

Marta Veličković

**A PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION TO
ENGLISH TENSES: BUILDING ACCURACY
IN SERBIAN TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION**



<https://doi.org/10.46630/piet.2025>

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Faculty of Philosophy
2025

By the decree of the Teaching and Scholarly Council of the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš, number 95/1-7-2-01, held on 2. 4. 2025. positive review reports of the manuscript of the textbook *A Practical Introduction to English Tenses: Building Accuracy in Serbian to English Translation* by Marta Veličković were approved.

To my husband, the love of my days. To my two nieces, the bright shining stars that bring me hope. To my sister, for just being who she is. To my dad.

And never last and never least, to my mom who I know is still here.

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PREFACE

The manuscript before you was written as a textbook meant to be included in the course material for the Contemporary English Language 8 undergraduate course taught at the Department of English, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš, the Language Learning Exercises: Translating from Serbian into the English Language undergraduate course offered at the same department, as well as the Translating Contemporary Literary Texts course included in the MA Translation program offered at the same higher education institution. The original motivation behind this book was to compile the experience encompassed after what are almost two decades spent teaching Serbian to English translation to our senior undergraduate students in an attempt to improve their translation accuracy as it pertains to tense forms, sequence of tenses, and reported speech. The gratitude I have for having spent these years working with the people I did, and the gratitude I feel in expectation of the years to come is considerable, as without my students' help I would not have been able to put down on paper what I hope will be a helpful resource for them.

Over the years I have been witness to the fact that our seniors struggle, persistently and consistently, with issues such as proper use of tenses, tenses that refer to past time in particular, and sequence of tenses in all its shapes and sizes. The main focus of the book, therefore, is the temporal relation between the past simple tense (the preterite) and the past perfect tense (the preterite perfect). The aforementioned issues with tense alignment are less frequently evident in our students' spoken language, but are more evident in their written work, especially when it comes to translating texts from Serbian into English. This is, in part, due to the differences in the tense systems of the two languages and perhaps the lack of a systematized overview of all the various meanings that the English language tense system can convey. In terms of the former, I am unable to make any meaningful contributions, but in terms of the latter, my goal is to at least make a dent in a topic so vast and broad as the English language tense system and make it more palatable for our students, fully aware of the fact that increased knowledge of it and adequate practice can contribute to an overall more successful performance of our students as translators.

Therefore, some of the chapters in the book are based on a selection of the topics covered in the accredited 2021-syllabus for the Contemporary English Language 8 course. These topics include, among others, the use of tenses in narration, with an overview of the existing differences between the Serbian and the English language, as well as reported speech, with a very specific focus on reporting verbs in the past tense, on sequence of tenses, on backshifting, but also on the pragmatic factors that

are often overlooked in relation to tense alignment. At the beginning of most of the chapters, and subsections, where necessary, a list of key terms has been provided to facilitate comprehension and provide a review.

The course objectives of the Contemporary English Language 8 course include providing a suitable environment in which students can achieve and maintain L2 proficiency. This is achieved by helping them obtain the necessary theoretical knowledge as well as gain practical experience in using the language, and by further developing their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Improving grammatical accuracy is an important aim of this course, which is achieved, among other things, by providing the students with ample opportunity to practice using (and comparing) a variety of syntactic structures by translating from Serbian into English (and vice versa) while also comparing and contrasting the specificities of both languages. Considering that the final exam for this particular course consists, among other things, of a Serbian to English translation test, as well as an oral exam, examples and exercises have been provided, wherever possible, to assist in the study process. Considering that the course objectives for the other two courses I had in mind when writing this book also involve developing grammatical accuracy in Serbian to English translation, the examples and exercises provided in this book are suited to their syllabi as well. To achieve these goals, in the final chapter of this book, shorter texts in Serbian have been provided for the students to both translate and to implement the information previously outlined in the book, while at the same time completing exercises pertaining to reading comprehension and vocabulary. These include references to synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, derivatives, collocations, and concordances. Copyright issues were adhered to in the selection process of the texts, and references to the source text made wherever possible.

The introductory chapter provides a backdrop for the perceived need for such a book. It includes a brief outline of some of the issues that L1 Serbian/L2 English learners might face, as they pertain to the (predominantly past) tense forms of the English language.

Chapter 2 was envisioned to indicate the differences that need to be made and recognized between the concept of time and the concept of tense.

Chapter 3 then slowly leads the reader into a discussion of the various tense forms of the English language, with a special focus on the past tense forms, primarily the preterite and the preterite perfect. The same chapter, in addition to outlining their key features, also outlines the possibilities for their combinations.

Chapter 4 was written as an overview chapter for the sequence of tenses, viewed both from a solely formal syntactic approach as well as one based on pragmatic factors, offering a varied view of a well-known topic.

Chapter 5 focuses on aspect, both the frequently discussed grammatical aspect and the less frequently discussed lexical aspect.

Chapter 6 introduces the concepts of orientation time and situation time in an attempt to facilitate the alignment of tenses, while chapter 7 focuses solely on reported speech but by taking into consideration similar times (deictic, situation, etc.).

Chapter 8 consists of a number of texts compiled for translation from Serbian into English, as well as some accompanying exercises, and is meant for practice only.

Each chapter contains numerous examples, which include pairs of sentences written both in Serbian and English so that the reader is constantly able to consider the translation equivalents and potential differences in meaning between various options. The chapters can be read continuously, but each one was designed to also function as a stand-alone resource for revision or further study. There are practice sections included in virtually all the chapters, while as previously mentioned, chapter 8 consists solely of translation exercises. All the practice sections focus on Serbian to English translation only.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who came before me and on whose proverbial shoulders I stood on: Professor Đorđe Vidanović, Professor Biljana Mišić Ilić, Professor Dragana Mašović, but to name a few. I extend special thanks to the reviewers who took the time to read these lines, Professor Biljana Mišić Ilić (with whom I have the great pleasure of working with on several undergraduate and postgraduate courses), Professor Mihailo Antović (my thesis adviser and someone who has shown me much patience over many years), Professor Jelena Danilović Jeremić (whom I have the privilege of calling not just a colleague but a dear friend), and Professor Miloš Tasić (who has shown me nothing but support). A special thanks goes out to Professor Ana Kocić Stanković for her patience and sound advice, and to Professor Aleksandra Janić Mitić for taking the time to help me. I would also like to thank my other colleagues, who work with me every day to help me be better and do better. Any and all mistakes are solely my own.

In the hopes that this book will find its way into the right hands and do some good, I wish all my readers the best of luck in their future endeavors.

Marta Veličković
Niš, November, 2024

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A brief overview

Key terms: speech time, event time, competing tense options, frequency of occurrence, incongruity between tense systems, temporal relations, pragmatic factors, simultaneity, posteriority, anteriority, current relevance/continuing applicability, situations

It was back in 1992 that Kachru pointed out the role that the English language plays in bringing together non-English speaking nations in academic settings: learning, teaching, research, etc. Despite its widespread use, it is still something of a challenge for us as professors and educators to teach this particular language as there are numerous factors that affect the learning/teaching process, including pre-existing levels of proficiency, individual motivation, extent of practice, as well as specific linguistic distinctions. These distinctions include the features of individual verbal systems of various languages which can explain the difficulties that L2 English learners encounter when faced with the various functions associated with the English tense system (cf. Declerck, 1986, 1990, 1995, Declerck et al., 1996, 1997, Declerck et al., 2006; Lambani, 2015; Thakur, 2021; Vaezi & Alizadeh, 2011).¹

When it comes to the order in which certain tense forms are acquired, and the accompanying difficulties, Housen (2002, pp. 157–158, original emphasis) pointed out the following:

In a first stage, verbs are either missing from learners' utterances or they appear as unanalysed components in rote-learned formulaic expressions (e.g., *I don't know*). In a second stage, productive verbs show up as morphologically invariant forms. For the most part, they are unmarked stem forms (*VØ*) (e.g., *want*, *eat*) but in some cases also inflected forms are observed, particularly highly frequent irregular Past forms (e.g., *got*) and *Ving* forms (e.g., *dancing*). These invariant verbs function as default forms in all grammatical, semantic and discourse contexts, irrespective of the temporal, aspectual or agreement values of the target language. All they express is the verb's inherent lexico-semantic content. Up to this stage then, development is driven by lexical learning. Grammatical learning does not set in until a third stage. This third stage is characterized by formal diversification as morphological variants of the previously invariant verbs appear (e.g., *eating* alongside *eat*, *said* alongside *say*). This process of formal diversification proceeds selectively in two respects. First, some

¹ Ng (2020, p. 19) went so far as to claim that: "the past tense is construed as morphologically more challenging to L2 learners, so [...] the accuracy rate of the past tense [is] lower than that of the present tense in free production. Even if learners are aware of a need to delineate situations in the past tense, a failure in provision of the past tense in actual language production, or morphological variability, may be observed".

verbs show morphological differentiation before others (esp. *be*, *have*, *do* and *go*). Secondly, some morphological categories show up before others. [...] The first formal categories to emerge are *Ving* (initially without an auxiliary or with an unanalysed auxiliary) and irregular Past forms (esp. *was* and *had*). Regular Past (*Ved*) appears later, followed by Vs, analytic Perfect-like forms (*Have/Be+V*) and *Be+going+V* constructions (including variants like *go/gonna+V*). Other analytic and periphrastic forms like *Will+V* are also delayed.

The proper use of tenses (in any language) conveys, among other things, an understanding of register and how it is reflected in both spoken and written language, as well as how language functions in specific situations. If an L2 English learner is consistently faced with a lack of accurate or even acceptable use of tenses due to excessive exposure to informal language, especially with regard to the possible implications that the use of certain tense forms may carry, it could lead to them opting not to delve deeper into the full scope of the functions of the English tense system. This prospective learner may prefer to stay within the more comfortable set of skills (s)he has already developed, irrespective of accuracy, irrespective of register suitability, and even irrespective of simple grammatical accuracy.

Apart from the aforementioned, there are further challenges we as L2 instructors face. For one, the terminology that is available to us is not always clear cut and uniform, nor always readily available, and ultimately, at times, it can simply be confusing for the learners.² Furthermore, the case might even be made, based on the comments of L2 English learners struggling with the English tense system (Bardovi-Harlig, 1992; Salaberry, 2000, inter alia), that the use of tenses in the English language sometimes appears to be quite arbitrary (cf. Lock, 1996), as in situations where we can use both the past simple and the past continuous, and in some instances even the past simple and the past perfect, with seemingly identical validity. For instance:

[1a] *The sun shone with a blinding ferocity.*³

and

[1c] *The sun was shining with a blinding ferocity.*

or

[2a] *He said he arrived the day before.*

and

[2c] *He said he had arrived the day before.*

All four sentences are grammatically correct, and all four sentences convey complete propositions. To quote Stosic: “the perceived difficulties for L2 learners [arise] from

² Past in the present, past in the future, future perfect, just to name a few terms that may potentially cause discomfort to the L2 English learner.

³ Let us also consider the potential translation equivalents:

[1b] *Sunce je sijalo naročito silinom.*

and

[2b] *Rekao je da je stigao prethodnog dana.*

mastering individual tenses as well as from choosing between competing tense options” (2019, p. 83), without, if we might add, possessing a sense of clarity regarding what such a choice entails. To further complicate matters, not all tenses are used with equal frequency in the English language (see Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Salaberry, 2000; Stosic, 2019). It therefore comes as no surprise that L1 Serbian/L2 English learners, among others, find it difficult to learn how to use the tenses of the English language consistently. Instead of evaluating tenses based on broad or possibly even vague definitions, it would be a better idea for these learners to focus on individual points where improvements might be made, in particular, in terms of combinations or alignment of tenses (in Serbian: *usklađivanje glagolskih vremena*), and not uses of individual tenses.

Let us first turn our attention to those features of the Serbian language that could potentially have an impact on English tense form acquisition (in Serbian: *učenje engleskog glagolskog sistema*). For instance, one would be the existence of the pluperfect (in Serbian: *pluskvamperfekat*) on the one hand, and the imperfect (in Serbian: *imperfekat* or *prošlo nesvršeno vreme*) and/or the aorist (in Serbian: *prošlo svršeno vreme*) in the Serbian language tense system on the other, which are tenses unspecified in the English language. The former roughly corresponds to what would be the past perfect (continuous) tense, and the latter two to the present perfect (continuous) tense or the past simple tense. This lack of one-to-one correspondence could in fact be one of the initial issues that crop up when discussing the delineation between past time and present time between the two languages.⁴ Furthermore, the tentative link between the various tenses found in the two languages does not always hold. As Stosic (2019, p. 83) indicates, the Serbian imperfect is an example of a tense which does not consistently have a counterpart in the present perfect (continuous) tense in English.⁵ As we can see from the following examples, there are two viable options:

[3a] *Tih godina, ljudi spasavahu sami sebe, ne pomažući mnogo drugima.*

[3b] *During the course of those few years, people tried to save their own skins, and didn't really try to help other people.*

[3c] *During the course of those few years, people were trying to save their own skins, and didn't really help other people.*

Then there is the Serbian aorist as exemplified in:

[4a] *Odgledah celu seriju i ništa ne shvatih.*

Based on the definition of the aorist, it is supposed to correspond to a perfect tense, indicating completion prior to the moment of speaking:

[4b] *I have binge-watched that entire show, but I didn't understand a thing.*

The translation sounds slightly cumbersome and might not be our first choice. The previous example could just as easily not be translated using a perfect tense, as seen in the following:

⁴ For more details please see Karavesović and Teodorović (2015).

⁵ For more information on South Slavic languages, in particular in reference to reported speech, please see Gvozdanović (1996).

[4c] *I binge-watched that entire show, and I still couldn't figure out what was going on.*

The translation equivalent does not include a single perfect tense, and yet we find that the intended meaning has been conveyed with accuracy and clarity.

Another point to take into consideration is that aspect (i.e., the experiential component) is foregrounded in Serbian verbs which are lexically marked for it (*imati*, *namigivati*, *pasti*, etc.).⁶ This is, however, not the case with the English language, which deals with lexical and grammatical aspects differently. For instance, aspect (in Serbian: *kategorija vida / glagolski vid*) is most clearly noted not in finite, but in non-finite verb forms in the English language (such as the bare or full infinitive, *go* and *to go*, respectively, or the *-ing* form *going*). The situation may further be rendered more convoluted if learners tend to focus more on lexical aspect and less on temporal relations or vice versa.

Sometimes the issues we encounter might be due to the aforementioned actual exposure to certain tenses, i.e., the frequency of their occurrence. If English language learners are not frequently exposed to a particular tense, they may draw the conclusion that it is simply 'not used' and opt to disregard it in their own language production. A case in point for younger learners would be how to distinguish between, and therefore correctly use, the present perfect tense in relation to the past simple tense (cf. Cowan, 2008), while in the later stages of proficiency, L2 learners may exhibit problems distinguishing between the past simple tense (the preterite) and the past perfect (the preterite perfect). Furthermore, a native speaker's tendency to avoid using the preterite perfect, whether justifiable or not, can prove to be another confounding issue. This, in turn, often results in student comments such as: *But I've (never) heard it used...* To that, as a course instructor, I simply say that to break the rules one must first know the rules.

Further issues include not understanding that differences in construal are conveyed by the use of different tense form combinations, as illustrated in the following sentences, which can be the result of the 'mislocation' of situations in the correct temporal context:

[5a] *He said he was on his way.*

This kind of reporting statement is usually made during the course of a narration, when someone is 're-enacting' a situation that is part of a temporal context different than that of their own.

