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INTRODUCTION

In most languages the perfect is constructed by the use of an auxiliary verb (either to be or to have) in the present and the past participle. Other names are sometimes given to the perfect tense. In English the perfect tense is often misleadingly referred to as the present perfect, an allusion to the auxiliary verb component in the present tense. The term "composed past" is also used in languages where this past tense is composed of an auxiliary and a participle. In some languages, the perfect tense is effectively the same as the preterit tense, or the aorist tense, but these two terms are not actually synonymous with the perfect tense. Thus the topic of this paper is **relevant**.

The subject of the paper is the Perfect Tenses. **The object** is the forms, meaning, formation and usage of the Perfect Tenses.

The aim of the paper is to research the Perfect Tenses themselves. Standing on such ground, there are several **tasks** pointed out:

- to study the nature of Perfect Tense in English;
- to research the forms, meaning, formation and usage of Perfect Tenses;
- to compare the Present Perfect and Past Indefinite Tenses.

Structurally the paper consists of introduction, three paragraphs, conclusion and a list of selected bibliography.

Paragraph 1. Meaning of Perfect Forms

Perfect tense is a category of verb tense used to describe completed actions. It covers the past perfect tense, the present perfect tense, and the future perfect tense. It is sometimes called the complete tense. In the first place, to understand the true nature of languaging the idea of «perfection» we should pay attention to the sense-bearing peculiarity of recurrent «have+done» usage. In fact, we all take it for granted that the

idea of knowing, for example, can be expressed in English with the help of the verb learn, only somehow formally modified. It is also the case with be friends and make friends. Examples are many. Indeed, the conventional semantic equation would look like: know = have learnt; be friends = have made friends [5].

In point of fact, it is subconsciously felt that the discourse meanings of the forms appear to be practically similar. A slight difference consists in the fact that the second form represents not simply knowing but something that a subject has after learning (learnt), or not simply being friends but a friendship which one has after making it (made). It turns out that English speakers have a language routine of expressing such a specific relation in time (have-had-will have) and space (the idea of having a completion of some action or state) that helps them more precisely describe the fragment of reality as they perceive it. In other words, they look at what they see in different aspects and refer to the notions of individual observation, general knowledge and understanding or «possession of eventive accomplishments» [2].

«Possession of eventive accomplishments» is a suggested definition which, from our point of view, seems to embrace the semantics of have done forms or possessive constructions. In simpler words, the speaker refers to having, or encompassing something already completed. Taking cognition-based explanation into account, we could reach the conclusion that this possessive construction represents the fact that the subject has/had/will have something in their spatial domain of perception which is left after an action or state, i.e. signs or results of something completed expressed in the participial form of a verb [1]. This approach comes into collision with the traditional interpretation dictating that 'present perfect denotes a past action at an unspecified time connected with the present' or whatever. First, conceptually this construction does not refer to an action. Second, it can never refer to the past. Only after realizing and recognizing this (even purely semantic, not that it is cognitive) factor will learners and teachers be able to enhance an understanding of this grammar phenomenon and cope with numerous delusion-related mistakes in its usage.

Discussing the theory of designation and indexation in connection with time reference, A. Kravchenko maintains, and we fully agree, that present is what constitutes the fragment of actuality sensually perceived by the subject (from Latin praesent, prae before, esse be, e.g. presumably meaning which is before) [4]. This fragment appears as something the subject feels their presence in. Respectively, past is what «past us» or behind our senses and can be spatially «pointed to» with the help of the index «then». Here are a few pairs of contrasted discourse situations exemplifying the underlying difference between present and past grammar forms frequently confused due to their typical structure-bound

misinterpretation:

- He is very sensitive. I have discovered that. = I have something left after discovering that. = I have a discovery of that. = I know it now.
- He is very sensitive. I discovered that. = That discovery happened to me, I remember [2].

The presented view of the idea of possessiveness left after an action or state seems to serve as a more efficient explanatory guide for all those who struggle with English grammar. At least, the cited interpretation models testify to a more transparent vision of the orientation effect the speaker intends to make on the addressee. Such an approach to perfect forms calls for a more justifiable term, which could help define the essence of this language phenomenon in a more plausible way. We would propose «possessive constructions» focusing on the semantics of the no-meaningless «have» rather than the participle of the verb, which has so dangerously misguided many grammarians into the idea of «perfection» highlighted in the traditional term.

Paragraph 2. Formation and use of Perfect Forms

The Formation of the Present Perfect is auxiliary verb **to have** (have/has) + Participle II (the present tense of the verb **to have** + the past participle of the main verb).

Affirmative

Interrogative

Negative

I have worked.

