hour | 6. fifteen minutes |
| 2. studying | 7. walking |
| 3. five minutes | 8. riding |
| 4. sleeping | 9. one hour |
| 5. eating | 10. sitting |

A contrast between the past perfect and past perfect continuous may be useful. The teacher can tell his students that both forms are used to indicate the same idea, but the latter puts the stress on the continuation of the action. He then carries out the following exercise:

Change these sentences as in the example.

Example: I'd slept for an hour when he came.

I'd been sleeping for an hour when she came.

1. I'd studied English for two hours when you called.
2. He'd played for ten minutes when you came.
3. The wind had blown for an hour before it began to rain.
4. Jim had painted for several hours when Mary called.
5. He'd waited for a long time before I arrived.
6. They'd sailed for hours before the storm began.
7. She'd slept for a long time when her mother woke her up.

8. John had walked for an hour when I saw him.
9. They'd played tennis for an hour when it began to rain.
10. We'd slept for a short time when the bell rang.

The teaching objective of the above exercises is to make the students' responses as spontaneous as possible. To force the students to use their power of selection, the teacher can carry out the following exercise:

Put the verb in brackets in the correct form. Use present perfect continuous form or past perfect continuous form.

1. They (swim) for an hour.
2. She (play) the piano since 1960.
3. Mary (sleep) for two hours when I came.
4. They (study) for the examination since last week.
5. The wind (blow) hard for an hour when it began to rain.
6. They (wait) for half an hour when the guests arrived.
7. Mr. Smith (live) here since 1962.
8. Mr. Smith (live) for five years here when we came.
9. She (rest) since two o'clock.
10. He (study) English for three years before he left.
11. They (play) for ten minutes when the storm began.
12. I (wait) for you since one o'clock.
13. He (standing) for fifteen minutes when they asked him to sit down.
14. We (plan) our trip for a month.
15. They (visit) us since last month.

E- The Future Perfect Tense

This tense shows the relationship between a future event and a definite point in future. It indicates before-future time.

Compared with the previous tenses, this tense is much less used, specially in spoken English. Accordingly, the drills introduced in this part are meant not as much to perfect the students in the use of this tense as to acquaint them with it.

Drill:

Model:

By five o'clock this afternoon, I'll have studied my lesson.

Example: finish the assignment By five o'clock this afternoon, I'll have finished the assignment.

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. write five letters | 6. read the book |
| 2. painted my care | 7. finish the story |
| 3. get to Tripoli | 8. leave the country |
| 4. fly to Europe | 9. write my assignment |
| 5. visit my aunt | 10. clean the house |

A conversation exercise follows. The teacher tells his students that by the time John graduates from college, he will have studied the following subjects:

English	math	history	geography	physics	chemistry
4 years	2 years	1 year	2 years	2 years	2 years

T - When John graduates, how long will he have studied English?

S - He'll have studied English for four years.

T - How long will he have studied chemistry?

S - He'll have studied chemistry for three years.

The the teacher may only point to the name of the topic, and one student asks the question and another will answer.

(Teacher points to math.)

S1 - How long will he have studied math?

S2 - He'll have studied math for two years.

(Teacher points to physics)

S1 - How long will he have studied physics?

S2 - He'll have studied physics for two years.

(Teacher points to history and geography)

S1 - How long will he have studied history and geography?

S2 - He'll have studied history for one year and geography for two years.

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