[5b] *He said he is on his way.*

But what if there was a sense of immediacy that needed to be conveyed? Such a requirement would lead us to write:

[5c] *He says he is on his way.*

⁶ The lexical aspect as an inherent feature of the given examples could be explained as follows: *imati* denotes duration (reminiscent of what some authors refer to as the imperfective aspect), *namigivati* denotes repetition or iteration, while *pasti* denotes punctuality (reminiscent of what some authors refer to as the perfective aspect). In and of itself the complexity of aspect extends far beyond the differences between the verb forms in Serbian and English, but further analyses exceed the scope of this book.

It is interesting to note that these three combinations of tense forms could all have the same translation equivalent in the Serbian language, which only further enhances the temporal mislocation:

[5d] *Rekao je da je krenuo.*⁷

Another issue, specific more to spoken language but one which certainly needs to be addressed, is the misalignment of tenses (in Serbian: *neusklađivanje glagolskih vremena*), such as

[6] *He reported that he had a dog before but now he doesn't.*

or the incongruity of tenses outlined in Tanaka (1988, p. 67):

[7] *It was alleged in the newspapers recently that the major is the head of a big swindling racket, but then they found the evidence that he was framed.*

This issue is clearly that of reported speech (in Serbian: *neupravni / indirektni govor*). When reporting, in addition to adhering to the rules of formal syntax, we also have to take pragmatic factors into consideration (for more details see Adam, 2022; Butt et al., 2012; Charkova & Halliday, 2011; Ng & Zhao, 2017), even though L2 English learners seem to focus more on the formal syntactic ones. As an initial illustration of what we actually mean by pragmatic factors⁸, let us take a look at the following sentences taken from Salkie and Reed (1997, p. 320), which are very similar to examples [5a], [5b] and [5c]:

[8a] *John said he is happy.*⁹

⁷ Here I owe a debt of gratitude to one of the reviewers of this book who suggested that another tense would be possible in the Serbian language if we were to use a different verb. Hence

[5e] *Rekao je da stiže.*

⁸ Schwellenbach (2022) focused quite specifically on precontextually and contextually-induced prominence, as a relevant pragmatic factor.

⁹ Even though this is a viable option, there are instances where situations are clearly completed (or 'bounded' as they are also known, or even more formally referred to as situations with a terminal point) whereby combinations of the present and the past tense form are not possible, as in (Salkie & Reed, 1997, p. 328):

[9a] *John said that he wrote a letter.*

However, it is interesting to note how the verb form would change once we take into consideration the article choice. If we were to opt for the definite article, there would be a higher likelihood of the sentence being reported as:

[9b] *John said that he had written the letter.*

This particular example renders the interpretation based on simultaneity (or inclusion) impossible (in Serbian: *istovremenost*), but rather that of anteriority (in Serbian: *prošlost / prošli događaji / raniji događaji*): the reported clause is anterior to the reporting clause (happened before it). The formal syntactic rules of reported speech dictate that the tense found in the reporting clause binds the tense found in the reported clause (i.e., we rely on the sequence of tenses to impose the temporal relations).

Let us also consider the potential translation equivalents:

[8b] *Džon je rekao da je srećan.*

[8d] *Džon je rekao da je srećan / da je bio srećan.*

[8f] *Džon je rekao da je bio srećan.*

and

[8c] *John said he was happy.*

[8e] *John said he had been happy.*

In the first instance, we can easily see that the time of John's feeling happy is the same time as when the reporting clause is being uttered, i.e., is 'simultaneous with the time of reporting'.¹⁰ However, as previously stated, based on traditional sequence of tense rules, sentence [8c] would be considered the preferred choice, as the dependent clause, or complement clause, is dependent on the tense of the reporting verb. And although this interpretation is valid, it is also important to note that the feeling of happiness may in fact not be simultaneous with the time of reporting, and may refer to another temporal location, which would be indicated with the use of adjuncts of temporal location, such as *yesterday*, or *when he heard the news of the birth of his child*.¹¹ But without these additional indicators of temporal relations, it is up to us to determine the tense, and we do so based on pragmatic factors implied in the discourse, or explicitly stated by means of adjuncts.

Additional examples include:

(26) Yesterday I was looking at a shirt that *was/is* just that colour.

(27) In 1968 John moved to Brighton, which *was/is* on the coast, so he started painting seascapes.

(28) In 1968 John moved to Brighton because it *was/is* on the coast, so he could paint seascapes there.

(29) She only employed Bill because he *was/is* so tall.

(30) The house we just passed *had?has* half its roof missing.

(31) Mrs Thatcher was a marvellous lady.

(32) Joe Bugner was a big man.

In all of (26) to (32) there is a choice between past and present tense. In some cases, indeed, even though the situation described plainly holds at speech time, the past tense is preferable, at least without further context. No one, to our knowledge, would want to claim that the past tense variant in these examples is the result of 'backshifting' a present tense. Salkie and Reed (1997, p. 332, original emphasis)¹²

[9c] *Džon je rekao da je napisao pismo.*

which is a potential translation equivalent for both sentences [9a] and [9b].

¹⁰ Salkie and Reed (1997, p. 324) introduce a new term to our discussion of simultaneity, that of intensionality (in Serbian: *intencionalnost*) whereby: "intensional expressions ([are] those that involve possible worlds that are not necessarily coextensive with the real world)."

¹¹ When it comes to reported speech, additional interesting points (albeit sometimes difficult to follow) include deictic changes, to be discussed later. For a more recent approach to deictic temporal reference (in Serbian: *vremenske odrednice*) please see Evans (2013) or Stapleton (2017).

¹² Backshifting will be discussed in more detail later on in Chapter 7.

What is illustrated here is the issue of availability of context, or our ability to create a context, in the past or present time, based on which to make our decisions regarding choice of tense forms. The aforementioned quote explains the use of tenses in some of the sentences, but in other instances it is not simply a case of whether there is current relevance/continuing applicability (a direct temporal relation to the moment of speech in a way, or a situation still holding at the time of speaking). The case could be made that the key is the scope of time invoked in the final two sentences: what if that particular feature was being foregrounded by the reported speaker during a particular sliver of time? So current relevance/continuing applicability (in Serbian: *relevantnost/primenljivost*) would perhaps not be the only factor to take into consideration. In the sentence containing a *because* clause, we have a clear indication that certain decisions were made in the past, thus rendering the past context more relevant for the representation of the sentence, and hence the choice of tense.

Defining situations

In this book, instead of constantly going back and forth between the terms activity, action, or state, we will be adopting Declerck et al.'s definition (2006, p. 12, 40, original emphasis) of a situation: "We will use SITUATION as a cover term for the various possible types of contents of clauses, i. e. as a cover term for anything that can be expressed in a clause, namely an action, an event, a process or a state [...]. Unless it is necessary to distinguish between these possibilities, we will speak of 'the situation referred to'. The verb ACTUALIZE will be similarly used as a cover term for the predicates that are typically associated with one of these situation types." At the same time, it is important to remember that these situations are typically grammatically represented by a clause. Due to a variety of different ways of construing the same situation, these clauses could be, for instance, active or passive, or atelic and telic¹³ (*They had ice cream* and *They had a bowl of ice cream each*, respectively).¹⁴

A similar definition of the term situation can be found in the work of Huddleston and Pullum (2002, p. 160), who refer to situations as "actions, processes, events, states, relations, etc. – i.e., for whatever is expressed by a clause". Situations, according to the same authors, include both states, which are static, and occurrences, which are dynamic.

¹³ "A term used in the GRAMMATICAL analysis of aspect, to refer to an event where the activity has no clear terminal point. Atelic verbs include *look*, *play* and *sing* (in such contexts as *he's singing*, etc.). They contrast with TELIC verbs, such as *kick*, where there is a clear end-point." (Crystal, 2008, p. 42, original emphasis)

¹⁴ The combination of two past continuous tenses is defined in such a way that we, according to the standard method of teaching tense form combinations, perceive them to be simultaneous. However, this is just our perception, and it applies to any tense forms that we perceive or construe to be simultaneous. This particular phenomenon is known as relative deixis.

This dynamic nature is the result of transitions into and out of states. States are in fact both limited (the current state) and unlimited situations (natural facts). Occurrences in turn can be divided into processes, which are durative (much like states), and achievements, which are punctual (in the sense of instantaneous). And finally, processes can be divided into activities, which are atelic (no end point is indicated), and accomplishments, which are telic (they are perceived as having an end point). Activities and states share the same feature: they both do not seem to have a perceivable end point.¹⁵

A further classification of situations was offered by Declerck et al. (2006, p. 45) and is said to include the following:

- punctual situations (which only occupy a point in time, as illustrated by the example *The dog hiccoughed.*)
- static situations (they are said to refer to situations that tend to be considered states, as in *She felt betrayed.*)
- durative situations (referring to the duration of a situation, as in *She droned on and on.*)
- homogenous situations (whereby we do not focus on the internal complexity of a situation, as in *My friend was in Portugal*, but consider every point during that stay to be more or less uniform, i.e., more or less of the same kind, rendering the situation a whole, or allowing us to perceive it as a whole)
- heterogenous situations (where uniformity is not taken into consideration, and instead we consider the different parts of a situation as in *My sister repotted her outdoor plants.*)

It is also important to add another element to this classification, that of ‘abstract types of situations’. They can be static and dynamic, whereby the former refer to states which are by definition unchanging, homogenous, and not agentive, while the latter can be punctual and durative. Durative dynamic situations are described as consisting of stages, or as they are more interestingly described, as ‘slices’, which due to a change in the situation differ one from the other. For example:

[10] *Joan is a beautiful woman.*

would be an example of a static situation, and

[11] *I'll be with you in a minute!*

of a dynamic one.

Situations can also be agentive and nonagentive. The former require an animate agent to instigate the situation, while the latter are just a different way of referring to states.

¹⁵ The difference between stative (in Serbian: *statičan / glagol stanja*) and dynamic verbs (in Serbian: *dinamički glagol*) can also be noted in a variety of other structures, such as the imperative, pseudo-clefts, the causative construction (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 95).

For example:

[12] *The nurse punctured the patient's vein.*

and

[13] *The coral reef ecosystem is slowly succumbing to the effects of global warming.*

Situations can also be homogenous and heterogenous. The aforementioned static situations are mostly considered to be homogenous as they remain 'unchanged' over certain periods of time. In that way, segments of these situations can often be used to stand in for the entire situation. This, on the other hand, is not an option for heterogenous situations. For example:

[14] *Stan is dependable.*

and

[15] *They had five pieces of cake.*

Situations can also be durative (having a temporal duration that can in some way, shape, or form be delineated) and punctual (situations that are actualized in a single moment). For example:

[16] *I'm having my car detailed.*

and

[17] *The cat jumped out of the window.*

There is one more classification that should be added to the list, one that refers to full situations and to predicated situations. To quote:

The full situation is the complete situation that the speaker implies (or the hearer infers) has actualized, is actualizing or will actualize, however long it turns out to be or to have been. The predicated situation is the part of the full situation which is actually referred to in the clause used. The predicated situation – the linguistically indicated situation – and the full situation – the inferred situation – may coincide with one another, or the predicated situation may be shorter than the full situation. (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 113)

An example of these two situations coinciding would be the following sentence:

[18] *Laurie spent several years starring on that show.*

and of not coinciding would be

[19] *At the time I was married to my job.*

Temporal relations: the link between time and form

Key terms: time of orientation (T_0), temporal relations, tense forms, speech time/ time of speaking, the deictic center

The specific experiences humans have when navigating space (such as observing motion or finding their bearings in relation to specific points) tend to be reflected in how they orient themselves in what we perceive to be linear time. To quote:

People use space to represent the abstract concept of time (e.g., Casasanto & Boroditsky [...]; see reviews of Bender & Beller [...]; Núñez & Cooperrider [...]). For instance, we often talk about time in terms of space such as in phrases like: “The future is lying ahead; the past is behind us” (Lakoff & Johnson [...] 1980). In addition, humans also tend to gesture to visually express time in space. English people may refer to the future by pointing to the front of their body and indicate the past by pointing to their back (also left-right for past-future) (Casasanto & Jasmin [...]; Cooperrider & Núñez [...]). Such temporal gestures with the future-in-front and the past-at-back mappings sound common for many Westerners. (Gu et al., 2019, p. 836)

Ergo the conclusion that tenses delineate reality, in the sense that they account for the “locations” of situations in what we perceive to be our reality. In this reality, we have more or less of a definitive understanding of what we, and others in our community, perceive to be past, present, and even future time.¹⁶ Just like we are able to ‘localize’ one object in space in relation to another one, we rely on a similar method of “localizing” situations in relation to one another. In both instances we rely on what is known as a frame of reference (FoR or in Serbian: *referentni okvir*); in this instance, a temporal frame of reference. The temporal relations that hold between situations in time account for the combinations of various tenses in the tense system of the English language and will be discussed in more detail later in this book. At this point, it would be important to state that the semantics of tense, or more precisely of a particular tense of a particular language, are to be found precisely in the formation of these temporal relations between orientation times (in Serbian: *vreme orijentacije*). An orientation time is: “Any time that serves, or can serve, as the origin of a temporal relation expressed by a tense form is called a ‘time of orientation’ (Declerck, 1995, p. 6) and is marked by (t_0).¹⁷

¹⁶ In order to ensure that we understand the time spans, we adhere to the following (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 148): “The past time-sphere is conceived of as a timespan of indefinite length which lies wholly before t_0 and is disconnected from t_0 . The absolute tense locating a situation time in the past time-sphere is the preterite (past tense). [...] The present time-sphere (or nonpast time-sphere) is conceived of as a timespan of indefinite length which includes t_0 .” To clarify, t_0 refers to the speech time (zero time) or in Serbian: *trenutak govora*. In order to locate various situations in the past time (or past tense sphere) we rely on a certain number of tense forms, including the preterite, the preterite perfect, and conditional tenses, included in what we typically refer to as the second and third conditional in the L2 English classroom.

¹⁷ “...there is a simple system of relative tenses to express relations in a past domain: we always use the

A term more accurate than that of tense (in Serbian: *glagolsko vreme*) is that of tense form, a term which we will adopt in this book. Declerck (1995, p. 3) stated that “[a] tense is the grammatical expression of a particular temporal meaning” and as such is an abstract concept, while “[a] tense form is a concrete verb form [...] involving this kind of formal expression of a tense meaning” exemplified by instances such as *walked*, *would walk*, etc. A tense form is more of a role of a particular verb form which in a particular language is used to locate and identify a certain situation to the hearer (see Declerck et al., 2006, p. 94 for more details).

Now to return to our perceived notions of past time, present time, and future time. The pertinent question is: how is this division made? It is taken for granted that such a temporal division exists but not many people would actually use any specific terminology to name the initial point of such a division. It is in fact speech time, or time of speaking, or even more precisely, the time (and place) where the speaker (and potentially, but not necessarily the hearer) finds themselves. The colloquially referred to ‘*here and now*’ and specifically, more accurately referred to as the deictic center (in Serbian: *deiktički centar*). It is usually in relation to where we “are” in time that we can determine what happened before that point (what is anterior to it) and what follows (or what is posterior to it). The moment when you are in fact reading this text is the moment when you represent the deictic center, based on which you decide what happened in the past time, and what will potentially (or in a prearranged or prescheduled manner) happen in the future time and use tense forms accordingly. A case in point would include examples such as

[20a] *I literally just read that.*

and

[20b] *That’s something I have yet to read about. We haven’t gotten that far.*

The role of the deictic center

Deixis (in Serbian: *deiksa*) is a reference to our ability to use language to pinpoint either people also known as person deixis, or time also known as temporal deixis, etc. A very important concept related to deixis in general is that of the aforementioned deictic center, a “role” assumed by the speaker. The deictic center is easiest to identify in the case of spoken or oral communication, when both the speaker and the hearer are located on the same premises at the same time and can actually see the situation unfold in real time. The deictic center is therefore always linked to the first-person pronoun *I*. However, every time a different person assumes the role of the speaker,

preterite for simultaneity, the past perfect for anteriority, and the conditional tense for posteriority, irrespective of whether the binding t_0 is the central t_0 or a bound t_0' ” (Declerck, 1995, p. 9)

the point of view changes (not just what the *here and now* are, but how the speaker perceives the sequence of situations, or what they want to foreground). Just like we have the present time that we find ourselves in as the readers, or t_0 , so does the narrator or the author have the present time they find themselves in when they are writing, and as does the protagonist. So, it is important for us to understand the concept of deictic time, to be aware of who, at a particular point during the narration, has in fact assumed the role of the deictic center.