Have I worked?

I have not worked.

He has worked.

Has he worked?

He has not worked.

She has worked.

Has she worked?

She has not worked.

It has worked.

Has it worked?

It has not worked.

We have worked.

Have we worked?

We have not worked.

You have worked. Have you worked? You have not worked.

They have worked. Have they worked? They have not worked.

Table 1. Present Perfect Tense.

The Present Perfect denotes:

- a completed action closely connected with the present when the time of the action is indefinite. Examples: Mr. Smith **has finished** his work. He can rest now. Mrs. Smith **had laid** the table. The family are having dinner. Granny **has prepared** a surprise. Everybody is looking forward to it. Granny **has baked** a layer cake;
- an action performed within a period of time which has not yet ended. The period may be indicated by such words as this month, this year, never, yet, etc. Examples: Annie **has written** an article this year. Samuel **has been** to London this month. Sarah **has studied** abroad this year. She **has taken** the post-graduate course this year;
- the beginning of the period is often indicated by the conjunction since which denotes «from some definite moment in the past till now». Examples: Samuel **has known** me since he was twelve. Samuel **has lived** in Hanbury Street since he moved to London. Sarah **has studied** abroad since she graduated from college. We **have been** friends with Samuel since 2005.

The Formation of the Past Perfect is auxiliary verb **had** + Participle II (the past tense of the verb **to have** + the past participle of the main verb).

Affirmative	Interrogative	Negative
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I had worked.	Had I worked?	I had not worked.
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He had worked.	Had he worked?	He had not worked.
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She had worked.	Had she worked?	She had not worked.
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It had worked. Had it worked? It had not worked.

We had worked. Had we worked? We had not worked.

You had worked. Had you worked? You had not worked.

They had worked. Had they worked? They had not worked.

Table 2. Past Perfect Tense.

The Past Perfect denotes an action completed before a certain moment in the past.

Examples: He told us that he **had passed** his exams They told us that John **had gone** to the dentist. I **had come** to the station before the train arrived. I **had seen** my friend before the train stopped. I **had called** her before she saw me. I **had run** up to her carriage before she got off.

The Formation of the Future Perfect is auxiliary verb **shall/will have** + Participle II (the future tense of the verb **to have** + the past participle of the main verb).

Affirmative

Interrogative

Negative

I shall have worked. Shall I have worked? I shall not have worked.

He will have worked. Will he have worked? He will not have worked.

She will have worked. Will she have worked? She will not have worked.

It will have worked. Will it have worked? It will not have worked.

We shall have worked. Shall we have worked? We shall not have worked.

You shall have worked. Shall you have worked? You shall not have worked.

They will have worked. Will they have worked? They shall not have worked.

Table 3. Future Perfect Tense.

The Future Perfect denotes an action completed before a definite moment in the future or an action which will begin before a definite moment in the future, will continue up to that moment and will be going on at that moment.

Examples: They **will have closed** the shop before we get there. I **shall have finished** my work by the 23d of July. We **shall have booked** tickets by the time school breaks up. My daughter and I **will have come** to Miami by the 27th of July. We **shall have been** there a fortnight when my husband joins us [3].

Paragraph 3. Comparison of two Tenses: Present Perfect and Past Indefinite

It is rather common mistake to confuse the Present Perfect and Past Indefinite. The main thing is that the Past Indefinite shows that the action belongs to the past while the Present Perfect shows its connection with the present. Compare:

- He often **came** here (but doesn't any more). He **has** often **come** here (so he may do it again).

The Present Perfect is never used with the adverbial modifiers of the past time (yesterday, last week). For instance: We **didn't see** him **yesterday**.

Both tenses can be used with the adverbial modifiers, denoting the period of time that is not over [3]:

- I **have talked** to him **today**. I **talked** to him **today**.

With the adverb «just» the Present Perfect is used; with the expression «just now» the Past Indefinite is used.

- I **have just heard** the news. I **heard** the news **just now**.

The Present Perfect is used with the adverb «lately» while the Past Indefinite is used with the adverbial phrase «last time»:

- I **haven't talked** to him **lately**. **Last time** I **saw** him, he **didn't talk**.

The Russian adverb «давно» can correspond to two different phrases in English: «long ago» which is used with the Past Indefinite and «for a long time» which is usually used with the Present Perfect:

- I **found** it out **long ago**. I've **known** it **for a long time**.

The Past Indefinite not the Present Perfect is used in When-questions. Both tenses can be used in Where-questions, but the Past Indefinite is more frequently used in them.

- When **did** you **come**? Where **did** you **find** it? Where **have** you **been**?

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