For Levinson (1983: 64), deixis is organised in an egocentric way, with the deictic centre constituting the reference point in relation to which a deictic expression is to be interpreted. For example, in an utterance such as *I'm over here now*, the speaker, the actual location and the actual time of the utterance are respectively the deictic centres. The term deictic centre underlines that the deictic term has to relate to the situation exactly at the point where the utterance is made or the text is written, in other words it has to relate to the position from which the deictic terms are understood. In conversations, the deictic centre is constantly changing between the partners; the speech event is conceptualised from a different point of view. (Stapleton, A. (2017). <https://publications.essex.ac.uk/esj/article/id/23/>, original emphasis)

When it comes to deciphering deictic time in general, there are two things we need to take into consideration. The first is known as the time of encoding. When it comes to writing, interacting with a text or even translating it, the time of encoding (in Serbian: *vreme kodiranja*) is the time when the writer/the author (either in their role of narrator or not) sat down to put their story down on paper. The time of decoding (in Serbian: *vreme dekodiranja*) is our present time, the t_0 of us as the readers, and it is whenever we decide to pick up the poem, story, novel, or whatever it is that we are going to read and or translate. Clearly, these are quite different times, because the deictic centers are different. In the time of encoding, the deictic center is the writer. And during the time of decoding, we represent the deictic center.¹⁸ To illustrate this, let us cite a well-known example from pragmatics, something that we can oftentimes read on storefronts or in shop windows, when a plaque or a handwritten note reads:

[21] *Back in 30/Back in 15/Back tomorrow.*

It is not easy for us as the readers at the time of decoding to interpret when this 30 minutes, 15 minutes, or tomorrow is/will be because we can only do so in relation to our present time, based on when we are reading that particular note. But actually, the interpretation of the note or the content needs to be deciphered based on the time of encoding, that is, the writer's time, or whenever the writer actually penned that note. As we do not actually know when that was, we can only make judgments and assessments based on our t_0 , we can only conclude that it happened at some point in what we perceive to be past time, i.e., a time that is anterior to our arrival at this particular store and our reading of this particular note.

We have mentioned that what is known as current relevance (or continuing applicability) necessarily need not refer to present time, it may refer to past time

¹⁸ For more information on deictic verbs please see Wang (2018).

as well, based on the available combinations of tense forms specific for the English language. This is linked to the idea of encoding time. The zero-point is usually equated with deictic time (time of speech or encoding time). But that is not the full extent of the situation, as the decoding time does not always coincide with it. And in situations that we as translators find ourselves, even if we were looking over the shoulder of the author, decoding time would still not match encoding time (primarily because it is posterior to it).

There is a very specific quote that outlines the idea of decoding time, and it reads: "The author addressing the reader of a book may take as t_0 the stage in the book where the reader has arrived." (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 112) This would be a good time to remind ourselves of how this pertains to the actual situation of interacting with a text in order to translate it really looks like. We usually find ourselves *in medias res*, we are asked to simply begin translating at a particular point along that imaginary time-line, and slowly build up the preceding events based on the information that we have been given. We must always be vigilant of the fact that the story does not begin with us, and that the story has its own t_0 , and in relation to that, we are asked to reconstruct situations along that imaginary time-line and use tense forms to indicate to our audience that same time-line. The translator is supposed to imagine themselves as traversing that imaginary time-line and recreating the situations correctly to the reader, in the order in which the author presented them, so that they could in turn recreate the same sequence.

PRACTICE SECTION

Please translate the following sentences into English. Make a note of whether the main verb will take a present or past tense form and why, i.e., whether the speaker is referring to past time or to present time.

- [1] Pitam ga šta je bilo sinoć, a on krene da mi priča kako kreće, pa svraća usput da nekog pokupi, pa gubi cigarete, pa mu ispada novčanik... ni sam ne znam kako je stigao na proslavu.
- [2] Da sam ja na mestu tog deteta, odabrala bih tog psa.
- [3] Svakog vikenda vodi sina na utakmicu sa sobom.
- [4] Ukratko, to je priča u kojoj se glavni junak bori za istinu i pravdu uprkos teškim okolnostima.
- [5] Čini mi se da je prilično zbunjen.
- [6] Rekao sam ti da dobro izgledaš, ne znam u čemu je problem.
- [7] Da stvarno voliš umetnost, ne bi stalno odbijao da kupiš neku novu sliku.
- [8] Da sam ja na tvom mestu, možda bih pričekao malo.
- [9] Ukoliko ne pročitaš tekst, nećeš moći da pratiš predavanje.
- [10] Operi sudove pre nego što izađeš.
- [11] Stižem!

CHAPTER 2: TENSE VS TIME

A provisional outline of tense in relation to time

Key terms: locating situations, event time, reference time, speech time, zero-point, an imaginary time-line, the ‘now-then’ relationship

This chapter will attempt to answer a relatively simple question: what is it that tense forms “do”? One of the possible explanations has already been given, and that is that they delineate reality. But before we take this particular issue any further, it is first necessary to make the distinction between tense (in Serbian: *vreme*) and time (in Serbian: *glagolsko vreme*). For example, Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) postulate that the category of time in the English language is actually construed by means of the English tense system, i.e., speakers of the English language rely on a series of tense forms to identify the relations between time references (see also Peterson, 2000; Stosic, 2019).¹⁹ Put simply, the relationship between tense and time is such that we use the tense forms in a particular language to ‘locate’ situations in time (see Gronn and Stechow, 2016, p. 313 for tense as a ‘means of encoding time’).²⁰ The idea of ‘locating’ points in time dates back to the first half of the 20th century, when Reichenbach (1947) formulated his definition of the past tense by invoking E[vent time] (in Serbian *vreme događaja*), R[eference time] (in Serbian: *referentna vremenska odrednica*), and S[peech time] (in Serbian: *vreme govora*): past tense is defined by E, R – S, which means that event time is simultaneous with the reference time, while both are anterior to speech time.²¹

In 1975, Traugott made the distinction between several different kinds of time:

- a) physical time, which can most closely be described as ‘what we experience, what we perceive to be ‘flowing’, irreversible, and linked so closely to what we as human beings perceive as duration,
- b) chronological time, which is linked to what can best be referred to as periods of time (seconds, days, weeks, etc.), and

¹⁹ Bos et al. (2013) also stated that tense forms do not necessarily coincide with time reference. They presented a situation specific to the linguistic environment of L1 Dutch/L2 English speakers wherein complete verb forms play a greater role in these ‘violations of the temporal context’ than do tense forms themselves.

²⁰ This, as previously indicated in the first chapter, amounts to us using the category of space to talk about the category of time. Evidence of this is found in the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1999) for example, who discuss the link between temporal cognition, i.e., an abstract concept or a target domain and space cognition, i.e., the experiential domain but also the source domain.

²¹ This particular combination of temporal relations will be revisited throughout the text.

- c) linguistic time, which is singularly linked to us as humans, and refers not to what we experience, but how we experience time, and this is where we find the link to tense (along with aspect and sequencing). These key features are what is known as 'locative' (1975, p. 209) which means that: "Tense locates what is talked about on an imagined time-line with respect to the speaker. Serial ordering locates events with respect to each other at points on the time-line. Aspect assigns limits and bounds to events."

Furthermore, Traugott presents an opinion much like the one postulated about spatial and temporal cognition:

[T]ime is in fact an assumed relation in language, not a concrete one and whatever orientation or movement it has must be derived from the act of locating what we talk about on an imaginary time-line [...] the first thing we come into contact with is in our direct line of vision (i.e., in front of us), and subsequent things are farther away: from our point of view they are behind what we have come in contact with. This line of vision, running front-back and not sideways, is the same one which establishes the space of tense deixis. The difference between tense deixis and sequencing is that in tense deixis the speaker must locate himself or herself somewhere on the line with respect to events, whereas in serial ordering (in its pure conceptual state), he or she does not do so, but only projects the imaginary line onto events. (1975, p. 220)

This is a phenomenon referred to as the 'orientation of serialization', and in summary, is a guideline for language learners not to view sequencing and tense separately.²²

But, how do we define tense and time? Here are some noteworthy definitions:

- "...tense applies to a system where the basic or characteristic meaning of the terms is to locate the situation, or part of it, at some point or period of time" (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 116)
- "Time is an extralinguistic category. That is, it exists independently of language. Tense is a linguistic concept: it denotes the form taken by the verb to locate the situation referred to in time, i.e., to express the temporal relation between the time of the situation in question and an 'orientation time' which may be either the 'temporal zero-point' (which is usually the time of speech [...]) or another orientation time that is temporally related to the temporal zero-point." (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 22)
- "Tense refers to the grammatical expression of the time of the situation described in the proposition, relative to some other time." (Bybee, 1985, p. 144)

²² "While tense deixis is, as we have seen, strictly tied to the concept of a person moving along a path, serialization is less directly tied to the speaker, and is therefore spatially less constrained" (Traugott, 1975, p. 221). Furthermore, "in English, some form of tense deixis must be used, and serialization takes on a less significant role" (Traugott, 1975, p. 223). Since we as humans tend to perceive time as having a single dimension, we tend to represent it as a straight line. This of course creates a much clearer link to adjuncts of temporal location such as *before* and *after* and sets the stage for sequential and chronological events, i.e., allows us to imagine 'the flow of time'.

- Tense is “[a] set of verb forms that indicate a particular point in time or a period of time in the past, present, or future” (Collins COBUILD English Grammar, 1990, p. 245)
- “Tense is grammaticalised expression of location in time... [T]enses locate situations either at the same time as the present moment..., or prior to the present moment, or subsequent to the present moment.” (Comrie, 1985, p. 9, 14)
- “Vreme (*Tense*) je formalno obeležena gramatička kategorija glagola kojom se pokazuje kojoj vremenskoj dimenziji govornik smatra da radije pripada. Pored vremenske dimenzije, odnosno neke vremenske relacije, kategorija vremena obeležava i indirektni govor, a upotrebljava se i za entitete koji ne pripadaju realnosti.” Đorđević (1996, p. 330, original emphasis)

The temporal ‘locations’ of situations on the imaginary time-line are encoded in various parts of the verb phrase (mostly in a morphological sense in the inflectional suffixes added to the main or auxiliary verb)²³, and in a reference to remoteness, inter alia. Remoteness is exemplified by the distinction between the present simple tense and the past simple tense, wherein the former indicates a situation considered to be less remote, and the latter something more remote in relation to speech time (moment of utterance), all in relation to the speaker as the deictic center.²⁴

In the example:

[22] *When Ann arrived, Charlotte had left.*

the subordinate clause provides the reference time (the time of arrival), while the main clause conveys the event time (Charlotte’s leaving). Both of these situations, naturally, occurred prior to the time of speech, in addition to one of the situations clearly happening before the other (as indicated by the presence of the past perfect tense in the sentence).

The proposition of a particular utterance is always related to what is called ‘the now of the utterance’ or the ‘time of utterance’ (Traugott, 1975, p. 208). The imaginary time-line is introduced in order to present the speaker as a kind of “anchor”, linking the aforementioned proposition to the so-called now of the time of utterance (in Serbian: *vreme govora*).²⁵ The speaker in a way assumes the role of a reference point, which, according to the same author, renders tense a ‘deictic structure’.²⁶ This kind

²³ This also means that the verb form is ‘marked for tense’ or ‘tensed’ and ‘carrying temporal information’ which Declerck et al. (2006, p. 23) refer to as ‘morphologically expressing reference to a past or nonpast temporal domain’.

²⁴ For more information see Fleischman (1989).

²⁵ For more on the time-line see Michaelis (2006).

²⁶ Let me just remind the reader that the deictic centre is usually the speech participant who is speaking, but that the speech event or speech situation can also function as the deictic centre, as context is vital for any kind of communication to take place.

of relationship is also known as the ‘now-then’ relationship, whereby the ‘now’ is determined in relation to the speaker, and ‘then’ can refer to either an anterior or posterior time. We, as the interlocutors, are asked to adopt this point of view pertaining to what the past time, present time, and future time is considered to be. Just like the speaker acts as an anchor, the deictic center is a means of ‘grounding’ one’s perspective in a particular point in time.²⁷ To quote: “Grounding of a clause situates a process with respect to the circumstances of the speech event” (Taylor, 2002, p. 392). Even a cursory understanding of these ‘locations’ in time is of key importance to the proper translation of tense forms.

Based on the idea of the ‘speaker as anchor’²⁸ or the deictic center and what that means to how we construe time, in the English language there are past time-sphere tenses (in Serbian: *prošla vremena*) and present time-sphere tenses (in Serbian: *sadašnja vremena*). These spheres represent how speakers conceptualize time. They are both of indefinite length and do not include speech time, i.e., the zero-point. Past time-spheres include the preterite, the preterite perfect, the conditional tense (to clarify, this refers to the combination of tenses associated with what we in the L2 classroom refer to as the second conditional), and the conditional perfect (this refers to the combination of tenses associated with what we in the L2 classroom refer to as the third conditional). Present time-spheres include the present tense, the present perfect, the future tense, and the future perfect tense. The fact that the same (or more precisely very similar) meaning can be conveyed by ‘different formal means’ actually refers back to the list of tenses previously associated with the past tense sphere and the present tense sphere.²⁹ The variety of different tense forms, not just among different languages but within a single one, are a means that the speakers of a language have recourse to in order to identify the location of the actualized situation (in Serbian: *završena radnja*).³⁰

²⁷ Comajoan-Colomé (2022) refers to grounding as the difference between action and description.

²⁸ For more information on anchoring, please see Enç (1987).

²⁹ Declerck et al. (2006, p. 25) state, succinctly, that the meaning of tenses is in fact the expression of temporal relations.

³⁰ This is related to what is known as epistemic time and deictic time. The former indicates when a situation is claimed to have happened:

[23a] *Susie said she was on her way.*

while the latter indicates a situation still relevant at the time of speech (continuing applicability):

[23b] *Susie said she is on her way.*

In both instances, the translation equivalent would probably be the same:

[23c] *Suzi je rekla da je krenula.*

Temporal relations

Key terms: absolute and relative tense forms, simultaneity, anteriority, posteriority

The tense forms that we rely on to locate various situations in time are, based on their temporal relations (those of simultaneity, anteriority, and posteriority), classified as absolute and relative, wherein the former refer in particular to what are known as the simple tenses. Absolute tenses (in Serbian: *apsolutno glagolsko vreme*) are defined as tenses that link the time of a situation to the time of speech (conveying a single temporal relation), while relative tenses (in Serbian: *relativno glagolsko vreme*) link the time of a situation to another orientation time which is not the aforementioned zero-point³¹ (which means another situation time, other than that of the time of speech). In a more practical sense, when it comes to past time spheres, Salkie and Reed (1997, p. 320) relied on this distinction to explain the temporal relation between the preterite and the preterite perfect in the following way: “absolute past which means ‘before speech time’ and the relative past which means ‘simultaneous with another past time in the context’”. Furthermore, a relative tense can only be encountered if there is an absolute tense around to bind it (to indicate whether it refers to past or present time, for example).

Let us once again consider an example we previously analyzed:

[22] *When Ann arrived, Charlotte had left.*

The absolute tense is *arrived*, which not only links us to the speech time but creates a past temporal space as it refers to a situation which is anterior to speech time. The relative tense is *had left*, as it is first linked to the preterite *arrived* (is anterior to it), and only indirectly to the speech time (which in this example has not been explicitly stated).

Another example can also illustrate a similar point:

[24] *He looked at me as if he suspected I were cheating on him.* (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 87)

In this particular sentence, the time referred to in the introductory or matrix clause conveyed by the tense form *looked* is past time. The subordinate clause contains the past subjunctive *were cheating*. We know that the present participle takes its cue in terms of distribution of events along a chronological time-line from the orientation time found in the independent or matrix clause (in Serbian: *nezavisna rečenica*). What this means is that the time referred to by the tense form *looked* is the same as the time referred to by the tense form *were cheating*. This in turn creates the impression of simultaneity, despite the lack of identical tense forms.

³¹ A definition of orientation time would read as follows: “Any time that can provide the ‘known’ time (or one of the known times) required for the expression of the temporal relation(s) encoded in a tense form is an ‘orientation time.’” (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 117)

Let's take a look at another example:

[25] *He looked at me as if he suspected I had been cheating on him.*

Once again, the tense in the main or introductory/independent clause refers to a past time, conveyed through the inflectionally marked form of the verb *look*, while the subordinate clause contains a complex tense, the past perfect continuous tense *had been cheating*. Based on what has already been discussed, an L2 English learner might, due to the presence of the present participle, conclude that the sentence conveys two situations that can be perceived as being simultaneous. However, it is the inflectional markings on the auxiliary verb here that actually indicate that there is a discrepancy. Both *looked* and *had been cheating* refer to past time, that much is certain. However, they do not refer to two identical points in time in the past, and so the temporal relation is not one of perceived simultaneity. In this particular instance, we are looking at an example of backshifting³², where the perfective aspect of the verb form indicates or imposes a very particular interpretation of the sentence at hand: the act of cheating (whether it had actually occurred or whether it is just an assumption) is anterior to the act of looking at someone at a particular way. So, the interpretation in terms of past time situations lies not with the present participle, it lies with the inflectional markings on the auxiliary verb *have*.³³

Declerck and Tanaka (1996, pp. 283–284, original emphasis) illustrate the distinction between absolute and relative tenses in the following way:

[26] *John said that Bill is ill.*

“the past tense form *was* in *John said that Bill was ill* is a relative tense form, whereas the present tense form *is* in *John said that Bill is ill* is an absolute tense form. The relative past tense form relates the time of its situation (i.e., the time of Bill's being ill) to the time of the situation referred to in the head clause (i.e., the time of John's utterance) in terms of simultaneity.’ The absolute tense form, by contrast, relates the time of its situation directly to the time of utterance.”³⁴

Further illustrations of the difference between absolute and relative tenses include:

(42) Ruby said that she liked snakes.

(43) Ruby said that she likes snakes.

³² Davidse and Vandelanotte (2011, p. 245) provide the following definition of backshifting: “... backshift is all about experiencing the shift from the absolute tense used in the reported utterance of DS [direct speech] to the corresponding relative tenses used in the reported utterance”.

³³ As one of the reviewers quite aptly pointed out, due to the presence of the conjunction *as if*, which in and of itself requires a particular type of tense form (or mood), specifically only past tense forms, the situation is rendered slightly more complicated due to the fact that even if the sentence were to include the tense form *looks*, we would still be required to use the preterite perfect.

³⁴ As one of the reviewers mentioned, this particular temporal relation that is characteristic of absolute tenses could provide a theoretical explanation for what some English L2 teachers refer to as ‘exceptions’ to the rules that regulate the sequence of tenses. However, that discussion lies outside the scope of this book.

A technical difficulty with Comrie's treatment of (42) and (43) is that only the morphological part of the S[equence]o[f]T[enses] rule allegedly fails to apply in (43): the semantic part still applies, so *likes* in (43) is a relative present rather than an absolute one. In Comrie's analysis the meaning of *liked* in (42) is also 'relative present', so (42) and (43) are claimed to have the same meaning. This appears to be incorrect: the present tense in (43) is an absolute present, as shown by the interpretation of adverbs like *now* when added at the end of the sentence. (Salkie & Reed, 1997, p. 337)

Absolute and relative tenses are closely related to the concept of backshifting and sequence of tenses (which will be discussed in more detail later in the book), as it is precisely through backshifting that a tense form changes from an absolute (establishing a temporal space) to a relative (subordinate or bound) tense form. In a way, a relative tense form, or more closely related to our current goals, a relative past tense form, means that the situation being referred to is simultaneous with the situation referred to by the absolute tense form which has already established a past domain (this situation is most often to be encountered in reported speech, as the tense form in the reporting clause is considered the absolute tense form, while the tense form in the reported clause is considered the relative tense form).³⁵

³⁵ For more on tense in a general reference work please refer to Fabricius-Hansen (1998).

PRACTICE SECTION

Please translate the following sentences into English, while also clearly indicating which of the tense forms are absolute, and which are relative.

- [1] Kada sam se sledećeg jutra probudila, svi su već napustili hotel.
- [2] Mačku je dala na usvajanje pre nego što je bilo ko morao da joj kaže da to učini.
- [3] Bio sam u tom trenutku uveren da je živela sama.
- [4] Bio sam u tom trenutku uveren da je makar jednom u svom životu živela sa nekim.
- [5] Znao sam da neće dugo ostati sama.
- [6] Stalno obećavam da ću naučiti da upravljam avionom.
- [7] Na mesto sastanka stigli smo tačno na vreme; puka je sreća da nas niko nije preduhitrio.
- [8] Zahvalnice smo primile za rad koji smo napisale prethodne godine.
- [9] Juče smo se dogovarale da danas izađemo na večeru, ali sada mi svi kažu da su već jeli i da su se predomislili.
- [10] Prošle nedelje mi je priznao da mu se jako dopadaš.

CHAPTER 3: TENSE FORMS

A brief overview

Key terms: analytic changes, primary and secondary forms, monotransitive verbs, ditransitive verbs, complex transitive verbs, finite and non-finite forms, auxiliary and main verbs, grammatical auxiliaries, modal auxiliaries, simple and complex forms

Once we have made the distinction between time and tense, it is necessary for us to move on and consider the tools we have at our disposal in language to locate situations on the imaginary time-line, specifically, tense forms.³⁶

An important place to begin are the features of verbs in general. Verbs can be classified as being transitive (in Serbian: *prelazni glagol*) or intransitive (in Serbian: *neprelazni glagol*), whereby the former take a complement in the form of an object (in Serbian: *dopuna glagolu*), usually a nominal (a noun, a noun phrase, a noun clause most often, but sometimes a non-finite form as well, just to name some of the most frequently occurring options), while the latter require no complement, but may require an adjunct of temporal or spatial location. This is further linked to the division of verbs into monotransitive, i.e., verbs that require only one complement which is usually a direct object (*buy something*), ditransitive which require two complements, both an indirect and a direct object, usually in that order (*give someone something*), and complex transitive verbs which require a direct object and an object complement to complete their meaning (*elect someone class president*).³⁷

Then we need to take into consideration the distinction between primary forms and secondary forms (in Serbian: *primarni i sekundarni oblik*), as they pertain to verbs in general.³⁸ The former include verb forms that are tensed, which means that they are morphologically marked, i.e., they have undergone an analytic change in the sense that a morphological inflectional suffix has been added to the verb stem and

³⁶ The most frequently referred to general reference grammar books at this point were the Collins COBUILD English grammar (1990), Bandalamenti & Henner-Stanchina (2007), Halliday (2013, 2014), Lock (1996), Michaelis (2006), Reppen et al. (2012), Thomson & Martinet (1996), and Yule (1999, 2006).

³⁷ This, of course, rather cursory overview should also include the division of verbs into iterative and non-iterative, whereby the former indicate repetition while the latter do not. See Đorđević (1996) for more details.

³⁸ The distinction between primary and secondary forms or primary and secondary tenses originates from Latin, whereby primary tenses are those found in independent clauses and should therefore be distinguished from non-finite forms. In addition, primary tenses refer to present or to future time, while secondary tenses refer to past time.

they are now marked for tense. This is most easily illustrated by the tensed preterite which is marked by its recognizable *-ed* past tense-forming inflection suffix (in the case of regular verbs) and the present simple tense form which is marked by the *-s* inflectional suffix for the third person singular only.

What is characteristic of primary forms is that they are mainly found in what are known as canonical clauses or matrix/independent clauses (reminiscent of absolute tense forms). On the other hand, secondary forms tend to appear in what are known as non-canonical clauses, which is just a different way of referring to subordinate clauses (and usually, but not exclusively, relative tense forms). For example, it is frequently the case that non-finite clauses are labeled subordinate (recognized for their adverbial function), often functioning as modifiers. On the other hand, a feature of finite verb forms is that they show congruence or agreement with the subject in terms of person and number, which refers to the structure of predication.³⁹

Another terminological distinction would be the one between what are known as auxiliary verbs on the one hand, and lexical verbs on the other. The very name of the former refers to the role that these verbs play in enabling us to form more complex verb forms, including the present perfect, the past perfect, the present perfect continuous, and the past perfect continuous, but to name a few. The category is also much broader than initially expected. We are usually taught that the auxiliary verbs in the English language include three verbs: the verb *do*, the verb *have*, and the verb *be*. However, there are certain classifications, such as the one presented in Huddleston and Pullum (2002), that indicate that auxiliary verbs in general function as a hypernym under which are subsumed not only these three verbs but in fact all the modal auxiliary verbs in the English language (including *can*, *could*, *shall*, *should*, *may*, *might*, *will*, and *would*, for instance).⁴⁰

Furthermore, there are lexical verbs, are also known as main verbs. These are the verbs that actually express the situation that is being referred to in time, that is, is being located on the imaginary time-line. In complex tenses (which include tense forms other than the present simple or the past simple tense), it is the auxiliary verb that takes any inflectional suffixes or undergoes analytic changes, while the lexical/main verb usually assumes a particular form that does not change.⁴¹ That verb form is

³⁹ This difference in form and function is one of the reasons why independent or matrix clauses contain absolute tense forms which 'bind' the relative tenses found in subordinate clauses.

⁴⁰ Declerck et al. (2006, p. 19, original emphasis) provided a modified version of the distinction between grammatical auxiliaries and modal auxiliaries. Grammatical auxiliaries include:

- “(a) the ‘tense auxiliary’ *have*, which is used in forming perfect tense forms;
- (b) the ‘aspect auxiliary’ *be*, which is used for building progressive verb forms;
- (c) the ‘voice auxiliary’ *be*, which is used in the passive;
- (d) the ‘periphrastic auxiliary’ *do*, which is used as a ‘dummy’ (pro-form) when a VP that does not contain an auxiliary (e.g. *love her*) is used in a construction that requires one (e.g. *I don’t love her*, *Do you love her?*, *I do love her*, etc.)”.

⁴¹ Tense inflection can actually be linked to temporal deixis. The tense markings added to verbs in the English language tell us whether reference is being made to past time, present time, or future time.

either the past participle or the present participle, depending on the type of complex tense.⁴²

Lexical or main verbs can take simple or complex forms, depending on whether the tense form requires the addition of a modal verb or another kind of auxiliary. For example, the simple forms (in Serbian: *prosti glagolski oblik*) would be the present simple tense (*sings*), the past simple tense (*sang*) as the finite verb forms, and the present (*singing*) and past participles (*sung*) as the non-finite verb forms. The complex verb forms (in Serbian: *složeni glagolski oblik*) would include the present (*is/are singing*) and past continuous (progressive)⁴³ tense (*was/were singing*), the present (*has/have sung*) and past perfect tense (*had sung*), and the present (*has/have been singing*) and past perfect continuous (progressive) tense (*had been singing*). This list excludes the complex forms that refer to future time or to hypothetical situations, modalities, etc. This extended list of forms is referred to as a paradigm.⁴⁴ The basic paradigm, that all learners of English are exposed to, is one that consists of the bare infinitive, the past tense verb form, and the past participle verb form.

Then, there are also:

- process verbs (*change, grow, mature, die, widen, slow down, improve, thicken, deteriorate, strengthen, diminish, darken, deepen, develop, increase*),
- action verbs (*walk, read, drink, look at, write, eat, abandon, ask, play*),
- and event verbs (*explode, burst, take place, rain, occur, happen, break down, snow, befall*).

And finally, Đorđević (1996, pp. 291–293) also provided a classification of her own, one based on aspectual features, which includes:

- durative verbs (*hunt, knit, read, work, write*),
- punctual verbs (*arrive, dip, knock, nod, take off*),
- ingressive verbs (*break out*),
- terminative (*give up*),
- iterative (*pant*),
- conclusive (*get up*),
- private/inconclusive verbs such as intellectual private verbs (*doubt, know*,

⁴² What this means in a very practical sense is that these two types of verbs differ in terms of inflectional morphology as well as in terms of the syntactic structures or patterns they take part in (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002).

⁴³ The term ‘progressive’, we would like to remind the reader, is merely a more recent term than ‘continuous’, and they will be used interchangeably in this book.

⁴⁴ “[T]he set of inflectional forms of a variable lexeme is called a paradigm” (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 74).

notice, remember, think), emotive private verbs (*desire, feel, hate, like, love, wish*), perceptive private verbs (*feel, hear, see, smell, taste*), and private verbs of bodily sensation (*ache, feel, cold, hurt, itch, tickle*).

The tense forms of the English language: some relevant features

Key terms: the simple present tense, the past simple tense (the preterite), the present perfect tense, the past perfect tense (the preterite perfect), the present participle, the past participle, the present continuous, the past continuous, the present perfect continuous, the past perfect continuous, telicity

One of the functions of a tense system is to facilitate speakers in their attempt to recount or narrate the chronological/sequential order of situations to their interlocutors for a variety of reasons. We can recount stories of situations that happened a long time ago, situations that are currently taking place, situations we expect to see forthcoming, situations whose result we are unsure of, situations for which we are sure no remedy exists; we can indicate whether or not something lasted for a very long time, whether something lasted for a very short period of time, and we can foreground situations where we need to emphasize that one situation preceded another in order to construe some sort of perceived causality.⁴⁵

Tense forms indicate where in time or on the imaginary time-line a particular situation is located and can also provide us with an indication of the speaker's construal of whether the situation is completed or not. Locating a situation on the imaginary time-line means determining where it is located in relation to the time of speaking. If it precedes it (is anterior to it, chronologically speaking), the reference is to past time, if it is perceived as seemingly simultaneous, the reference is to present time, and if it comes after the time of speaking (is posterior to it, chronologically speaking), the reference is to future time.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ It is important to mention that much like the imaginary time-line, situations have no 'directionality'. This is something that we, as humans, impose upon both the time-line, and the situations themselves. For this, we rely on "sequencing, deictic tense orientation, aspectual orientation to boundaries" (Traugott, 1975, p. 214).

⁴⁶ It is interesting to note that various linguistic environments provide specific research results pertaining to what tense forms L2 English learners find most or least difficult to learn based on test results. Sukasame et al. (2014), for example, present the following results, in descending order of perceived difficulty for the L2 English language learners: the preterite perfect, the preterite, the present perfect, the past continuous, the present simple, the future simple, the present continuous.

It is also important to note at the very beginning of this chapter that we will not be focusing on tense forms that have future time reference in this book.

In order to fully comprehend their potential combinations, it is important to tackle each of the tense forms in turn.⁴⁷ However, it was not an easy to decide the order in which to present the various tense forms of the English language. A factor which of some importance was Bache's (2008) detailed and multiple-layered analysis of the British National Corpus, carried out in an attempt to provide an operationalized definition of the aforementioned tense forms, which yielded the following results: the most frequent of the tense forms that emerged were (in descending order) the preterite, the future simple, the preterite perfect, the present perfect, the future perfect, the past continuous, the present continuous, the future continuous, future in the past, future in the present, the preterite perfect continuous, the present perfect continuous (p. 53). This scale did, to a certain extent, inform the decision on the order in which the tense forms are presented.

Furthermore, in order to provide clarity, it is important to introduce a particular kind of verb form prior to any detailed discussion of tense forms. This refers primarily to a particular type of non-finite verb form, i.e., the participle. Although there are several types of non-finites in the English language, we will limit the scope of our discussion to the present and past participle, to the exclusion of the perfect participle. These two participles in particular have been singled out for the role they play in the formation of what are known as complex tenses in the English language, as opposed to simple ones. In the simplest possible terms, a complex tense is one that requires the addition of an auxiliary verb (in the English language we are referring to the aforementioned verbs *be*, *have*, and *do*) in addition to the main verb. To clarify, the auxiliary verb assumes the required tense form, while the main verb either takes on the form of the present participle (in combination with the auxiliary *be*) or the past participle (in combination with the auxiliary *have*).

The past participle is inflectionally marked, usually taking the inflectional suffix *-ed* in the case of regular verbs or the inflectional suffix *-en* in the case of irregular ones. The past participle is usually used to form perfect tenses such as the present perfect tense, the past perfect tense, the present perfect continuous, or the past perfect continuous. What is known as the past participle is, by certain authors such as Huddleston and

⁴⁷ Comajoan-Colomé (2022) discussed the order in which certain tense forms, past tense forms in particular, are taught in certain areas and why. For instance, his study indicated that in Spain, the L2 learners are first taught the present perfect, then the preterite, and finally the imperfect, while in the USA, the order is the preterite, then the imperfect, and finally the present perfect tense. A cursory overview of the high school EFL textbooks used in Serbian schools (series *Improving English*, *Headway*, *On Screen*, *Traveller*, *Solutions*) indicates a stable order in which tense forms are taught in this linguistic environment: the present simple, the present continuous, the present perfect, the present perfect continuous, the past simple, the past continuous, the past perfect, the past perfect continuous. And from another point of view, Bardovi-Harlig (2000) outlined the order of emergence of "morphological categories" among L2 English learners: invariant V, present participle *Ving*, irregular past of *be*, irregular past of other verbs, regular past *Ved*, then *be* + *going to*, perfect tense forms, third person singular present tense forms, and then *will* + V. Some of the main reasons outlined for these different orders have to do with the textbooks that the teachers use in their everyday use, their own teaching experience, and the difficulty of the tense forms themselves.

Pullum (2002), also referred to as the passive participle, used in combination with the auxiliary verb *be* in order to create passive structures.

Participles in the English language tend not to be used only to form complex tenses. It often happens that they have an adjectival function and can be used to modify a head noun. This particular feature, this adjective-like function, is best illustrated in passive structures. When it comes to passive constructions, the emphasis is not in fact on tense, or on the moment when a situation was actualized. The focus is more on a change of state which is more closely related to modification or description than it is to location in terms of time in general.

[27] *Spurred into action by her words, he left the room immediately.*

The present participle in the English language is inflectionally marked by the addition of the *-ing* suffix, and one of the important things to remember is that its primary use is to form more complex tenses, such as the present continuous tense, the past continuous tense, the present perfect continuous tense, and the past perfect continuous tense, but to name a few. Huddleston and Pullum (2002), when referring to labels such as the (present) participle, indicate that it should be used/understood in a more relative sense and not in a more absolute sense. So, when we take a look at more complex syntactic structures, such as complex sentences (which consist of one main clause and at least one dependent), the present participle contained in the dependent/subordinate clause indicates an event taking place at a time referred to by the main verb of the independent clause, mostly indicating the temporal relation of simultaneity. This account of perceived simultaneous activities actually provides an explanation for the use of adverbs such as *now* or *at the time*. At the same time, it is closely bound to the continuous/progressive aspect, and frequent occurrence (explicitly stated or implied) of the adverbs *when* or *while*. In fact, the example

[28a] *Smiling, she threw down her bag and hugged her dog.*

actually represents the reduced version of the sentence

[28b] *As/while she was smiling, she threw down her bag and hugged her dog.*

The present simple tense

The present simple tense is analytically marked only for the third person singular, when the inflectional suffix *-s* is added to the stem of the verb (*work, works*). It is most frequently used to refer to situations that repeat regularly in the course of the present time. It expresses states or habitual actions, which, considering the fact that they tend to repeat over and over again, can be considered to have gained more or less permanent status. Examples include the following:

[29] *Water freezes in zero degree weather.*

or

[30] *She drinks champagne every time we go out.*

and

[31] *My mother works as a kindergarten teacher.*

Example [30] implies both regular repetition in the present and something that can be considered a fact/state due to an unchanging or invariable situation. In examples [28] and [29], we find situations that grammar books refer to as general states. This is an indication of their longevity and duration, despite the fact that no progressive aspect has been used to emphasize any ingressive (beginning) and egressive (end) points, or any of the other features typically associated with what is usually referred to as the progressive aspect.

The aforementioned general truths, or ‘universal time statements’ as Quirk et al. refer to them (1985, p. 85) are usually associated with stative verbs, while ‘habitual time statements’ are linked to dynamic verbs. The present simple tense in particular is closely related to stative verbs such as *exist* or *thrive*, or ergative verbs which indicate a change in meaning, such as *boil* and *freeze*, *grow* and *harden*, *rise* and *expand*, etc. There is also a tense known as the instantaneous simple present which expresses activities that are simultaneous with the time of speaking, another feature more commonly associated with the progressive aspect.

However, a discussion of facts and states by no means exhausts all the possible uses of the present tense. For example, Huddleston and Pullum (2002, p. 128) include the following on their list of uses of the present tense (see also Cowan (2008) for more details):

- the performative use of verbs

[32] *I hereby appoint you regent.*

- running commentaries

[33] *... the batter walks up to the plate... he stops...adjusts his baseball cap... and assumes the position...*

- demonstrations

[34] *We pick up the sample, ever so carefully, and transfer it to the heated solution.*

- synopsis and stage directions

[35] *They all exist stage left.*

- present existence of works created in the past

[36] *The Mona Lisa proudly shows off her enigmatic smile to this very day.*

- captions

[37] *It's the small things in life.* (or any similar captions that we find on social media such as Instagram)

- chronicles of history

[38] *This book chronicles the life and times of the greatest kings of Babylon.*

- the historic present in narrative

[39] *So I walk up to the newsstand, and you will never guess what I see... nothing! It's not there!*

- hot news

[40] *The latest news just in: famous celebrity shuns ex-partner in public.*

- and past evidential use with verbs of communication

[41] *I can advise, but there is nothing I can do if no one will listen.*

Also, there is the option of using the present simple tense in conditional clauses, as in

[42] *When it starts to rain, bring the washing in.* (exemplifying the zero conditional)

and

[43] *When it starts to rain, you'll probably get wet.* (exemplifying the first conditional)

However, the various uses of the present tense will not be addressed further in this book. One of the reasons behind this exclusion is the potential confusion regarding applicability that the instantaneous present, the conversational historical present, and the narrative present bring to L1 Serbian/L2 English language learners when used inappropriately to report speech, as this group of learners has the tendency to revert back to the present tense even if it is uncalled for. In cases of reporting, the instantaneous present is most closely related to what is known as “running commentary” that is frequently encountered when one listens to broadcasts of sports events. The conversational historical present does refer to past time, but it conveys situations that have already taken place in such a way that they seem to be unfolding before us, creating thus a sense of immediacy. An example would be a witness recounting what they saw during the commission of a crime. The narrative present, which is characteristic of the Serbian language, is used when we recount the plots of movies or books, or provide descriptions of great works of art, etc. Its reference to past time can be noted when it is used with communicative verbs such as *inform* or *tell*, as in

[44a] *Your teacher informs me you have not been coming to class.*⁴⁸

There is a possible explanation as to why the historical present causes such issues among L1 Serbian/L2 English learners, and that would be the shift in temporal perspective. To quote: “By this I mean the phenomenon that a situation which is

⁴⁸ Let us also consider the potential translation equivalent:

[44b] *Tvoja nastavnica mi kaže da ne pohađaš redovno nastavu.*

interpreted as lying in a particular sector is sometimes treated as if it belonged to another absolute sector. A well-known example is the so-called historical present: a situation that lies in the past [...] is treated as if it were a present situation.” (Declerck, 1995, p. 10)

As a result, tenses are often confused one with the other, and sometimes there is even disregard for the fact that narrative tenses in the English language are past tenses. As a result, the use of the present tense to narrate in English creates a sometimes unjustified sense of immediacy or current relevance/continuing applicability. This provides support for the theory of the proposition still being relevant at the present time, i.e., “the present effect of a past communication” (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 87).

The past simple tense (the preterite)

The past simple tense is formed by adding the *-ed* inflectional suffix (for regular verbs) to the base form/stem of the verb (*worked*) and does not undergo further analytical changes irrespective of whether the subject takes a singular or plural form, while irregular past simple tense forms do not conform to this inflectional pattern, and usually need to be learned by heart.

Huddleston and Pullum (2002, p. 85) state that the preterite has three distinct functions. One of them is to refer to (a specific) past time, as in

[45] *John wrote a poem last night.* (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 43)

The second is the use of the preterite in the second conditional where it is known to indicate modal remoteness

[46] *If he had more time, John would write a poem.*

and the third is the specific function of the preterite known as backshifting or sequence of tenses

[47] *John said he didn't have the time to write a poem.*

In her work, Đorđević (1996, pp. 338–341) points out that the preterite refers to situations that occurred prior to the time of speaking, which leads to it being seen as ‘remote’ in relation to speech time as an orientation time. She distinguishes between several meanings of the preterite, including

- a basic or definite meaning (used when the speaker has a definite time in mind of when a situation occurred, so it is sometimes accompanied by an adjunct of temporal location),
- a habitual meaning (the aforementioned repeated situations with no limit on the duration of the time span in question),

- a generic meaning (for ‘timeless’ situations which are taken as ‘fact’ irrespective of the time in question),
- a future meaning, and
- a modal meaning (usually to be found in conditional clauses, much like the hypothetical conditional, or subordinate clauses introduced by conjunctions such as *if*, *if only*, *as if*, and *as though*, as well as after *wish*, *suppose*, *would rather* and *it’s (high) time*).⁴⁹

In order to use the preterite to locate a particular situation on the imaginary time-line, an orientation time is needed (either one that is specifically stated or one that is sufficiently implied). Therefore, an important aspect of the use of the preterite is the inclusion of adjuncts of temporal location. An adverb of time (or prepositional phrase functioning as an adverb of time) indicates that something ‘holds’ within the confines of a particular point in time. For example,

[48] *It was very humid last night.*

In this example, the use of the preterite is rendered necessary due to the presence of a very specific adjunct of temporal location (*last night*), indicating a specific point located somewhere along the chronological sequence of situations, i.e., on the imaginary time-line. However, we can also say:

[49] *The following night was different.*

or

[50] *This night would bring changes we didn’t expect.*

For these two examples there is no indication of a specific point in time. The specific point in time, or the general location of a situation on an imaginary time-line, is actually either directly stated at some point previously during the discourse (can be grasped based on the story, through a specifically stated deictic center), or must indirectly be understood from the context of the example itself (indirectly stated, whereby it is up to the listener/reader to reconstruct it based on a perceived deictic center). Either way, the reference in these two examples is not to past time, but in fact to future time. If we were to revisit the sentence:

[51] *This night would bring changes we didn’t expect.*

we could see that the use of the demonstrative pronoun indicates that there was an orientation time previously stated which signifies the relevance of this particular

⁴⁹ Many modern-day L2 English learners seem not to take into consideration that there is no distinction between *was* and *were* in situations that are referred to as *irrealis*, or, as it is most often referred to, the second conditional in the English language. Despite their hesitation to recognize any difference between the two, the rules of English language use indicate that the subjunctive is the desired verb form, irrespective of the current frequency of use of the more informal *was*. It is, as is the case with structures such as *I wish*, usually part of a subordinate and a non-factual structure.

It is interesting to mention that Ziegeler (2012), when analyzing colloquial Singaporean English determined that the preterite can even be used to refer to both present and past habitual situations.

night in the chronological linear sequence of events. So, the precise moment of occurrence, albeit indirectly conveyed but understood by the listener/reader, need not be explicitly stated in order for communication to take place.

What tends to hold for the present simple tense, holds for the preterite as well when it comes to repetition: if a situation tends to recur in past time, it is also considered to have achieved fact status. Furthermore, the preterite renders the status of 'fact' to completed activities (hence the reference to specific points referring to past time). In more grammatical terms, it indicates that a situation was actualized at a specific point in time which is anterior to the time of speaking.

[52] *I finished that book some time ago.*

Another similarity in the use of the present simple and the past simple tense can be seen in the instances when the latter is used to "replace" the former (specifically, when more than one orientation time is needed). This most clearly includes instances such as reported speech:

[53] *He said he felt like having a cup of coffee.*

where the shift in tense from the present simple to the past simple falls under the category of backshifting. To quote: "[i]n indirect (reported) speech past tense in the reporting verb tends to make the verb of the subordinate clause past, too. This phenomenon is called back-shift." (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 88). This also applies to unreal conditions that refer to the present time

[54] *She acts as if it were all up to her.*⁵⁰

The latter in particular is a good example of the preterite not referring to past time as part of the so-called 'hypothetical past' as found in conditional sentences, or the so-called second conditional: *If I were you...* (the *irrealis*) or *If you did that...*

The preterite is always an indication of a following or upcoming situation (in Serbian: *posteriornost*), one that is posterior to the situation referred to by the past perfect (continuous) tense. This is a reference to consequential activities (Collins COBUILD English grammar, 1990, p. 2051), which can actually be exemplified in a variety of tense combinations. One is the consequential relationship that can be perceived between a string of past simple tenses as in

[56] *I woke up, got out of bed, changed clothes, brushed my teeth and left the house.*

wherein none of the posterior or upcoming activities (for example the changing of clothes) could have happened if the previous or anterior activity had not taken place

⁵⁰ Please note that the meaning of [50] is non-factual, which means that in fact it is not all up to her. However, sentences such as

[55] *She acts as if it is all up to her.*

do actually refer to situations where much rides on the individual in question. However, in such situations, the use of the conjunction *as if* is not warranted, considering that it is a clear indication of non-factual situations. Hence, one is unlikely to come across such examples frequently.

(the getting out of bed). There is also the ‘interruption’ implied in the past continuous/past simple tense combination:

[57] *I was busily typing away at my computer when my dog decided to start barking.*

wherein the latter of the situations is posterior and indicates a consequential change in the situation (an interruption). Despite the fact that when comparing the preterite to the past continuous tense, the former mostly emerges as a means of drawing attention away from the situation that is ongoing or temporary, presented or conveyed by means of the past continuous tense, the temporal relations between them can be considered that of perceived simultaneity, or perhaps at least a slight overlap.

[58] *And while they were all discussing future dinner plans, he came up with his own idea about the project.*

And finally, we come to the combination of the preterite and the preterite perfect, as exemplified in

[59] *They all felt tired because of all the cleaning they had done.*

The unmarked, or even default setting for tenses in narration, the string of past simple tenses, is the standard, typical way of conveying or describing situations that have been actualized. It is, in a way, the scaffolding of any narration. For example:

[60] *We sat around the fire and waited for my soldier brother to come home from the war. He arrived about six in the evening.*

The verb form *sat* and *waited* could just as easily have been *were sitting* and *were waiting* (to convey the descriptive component) which would then refer to particular situations which were temporary, which we knew were going to end with the (in this case expected) arrival of an interruption, and would result in our attention being drawn to the subsequent situation(s).

One way of ‘disrupting’ this sequence of past simple tenses is to include flashback narration, on a larger or smaller scale. Flashback narration (the sudden shifts or disruptions in the chronological order that we may refer to as the marked version) will be indicated by the use of the perfective aspect. Every shift in focus of attention can be perceived as the beginning of a new, sequential, unmarked, chronological and linear order of events conveyed by means of a string of past simple tenses. That is one of the reasons why we do not narrate by consistently or constantly relying on the perfective aspect. We use it once, to indicate a shift in chronology, after which we once again revert to the default settings. This is illustrated in example [61], where the preterite perfect is, once it has introduced a situation anterior to the one found at the very beginning, followed by a sequence of past simple tenses.

[61] *I kept telling you that he was the one to blame. I was adamant about it. It all started when he'd finally acknowledged that he had stolen the money from the safe. I tried to tell you, but you did not listen, not once. I was fighting so hard for your attention.*

The present perfect tense

The present perfect tense has so far been classified as a present tense, but the Collins COBUILD English grammar (1990) tends to identify it as more of a past tense, in the sense that it refers to past time.⁵¹ In fact, the beginning of the particular situation it refers to is a starting point that is chronologically anterior to speech time, that is, is located in the past in relation to the speech event or the current discourse space.

[62] *Yes, I have had time to review your application. You will be informed of our decision in due time.*

The core uses of this tense include the following:

- referring to situations that began at a point in the past and last until the present time, or the time of speaking

[63] *My father has been rooting for the same team his whole life.*

- referring to situations that have recently been completed (which is once again a reference to the present time or time of speaking). This in particular has to do with achievement verbs, whose lexical aspect, which indicates immediate completion, contributes significantly to their meaning

[64a] *She has just walked in.*⁵²

- referring to situations completed in the past which are still relevant in the present time (current relevance/continuing applicability). This in particular has to do with accomplishment verbs, which rely on their lexical aspect to express activities that have been completed⁵³

[65] *The new Jo Nesbo novel has just come out.*

⁵¹ There are some disagreements over whether the present perfect tense refers to past time or to present time, primarily due to its “semantic anomalies” to borrow a phrase and the fact that the auxiliary *have* does take a present tense form. What further confounds the issue is that as a tense form it seems to straddle the imaginary dividing line between past time and present time. As a result, some English teachers refer to it as a present tense form. However, as indicated in the text, some grammarians are of the opinion that it refers to past time (Cowan 2008), others state that it is “past with ‘current relevance’” (Quirk et al. 1972, p. 337), while others, such as Đorđević (1996, p. 445, original emphasis), state that “**Sadašnji ili prošli perfekt** (*Perfect*) se upotrebljavaju da pokažu da se radnja desila u vreme koje je prethodilo vremenskoj dimenziji o kojoj je reč (sadašnjost ili prošlost)”, a sentiment echoed in Huddleston and Pullum (2002, p. 139): “The perfect, marked analytically and the preterite, marked inflectionally, constitute the two past tenses: they have it in common that in their basic meanings they both express the temporal relation of anteriority”.

⁵² Let us also consider the potential translation equivalent:

[64b] *Samo što je ušla.*

⁵³ As one of the reviewers kindly mentioned, what is more important here is that the situation itself was actualized, and not the time of the actualization itself. That is a distinction worth noting.

- referring to situations that convey a change over time, whereby the perfective aspect contributes the “interpretation that the evolving change is now complete” (Cowan, 2008, p. 368)

[66] *Her condition has improved significantly over the past few days.*

For L1 Serbian/L2 English language learners, a potentially confounding issue is how to align these tenses within the scope of a complex sentence. Let us, for example, consider combinations of sentences linked with a transitional expression such as *since*. That, in a very practical sense, translates into the following: the present perfect tense, which is very frequently linked to the use of the word *since*, will be found in the matrix or independent clause and not in fact in the subordinate clause beginning with *since*. What this means is that the entire subordinate clause functions as an adverb of time marking the beginning of a situation, indicating that a perfect tense needs to be used in the matrix clause.⁵⁴ A case in point would be:

[67] *Ever since she broke that cord, she hasn't been able to put it back together.*

When compared to the present perfect or present perfect continuous tense, the preterite refers to a precise point in past time. The relationship is one of a partial overlap, in the sense that the preterite indicates the starting point of the situation referred to by the other two tenses. For example:

[68a] *I have been working here ever since they opened the building.*

[68b] *I have worked here ever since they opened the building.*⁵⁵

[68c] *I worked here since they opened the building.*

The interpretation assigned to examples [68a] and [68b] is such that the situation itself is being perceived and depicted as still ongoing, still current, a situation which has not achieved actualization. Example [68c] carries no implication as to whether the situation is ongoing or whether it may continue into the future. The emphasis is much more focused on completion, in accordance with the meaning associated with the preterite.

⁵⁴ What tends to happen is that the rule ‘regulating’ the distribution of the present perfect tense in combination with the adverb *since* is perceived as an instruction to L1 Serbian/L2 English learners to use the present perfect tense immediately after the introduction of the adverb. Furthermore, it is worth nothing that some researchers and some practitioners would state that the present perfect tense is one of the most difficult tenses for L1 Serbian/L2 English speakers, and that as such it requires specific study. Although I agree to an extent with their assessment, the study of this particular tense falls outside the scope of this book, which is predominantly focused on the relations between the preterite, the preterite perfect, and deictic time.

⁵⁵ Let us also consider the single potential translation equivalent for all three examples:

[68d] *Radim ovde otkad su otvorili zgradu.*

The past perfect tense (the preterite perfect)

The preterite perfect, like the present perfect tense, is also marked by the perfective aspect. It refers to a situation anterior to an orientation time which is referred to by a past simple tense form (while in the case of the present perfect tense, the anteriority is usually in relation to speech time/the zero point). However, the anteriority is only in relation to the beginning of the situation being referred to. As a result of its orientation time being referred to by the preterite (whereby the the past perfect tense is indirectly related to speech time), the preterite perfect is said to refer to “past-in-the-past” (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 93).

The use of the preterite perfect is such that we usually come across it in complex sentences, whereby it is irrelevant whether the clause containing the verb in the preterite perfect will come first or second. The only order to note in this instance is that of chronological order of the situations, i.e., chronological accuracy. Chronologically speaking, the situation referred to by the preterite perfect is anterior to that expressed by the preterite, which thereby assumes the role of an orientation time (in turn anterior to the time of speaking).

The following represents what we are most often taught explicitly in the L1 Serbian/L2 English language setting:

Glagolski oblici u prošlom perfektu predstavljaju radnju koja se u potpunosti desila u prošlosti, a tačno vreme njenog dešavanja se ili iskazuje – obično je to oblik koji se odnosi na događaj koji se desio pre nekog momenta u prošlosti koji pokazuje obično preterit, ili sadašnji perfekt – ili se vreme podrazumeva. Drugim rečima, on služi da poveže dva prošla događaja koja su se dogodila jedan za drugim, i da obeleži radnju koja se dogodila pre, ali je relevantna za neku vremensku tačku u prošlosti, da znači nešto što je još dalje u vremenu od nečeg što je već prošlost; da znači prošlost u prošlosti, odnosno da se smatra anteriornom verzijom preterita, antepreteritom. To je oblik koji odgovara delimično preteritu, a delimično sadašnjem perfektu. (Đorđević, 1996, p. 455)

When the use of the preterite perfect is required, it may be necessary for us to try and recreate the chronological order of situations actualized in the past (the order in which situations are conveyed in discourse usually reflects the chronological (temporal) order in which they occurred) and also wise to consider using adjuncts of temporal location such as *before* and *after*, to establish the order (see Gronn & Stechow, 2016, p. 314):

[69a] *He left before he had managed to find his keys.*⁵⁶

and

⁵⁶ Let us also consider the potential translation equivalents:

[69b] *Otišao je pre nego što je uspeo da pronađe svoje ključeve.*

for the former and

[70b] *Pronašavši svoje ključeve, otišao je.*

[71b] *Nakon što je našao svoje ključeve, otišao je.*

for the latter.

[70a] *After he had found his keys, he left.*

which can also be syntactically paraphrased to include a non-finite form:

[71a] *Having found his keys, he left.*

The preterite perfect is said to indicate “extra time” in relation to the preterite (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 93). It in turn can be interpreted as locating the situation referred to by the preterite perfect as being further removed from the time of speaking (located somewhere in the present time). The preterite, when compared to the past perfect or past perfect continuous tense, in fact becomes an orientation time based on which we determine the temporal relation of anteriority.

According to Gronn and Stechow (2016, p. 314):

For simple tenses in main clauses the temporal centre is either contextually given, that is anaphoric, or uniquely given by the speech time, hence referential and not quantificational. In composite tenses, such as the past perfect [...] the temporal centre is typically an anaphoric definite time, while the reference time is shifted backwards. [...] [W]e should carefully separate the reference time (aka the assertion time) from the temporal centre (aka the perspective time, temporal anchor for the sentence). In contrast, the classical notion of reference time going back to Reichenbach (1947) suffers from the defect of not distinguishing properly between these two temporal parameters.

Much like the preterite, the preterite perfect also has some specific meanings, including:

- a continual meaning (indicating that a situation lasted until a specific point in the past, much like the temporal relation between the present perfect and the time of speech),

[72] *He had frequented that bar until it was finally shut down by the health inspectors.*

- a resultative meaning (indicating that the results of a situation are still ‘relevant’),

[73] *She had come out unscathed from the scandal.*

- a future meaning, a meaning known as hypothetical, unreal, or even a meaning expressing modality (linked to verbs such as *expect*, *hope*, *intend*, *mean*, *suppose*, *think*, *want*)

[74] *They had supposed that a different outcome was underway.*

Finally, we might set aside some time to consider adjuncts of temporal location and the role they can play in conveying the chronological and sequential order of events (situations) that we refer to as narration (or more precisely, the temporal relations of simultaneity, anteriority, and posteriority). Declerck et al. (2006, pp. 732–734) discuss narrative time clauses as ‘pushing forward the action’ (unlike the main clause which provides more general temporal location information), and include among

them narrative *when*-clauses (e.g., *I was just going to leave when the telephone rang*) and narrative *before*-clauses (which, just like narrative *when*-clauses, use an absolute tense form).

Before-clauses should be analyzed alongside *after*-clauses, both of which play an important role in uncovering the semantics of tenses. A definition of the latter could be the following:

In the same way as *before* means ‘before the time when’, the conjunction *after* is semantically equivalent to ‘after the time {that / when / at which}’. This is in keeping with the fact that the conjunction *after* has actually developed from a phrase corresponding to the modern English phrases ‘after the time that’ or ‘after then that’. In the paraphrase ‘after the time {that / when / at which}’, the word *time* refers to the Anchor time, which is the *initial* point of the Adv-time. (When a *before*-clause is used, the Anchor time is the *terminal* point of the Adv-time.) (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 742, original emphasis)

A grammatical representation of what an *after*-clause would look like can be seen in the following (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 746):

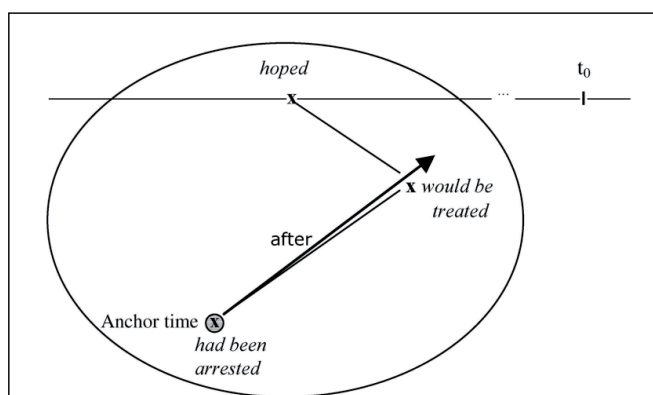


Figure 14.14. The temporal structure of *I hoped that my brother would be treated well after he had been arrested*.

Source: Declerck et al., 2006, p. 746.

The present continuous tense

The present continuous tense refers to situations that are perceived to be ongoing at the moment of speech, that most probably began prior to it, that tend to last over an extended period of time, throughout/during the time of speaking, and may even continue after it. This tense form is usually associated with activity verbs

and achievement verbs. Achievement verbs (*hit, kick, bounce* and other punctual achievement verbs) take on an iterative meaning when in the progressive form. This iterative meaning can also convey disapproval or annoyance, or “more emotional strength and intensity” (Cowan, 2008, p. 363):

[75] *They are always running late.*

or

[76] *She is always forgetting to lock her front door.*

This effect includes a reference to people’s behavior at a particular time, i.e., in and around the time of speaking, thus emphasizing the temporary nature of the situation (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 923). Sometimes we can even use the progressive aspect to indicate changes in state. For example, while:

[77a] *That looks really bad.*

indicates that the change has already happened,

[77b] *That is looking rather bad.*

implies a process, a temporary appearance, and not necessarily the end state. The situation is much the same with appearance verbs (*appear, seem, resemble*) and cognitive verbs (*know, believe, mean, understand*), which can also indicate an ongoing, i.e., evolving process. The present continuous tense is quite frequently used with verbs such as *come, go, arrive, land* which “refer to a transition between two states or positions” (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 89).

Due to the perceived temporary nature of the situations, the present continuous tense indicates the potential for change. This is why sentences such as:

[78] *The sun was/is shining.*

or

[79] *The wind was/is blowing.*

are primarily used to provide descriptive detail.

The past continuous tense

The past continuous tense mimics the present continuous tense in terms of it being used to express ongoing situations. However, as with most past tenses other than the preterite, we have more than one orientation time: the actual time of speaking (or writing), and an orientation time in the past in relation to which we determine a situation to be in progress (naturally, this orientation time is to be found in past time). A case in point would be the following:

[80] *Listen, I have something to tell you: when he walked past her, she was having a quiet conversation with her sister and they were arguing with one another.*

The imperative *listen* and the tense form *have* refer to the speech time, locating it in the present time, while the tense form *walked* indicates an orientation time located in the past, i.e., anterior to *have*, followed by the tense forms *was having* and *were arguing*, both of which indicate progression in the past. Even though the beginning and end point of the conversing and the arguing are unknown, they are in a way linked by the tense form *walked* to past time. In this particular instance, there is, at least, a momentary overlap between the situations, in the sense that the past time situations cannot be explained as anterior or posterior to one another.

In terms of the temporal relation between the past continuous tense and the preterite, it can refer to a situation construed as ongoing at a point when another situation referred to by the preterite is 'located'. Examples include sentences such as:

[81a] *I was taking a bath when the phone started to ring.*

and

[81b] *I was taking a bath when the phone rang.*

Sentence [81a] may carry the implication that the person remained in the bath and did not in fact get up to pick up the phone, instead letting it ring. That kind of interpretation would be akin to that of:

[81c] *The phone was ringing while I was taking a bath, ergo, I wasn't able to pick up and you should have called back.*

Sentence [81c] indicates the possibility of conveying simultaneity by means of two identical tense forms, in this instance *was ringing* and *was taking*, which in duration exceeds any overlap that could be conveyed by the previously illustrated combination of a past simple tense and a past continuous tense. Even though we once again have no access to information regarding when the bathing or the ringing started, based on our general knowledge of the world around us, or pragmatic factors, it would be safe to assume that the bathing certainly took longer than the ringing, was probably not intermittent (as the ringing may have been if the person called back), and that the ringing probably ended before the bathing itself. These are all inferences, not overt statements of fact, but are important enough to be taken into consideration.

One way of disambiguating between the simple and progressive (past) tense was noted by Declerck et al. (2006, p. 29, original emphasis):

I wrote an essay last night.

I was writing an essay last night [when Henry came in].

wherein the use of the past tense form *wrote* is an indication of the point of view of the speaker: the situation has been actualized. The use of the past continuous tense *was writing* indicates that the speaker views the situation as ongoing, incomplete/not completed.

Another point to take into consideration is ‘gradual transition’, which, based on the aforementioned, is not difficult to link to the progressive aspect. In order for a situation to be transitional, it often also includes a ‘preparatory phase’, implies a process, i.e., “a durative change in state” (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 60). A potential illustration might be the following one:

[82] *The crowd was dispersing.*

The examples that have been provided so far indicate situations whose beginnings we are not able to determine (which might even be irrelevant to the proposition being conveyed), but whose end point might or might not be gleaned from the provided information. And yet, it is also possible to use the past continuous to describe a period of time between two points of time in the past, such as:

[83] *She was operating on a patient from 10am until 2pm.*

The emphasis here is both on duration (the length of the surgery) and the temporary nature of the situation itself (a process that is ongoing but is terminable). And finally, another feature that is a consequence of the progressive is the iterative component that can sometimes, as needed, be inferred from the past continuous tense on occasion:

[84] *She was checking her phone during the entire date.*

A brief note on the present perfect continuous tense and past perfect continuous tense

The present perfect continuous tense more or less spans the same segment of time as the present perfect: it extends along a period of time lasting up to the present time, sometimes even up to the moment of speaking, but without the implied sense of completion. Please note the differences in the following situations:

[85a] *He has been living there.*⁵⁷

[85c] *He has lived there.*

Sentence [85a] refers to an ongoing situation, while sentence [85c] refers to a situation that has now ended and/or changed. Hence, the present perfect continuous tense may create an impression of incompleteness.

The situation is much the same when it comes to the temporal relation between the past perfect tense and the past perfect continuous. The past perfect continuous refers to an extended or ongoing situation that preceded a situation that was actualized at some time in the past (the situation is referred to by the preterite).

⁵⁷ Let us also consider their potential translation equivalents:

[85b] *On tamo živi već neko vreme.*

and [85d] *On je tamo nekada živeo.*

[86a] *He had been living there.*⁵⁸

[86c] *He had lived there.*

However, the Collins COBUILD English grammar (1990, p. 252) indicates that the past perfect continuous also has a specific function in that it conveys unrealized expectations and wishes, as illustrated in the following example:

[87] *I had been expecting some miraculous change.*

It will suffice to say that the expected change in fact never took place.

A brief note on the passive as it pertains to the use of the preterite and the preterite perfect

Put very simply, verbs refer to situations, and adjectives refer to qualities. This provides a link to some of the basic sentence patterns of the English language, and the possible combinations that ensue from incorporating linking verbs or the verb *be* into these patterns: N¹ be N¹ (*I am a teacher*) or N be Adj (*We are happy*), for starters. All passive structures also contain the verb *be*, which is why the case could be made that passive structures perform a function that is more descriptive in nature. This might mean that the focus in a passive structure is perhaps more on the adjectival, or it is perhaps the intention of the speaker to focus on the end result, the ensuing state, rather than the activity that has been completed, in a way. That is why Huddleston and Pullum (2002) present the following as an example of an ambiguous sentence:

[88a] *It was broken.*

The reasoning behind the potential ambiguity is the issue of what the focus is on, whether on the activity:

[88b] *Neko ga je polomio/pokvario.*

or on the state:

[88c] *Bilo je polomljeno/pokvareno.*

This is why, when it comes to situations that convey events much more so than states, it might seem to us that the better option could be to use the perfective aspect,⁵⁹ i.e., a more complex tense, as in:

[88d] *It had been broken.*

⁵⁸ Let us also consider their potential translation equivalents:

[86b] *U to vreme on je živeo tamo.*

and

[86d] *On je nekada živeo tamo.*

⁵⁹ For the sake of disambiguation, it is worth mentioning that the term *perfect* refers to tense, and *perfective* refers to aspect.

wherein the focus is more on the activity, than to use the preterite, which more often seems to convey situations related to states (the state of being broken, with the focus averted from the reason or cause for that state).

Combinations of past tense forms in the English language

We have established that the narrative tenses in the English language are past tenses. To quote Salkie and Reed (1997, p. 327):

a series of events in the past is narrated through the eyes of a character in the story. This makes it easier for the reader to attribute pragmatic responsibility to the character as well as to the narrator. But all the events are recounted in the past tense, as is normal in narratives. There is no reason to switch to any other tense when the past thought is reported: the thought is past for the narrator, and its content is also past for the narrator.

We have also by this point reviewed, however briefly, the features of these tense forms. However, the issue of their possible combinations requires a more detailed analysis than any that may have been referred up to this point.

Let us first go back to why we avoid present tenses in the English language when it comes to narration (not including the exceptions previously discussed). For example, Declerck and Tanaka (1996, p. 14) state that “the speaker is unlikely to use the present tense in a report that forms part of a discourse which is about the past and that conversely, a shift of domain [from past to nonpast] will be more likely than S[equence]o[f]T[enses] in a context about the present”. Choosing the present tense in the reported clause could, on the one hand, be the result not only of a lack of awareness of the semantic and pragmatic features which regulate the SoT, but might also be an issue of current relevance/continuing applicability on the other. For instance, it is the reporting speaker that decides the relevance of the semantic content, so if the speaker decides to use a present tense form, they must consider the relevance to be greater from the point of view of their deictic center, i.e., their *here and now*, rather than that of the reported speaker. Riddle (1978, p. 29) even mentioned unresolved situations where a ‘further change’ is expected, whereby the present tense might be the more pragmatic choice of tense form, as opposed to an outcome already being expected based on the given context (please see the brief section pertaining to misaligned tenses in the introductory chapter). So, the choice of present or past domain (and the associated tense forms) must be made consciously, and cannot be a slip of the pen, or a translation done carelessly, or in a hurry.

As previously mentioned, each past tense form has a specific meaning and combines with other tenses in a specific way. The more we understand these mutual combinations, the easier it is for us to determine the chronological sequence of situations over time, i.e., the easier it is for us to locate them on an imaginary timeline. Since we have already introduced the concept of time of speaking and the fact

that a particular story/narrative can and often does evolve at a time not identified as our *here and now*, let us first start with the combinations of the only absolute tense on our list, the preterite. Past simple tenses combine in a very simple manner, one after the other in a sequence, bound together by a clearly identifiable logical relationship underlying the progression of the situations they refer to. For instance:

[89] *The minute the bell rang, I packed up my stuff, made sure everything was in my bookbag, walked out of the classroom, and headed out to the cafeteria.*

Although it is safe to say that it would be possible to view each of these situations in isolation (from the ringing of the bell to the heading off to lunch), that is not the focus here. It is very important to take into consideration the fact that each of these situations should not be viewed individually but should at all times be considered part of a sequential chain. That means that every situation is actually a consequence of, or the natural result of, the previous one. In fact, a possible way of viewing these situations is to imagine them as a set of stepping stones, each one placed after the other, and each one requiring that the previous step be taken in order for the next to be rendered possible (packing up your stuff before you leave the classroom, actually physically walking out of the classroom before you are able to move to another location, etc.).

If we are faced with a sequence of past simple tenses within an individual sentence, or even in an entire sequence of individual sentences, they are still considered to be a unified discourse segment. We could even go so far as to say that a sequence of past simple tenses makes up the backbone of a narrative, that this tense is, so to speak, the scaffolding of narration. Now, it is possible to manipulate this chronological sequence if we wish to achieve a variety of effects, but at this point we would simply like to focus on the sequential order of past simple tenses without introducing additional tenses at this time. To quote: “[i]n English, when we establish an event as in the past, we continue on with the past simple tense to report it. [...] This continuity of tense can continue through longer stretches of discourse.” (Cowan, 2008, pp. 381–382) As a result, we do not narrate using the preterite perfect.⁶⁰

Most of these sequences we take for granted, we rarely pay them much, if any, attention, but actually determining the correct sequential/chronological order of the situations that make up the “backbone” of a text is of vital importance for being able to determine which tense form to use, and in combination with which other

⁶⁰ A case in point would be the opening lines of the short story Christmas Eve 1953 (the second story in T. Hanks’ collection titled *Uncommon Type: Some Stories* published by Vintage Canada in 2017, p. 35 of the book): “Virgil Beuell didn’t close the shop until nearly dinnertime, when a light snow began falling. The road back home was slick and getting slicker so he drove slowly, wonderfully easy to do in the Plymouth with the PowerFlite automatic transmission. No clutch, no shifting, an engineering marvel. Skidding off the icy road and getting stuck in the snow would be a disaster tonight; in the Plymouth’s trunk were all the treasures due to the morning from Santa, kept hidden and undiscovered there since the kids had declared their wishes weeks ago. Those parents had to be under the tree in a few hours, and transferring them from the trunk of a snowbound car to the cab of a tow truck would alter Christmas Eve horribly.”

tense forms. Every story, every narration, irrespective of the tense forms used, can be broken down into a sequence of chronological past simple tenses, and it is of key importance for us to determine this chronological order of events before we begin the translation of any text.

In addition to the sequential combination of past simple tenses, let us consider additional combinations of the preterite, some of which have been previously discussed in this very chapter. For instance, we have already stated that the past simple tense can be combined with the past continuous and the past perfect (continuous) tense. For instance, the preterite combines with the past perfect (continuous) tense in order to slowly shift focus from what we perceive to be a 'closer' past to what we might consider a more 'distant' past (just a quick reminder, we have already called this 'the past in the past'). The past continuous tense refers to a situation that was ongoing at a certain point in time in the past, and when it began and when it ended is not necessarily the focus of our attention. The focus, however, can be on foregrounding duration, or on providing a backdrop for a past simple tense which refers to a situation that has the effect of interrupting/disrupting the ongoing one. A typical example would be the following one:

[90] *While I was taking a bath, the phone rang.*

which illustrates an overlap, however brief, between the two situations.

Just like the past simple tense can be combined with other past simple tenses, so too can the past continuous tense be combined with another past continuous tense. In such instances the construal is of situations that are perceived to be taking place at the same time, rather than situations which logically ensue one after the other.⁶¹ For example:

[91] *While I was taking a bath, you were making dinner.*

Once again, the beginning of the activity and the end point of the activity are irrelevant for this particular construal. The only point that is relevant is that these two activities are perceived as taking place at the same time, or are overlapping at least in part. Please note that it is not customary for the past continuous tense to be combined with the past perfect, but it is far from impossible:

[92] *He'd barely paid off the ring before he was selling it on eBay.*

Such a combination of tenses exemplifies a very informal register and will not be discussed further in the text.

Then there is the combination of the preterite perfect/the past perfect continuous tense and the preterite. For the purpose of clarity and ease of comprehension, only at this moment will the distinctions between the non-progressive and progressive aspect

⁶¹ Which brings us once again to an important point regarding the use of tenses in the English language: if two situations are perceived to be simultaneous, then a good way of conveying this effect is using the same tense to indicate the contemporaneous nature of the situations.

simply be reduced to duration. We are choosing to gloss over other distinguishing features solely for the purpose of indicating the temporal distribution (location) of the given situations. In the simplest possible terms, the preterite perfect refers to a situation that preceded/is anterior to another past situation, wherein lies its link to the preterite. In simple chronological terms, we use the preterite perfect to refer to a situation that chronologically speaking happened first (in a remote past in relation to the time of speaking), while the preterite refers to a situation that chronologically speaking happened second, i.e., is posterior to the previous one (please note that this entire construal is based on the assumption that we view time as moving “forward” and that past time is “behind” us). It is also considered to be a past ‘closer’ to the time of speaking. This type of temporal relation could also be linked to the idea of backgrounding and foregrounding or creating the effect of an emphatic structure.

An example would be:

[93a] *After I had cleaned my room, I left for the movies.*

or, to illustrate the underlying emphatic structure

[93b] *(It was only) after I had cleaned my room (that) I left for the movies.*

Syntactically speaking, it is possible to rephrase this sentence by referring to the underlying sequence of past simple tenses, and the example would in that case read as follows:⁶²

[93c] *I first cleaned my room. Then I went to the movies.*

Example [93c] is an indication of the fact that any combination of tenses can be rephrased if needed, in this case by means of two past simple tenses, to indicate the actual chronological order.⁶³ There are, without doubt, various options for syntactic paraphrase when it comes to the combinations of a past perfect (continuous) tense and a past simple tense. For instance, if a clause begins with the aforementioned conjunction *after*, we have the option of paraphrasing this particular subordinate clause by introducing a non-finite form, that is, a present or perfect participle. In this case, the sample sentence could read:

⁶² Related to this point, Traugott (1975, p. 209, original emphasis) had the following to say: “*He did X before he did Y* [is] expressed as *Finish X, he did Y*.” Which means that any marked order of situations, i.e., anything other than the sequential ordering of past simple tenses, can actually be rewritten as precisely such a sequence.

⁶³ If we were to be accurate, it would be possible to do much the same thing with a past simple tense/past continuous tense. For example:

[94a] *The rain was coming down heavily as he ran out of his car and into the building.*

We could, for the sake of clarity, break these situations down in the following manner:

[94b] *It started to rain. He got into his car to get to work. He got to work and parked the car. He ran out of the car. He got wet from the rain. He entered the building.*

Of course, it is clear to any L2 English learner that we are skipping over situations, glossing over many of them, and that many nuances are actually lost in such renderings. However, they are nevertheless possible, and could potentially be helpful.

[93d] *After cleaning my room, I left to go to the movies.*

or:

[93e] *Having cleaned my room, I left to go to the movies.*

Semantically speaking, the proposition is more or less the same. In syntactic terms, we have still to a certain extent retained the aforementioned emphasis in terms of pointing out which situation needed to be presented as having actualized first, (in this case the cleaning of the room) in order for another situation to present itself as a result (in this instance, going to the movies).

Another aspect of the temporal relation between the preterite and the preterite perfect is related to the concept of remoteness. The preterite indicates remoteness in relation to speaking time, while the preterite perfect indicates even greater remoteness in relation to speaking time, as it is anterior to the preterite that assumes the function of its orientation time:

[95] *As I sit here, I can't help but think about a book I loved as a child, The Giving Tree, which had been given to me as a birthday present by my parents.*

The present tense (*sit*) refers to the present, to the time of speaking, the preterite (*loved*) in turn indicates remoteness in relation to it, while a further remoteness in relation to it is indicated by the use of the preterite perfect (*had been given*).

When asked what they believe to be the most frequently occurring use of the preterite, L1 Serbian/L2 English learners might say that it is used to refer to a situation completed at some (specific) point in past time. The sense of finality or completion is an important part of the definition for the use of the preterite, there is no question about it. However, when it comes to comparing the sense of finality and completion conveyed by the preterite on the one hand, and the preterite perfect on the other, it is the latter that conveys this aspect of finality, completion, and the inability to change in a way that far exceeds that of the preterite. A case in point:

[96] *If it had rained (but it didn't), I would have brought an umbrella (but I didn't).*

or more succinctly put:

[97] *I could have done it (but I didn't).*

[98] *I would have done it (but I didn't).*

[99] *I should have done it (but I didn't).*

Finally, let us take a look at a visual representation of how situations are located on the time-line, as found in Declerck et al. (2006, p. 155). Specifically, we are referring to Figure 2.2. which outlines the distribution of situations within a single temporal domain as it pertains to a particular sentence.

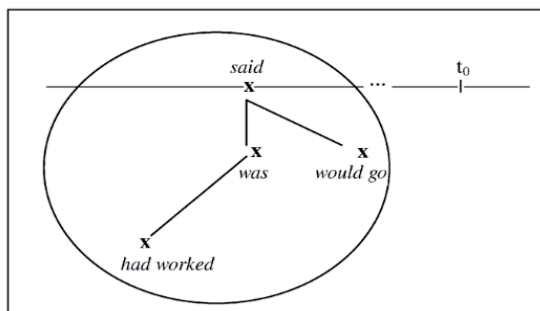


Figure 2.2. The tense structure of *John said that he was tired because he had worked hard all day and that he would go to bed early.*

Source: Declerck et al., 2006, p. 155.

The central t_0 , or binding t_0 , for the relative tenses is the tense form *said*. The remaining tense forms are bound: *had worked* is anterior to *said*, *was* is simultaneous with *said*, *would go* is posterior to *said*. Even if any of these relative tenses were to establish domains, they are still subordinate to the central t_0 or to any other t_0 in the domain. All the situations are temporally related to *said*, not to the t_0 because the tense form *said* established a past domain and the remaining situations are all within that domain. Since it established a past domain, they are all past tense forms.

PRACTICE SECTION

Please translate the following sentences into English. Make a note of whether the main verb will take a present or past tense form and why, i.e., whether the speaker is referring to past time or to present time (or even future time). The original versions can be found in Cowan (2008, p. 371).

- [1] Razgovarala sam već sa njim o tome. Razgovarali smo prošlog četvrtka.
- [2] Kad smo stigli kući, večera je već bila na stolu.
- [3] Kad smo stigli kući, Marko je već skuvao večeru.
- [4] Da sam tada kupila deonice, danas bih imala jednu pozamašnu svotu novca.
- [5] U petak nismo dobili odgovor od vas.
- [6] U petak nismo dobili odgovor koji smo očekivali.
- [7] Kad sam ga upoznala, već je živio u Parizu.
- [8] Kad sam ga upoznala, nije više živio u Parizu.
- [9] Kad sam ga upoznala, već se odselio iz Pariza.

(Sentences [10] to [13] are based on examples found in Cowan 2008, p. 367).

- [10] Ti si jedna vrlo nepristojna osoba.
- [11] Zašto se ponašaš tako nepristojno?
- [12] Trebaće im tri godine da to razreše.
- [13] Pričaće o tome naredne tri godine.

(The original versions of sentences [14] to [34] can be found in Cowan 2008, p. 372, 374).

- [14] Radi sa nama na projektu mesecima.
- [15] Jeste, radio je sa nama s vremena na vreme.
- [16] Radio je na projektu, ali odavno.
- [17] Piše knjigu.
- [18] Napisao je knjigu. Ne sećam se tačno kad.
- [19] Već decenijama piše knjige.
- [20] Decenijama je pisala knjige. Jednu za drugom.

- [21] Čekala ga je satima pre nego je odlučila da ode sama.
- [22] Čitala sam članak koji si napisao. Odličan je, ali mislim da imam par komentara.
- [23] Učim od podneva, mislim da je vreme za predah.
- [24] On na tome radi još od početka godine.
- [25] Koliko se već bavi stomatologijom?
- [26] Koliko se bavio stomatologijom?
- [27] Koliko me dugo čekaš?
- [28] Koliko si me čekao?
- [29] Do tad, koliko je već dugo živela u Beogradu?
- [30] Koliko već živi u Beogradu?
- [31] Sagradili su malu brvnaru na kraju grada.
- [32] Uveliko grade malu brvnaru na kraju grada.
- [33] Ko je kidao moje cveće?
- [34] Ko je pokidao moje cveće?

(The original version of sentence [35] can be found in Huddleston and Pullum 2002, p. 79).

- [35] Namerno ju je neko polomio, iz inata, iz zlobe.
- [36] Polomljena je iz inata, iz zlobe.
- [37] Nije mi delovalo kao da je polomljena.
- [38] Nije mi delovalo kao da ju je neko polomio.
- [39] Bila je polomljena.
- [40] Neko ju je polomio.
- [41] Avion upravo sleće.
- [42] Udaru loptu o zid reketom.
- [43] Stvari ti stalno izmiču kontroli.
- [44] Ponašao se vrlo čudno. (Begin with *You...*)
- [45] Čini se da je svakog dana sve pametniji i pametniji.
- [46] Nekako mislim da bih ja to drugačije uradila.
- [47] Naš avion poleće tek večeras, imaš dovoljno vremena da se spakuješ.
- [48] Dolaze mi rođaci narednog meseca. Jedva čekam!

[49] Trenutno sprema ispit.

[50] Te večeri sam očistila kuću.

[51] Te večeri sam čistila kuću.

(The source for sentences [52] through [63] is: Mihajlo Pupin, *Sa pašnjaka do naučenjaka*)

[52] A da su pre četrdeset osam godina postojali ovi sadašnji propisi o useljavanju, ja bih verovatno bio vraćen natrag.

[53] - Uzmite, molim Vas, - rekao sam im - to je mesila ruka moje majke i pripremila mi za ovaj dugi put.

[54] Ispričao sam im šta me je poteralo u Prag, ističući posebno, mišljenje raznih ljudi da sam ne samo prerastao školu u svom rodnom mestu već i u Pančevu.

[55] Osećao sam da nemam prava da molim za pomoć jer se nisam sasvim posvetio poslu radi čega sam došao u Prag.

[56] Da nije bilo toplog broskog dimnjaka, verovatno bih umro od hladnoće.

[57] Što me je više mučila, izgledalo je da to pričinjava sve više zabavu ostalim radnicima, grubim doseljenicima rođenim u raznim zemljama.

[58] Ovo putovanje podsećalo me je sada na putovanje Dunavom pre otprilike osamnaest meseci.

[59] Princeton nije bio nalik ni na jedno mesto koje sam do tada video.

[60] U mladosti je malo učio, skoro nije ništa čitao, ali kada bi se našao pred knjigom, gledao je u nju sa strahopoštovanjem.

[61] U prvi mah mi se učinilo kao da je taj starac sišao sa one velike slike.

[62] Sledećeg dana ustao sam mnogo pre izlaska sunca, pošto sam celu noć proveo u razmišljanju kako da se oslobodim nesnosnog pridikovanja ovog verskog zatucanka, kome nije bilo leka.

[63] Kad sam se probudio, setio sam se pisma koje sam majci poslao iz Hamburga pre godinu dana, obećavajući joj da ću se skoro vratiti sa puno znanja i sa akademskim počastima. Ovaj san podsetio me je da je moje obećanje pažljivo ubeleženo u mojoj podsvesti.

CHAPTER 4: SEQUENCE OF TENSES (SoT)

Sequence of tenses (SoT): a standard approach

Key terms: indirect speech/reported speech/reporting speech, the reporting clause, the reported clause, the reporting speaker, the reported speaker, binding

It very rarely happens that a particular piece of writing or a text that we are being asked to analyze or translate actually begins with the “beginning” of the story, and it is much more frequently the case that we find ourselves *in medias res*. However, this does not mean that we are unable to determine the location of the first actualized situation since we can refer to the rules which regulate the way in which past simple tenses are chronologically ‘organized’. It is of vital importance for us to be able to determine which situation will assume the role of the initial orientation time, as it will determine the perceived anteriority and posteriority (even simultaneity) of subsequent situations.

Once we understand this sequential order, we will be able to better understand if and why the author decided to “reshuffle” the situations, therefore using a variety of tense forms other than that of just the preterite, such as the past perfect (continuous) and past continuous. The temporal relation between the preterite functioning as an orientation time and the past perfect (continuous) linked to it can be considered a cause-and-effect relationship (consequential activities)⁶⁴, not merely due to the fact that one event preceded the other, which is one of the key features underlying the sequence of past simple tenses, but also due to the fact that the past perfect (continuous) tense will background an activity, while the preterite (linked to the completion of this activity or the lack thereof) will foreground the resultant state. We have previously used the following example to illustrate this relation:

[59] *They all felt tired because of all the cleaning they had done.*

But in such a perceived cause-and-effect relationship, what is being foregrounded and what is being backgrounded? Some might say that when it comes to a past perfect (continuous) tense and a past simple tense combination, what is being backgrounded is the past perfect tense, and what is being foregrounded is the past simple tense. This would, more or less, be in line with the approach that the orientation time in relation to which we use the past perfect tense is in fact linked to a particular past simple tense. That, in order to narrate in a particular way, we single out that certain situations have been ‘reshuffled’ in terms of their location on the time-line. However,

⁶⁴ Reminiscent of Salkie and Reed’s (1997, p. 334): “the content of the past belief has present ramifications.”

ultimately the end focus will be on that particular situation which has been ‘properly’ chronologically presented in relation to our orientation time (i.e., the preterite). This allows us to once again “rejoin” the chronological order of situations outlined during the course of the narration.

What kind of role do these relationships play in the SoT? In order to answer that, we would first have to consider the following: even though we all ‘feel’ we know what the SoT is, i.e., as L2 learners of English we feel we know what is understood of us when we are asked to use sequence of tenses, how would we in fact define what the SoT is? Salkie and Reed (1997) simply refer to the SoT as the temporal relation between tense forms, with the addition that these tense forms locate situations along the aforementioned imaginary time-line. This, as we will now refer to it, standard approach to the SoT, was proposed by Comrie (1985, 1986) and by Thomson and Martinet (1996). Comrie’s take on the SoT is the following one: “If the tense of the verb of reporting is non-past, the tense of the original utterance is retained. If the tense of the verb of reporting is past, then the tense of the original utterance is backshifted into the past.” (1986, p. 279)

Comrie assumes that the SoT has what might be referred to as a morphological part and a semantic part. The former changes the form of a verb, thus changing the tense. The latter changes the meaning of a tense. Comrie further assumes that a tense backshifted into the past does not acquire an additional semantic component. The ‘meaning’ remains the same, i. e., the reference is still to the present or past, only the perceived simultaneity, anteriority or posteriority is now relative to the time of the reporting verb. So the interpretation, so to speak, of the tense form adopted through backshifting is in fact relative.

Regarding the sentence:

[100a] *Joe said that he had been to London the previous day.*

Comrie stated that such a combination of tense forms is possible because there existed a ‘contextually established reference point in the past’ in relation to which a past tense, which would be *was* as in ‘*was in London*’, which we understand to be the case from the example, can be replaced by the preterite perfect *had been* (1986, p. 292). This is in line with the SoT rule about ‘past tense reporting verbs’ which provide ‘reference point in the past’.⁶⁵

This ties in with Comrie’s (1985, p. 36) definition of an absolute tense as a “tense which includes as part of its meaning the present moment as deictic center”, as well as

⁶⁵ Although [100a] is the preferred option, it is important to note that at times, especially in informal, spoken language, we tend to encounter sentences such as

[100b] *Joe said that he went to London the previous day.*

more and more frequently. Despite its frequency, the preferred version in formal academic language is [100a]. In [100b], the preterite indicates that we are dealing with a tense form that is ‘past in relation to the time of Joe speaking’. The preterite perfect means that we are dealing with a tense form that is “past in relation to a contextually established past reference time” (Salkie & Reed, 1997, p. 337).

that of the aforementioned relative tense, “which is interpreted relative to a reference point provided by the context” (Comrie, 1985, p. 58). Such a combination renders the preterite a so-called pure absolute tense,⁶⁶ while the preterite perfect, due to the nature of its temporal relations, is in fact an absolute-relative one. The semantics of these two tense forms would more or less align with the following: the preterite means E[vent time] before S[peech time], while the preterite perfect is more of a combination of E[vent time] before R[eference time], and R[eference time] before S[peech time], whereby R[eference time] is an intermediate reference point (refer to Huddleston and Pullum (2002) for a similar account).

This highlights the difference between the original time of speaking and the time of reporting, which is also in its own right a time of speaking, one more closely linked to our current understanding of *here and now*. This is strongly reminiscent of the *now-then* relationship previously mentioned by Traugott (1975, p. 208). She refers to the same concept using slightly different terminology, referring to it as ‘temporal sequencing’, ‘serial ordering’ or ‘serialization’ involving situations that we can perceive as being simultaneous/overlapping, or as preceding/following one another (whereby the temporal relations are those of anteriority and posteriority, respectively). The same author also makes the following important distinction: “sequencing and tense should not be confused since tense involves speaker deixis, while sequencing involves the anchoring of events with respect to each other, but not necessarily to the speaker” (Traugott, 1975, p. 208), an explanation that leads us back to our discussion of relative (the former) and absolute tenses (the latter).

Tanaka (1988) defines the SoT through subordination, stating that the SoT is a means by which the tense form of the main verb in the complement⁶⁷/subordinate clause (also known as the ‘lower verb’) is ‘made to match’ the tense of the main verb in the matrix clause (also known as the ‘higher verb’). This definition invokes what we have so far said about backshifting,⁶⁸ i.e., the ‘maintenance’ of the temporal relation between the main verb form of the independent/main clause and that of the dependent clause.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ There are certain situations when relative past tense is expected, according to Declerck (1995) and they include: the existence of a *when*-clause as a modifier in the represented sentence or adjunct of temporal location, while at the same time inclusion of the phrase *used to* is connected to the occurrence of an absolute time, since it in fact refers to a bounded situation (limited).

⁶⁷ This subordinate clause is known as a complement clause as its syntactic function in relation to the reporting verb contained in the matrix clause is that of the direct object or DO. A case in point would be:
[101] *She said the cat just yawned.*

wherein *She said* is the matrix clause (*She* functions as the subject and *said* as the predicate), while *the cat just yawned* is the subordinate clause functioning as the complement of the verb *said*, that is, as its direct object.

⁶⁸ Backshifting is “a change in the original tense of the direct speech utterance triggered by a past tense reporting verb in the main clause, where present tenses are changed to their past equivalents, past tenses to their past perfect equivalents, future tenses to their future-in-the-past equivalents, and so forth.” (Charkova & Halliday, 2011, p. 6)

⁶⁹ However, temporal relations are not the only ones that have an impact on sequence of tenses. Tanaka (1988) refers to semantic factors, pragmatic factors, as well as discourse factors as well. Interestingly enough, and quite contrary to what we have been taught about sequence of tenses in general, Tanaka

Though Comrie has gone down in linguistic history as a linguist who promoted adhering to formal syntactic features, other linguists have found that there were exceptions to this rule (Declerck, 1986, 1990, 1995, 1997; Declerck et al., 1996; Declerck et al., 2006, *inter alia*). They include recency in terms of when the direct statement was made and statements that are still ‘true’ at the time of reporting (the aforementioned current relevance/continuing applicability), as well as the role that the variety of pragmatic, semantic, and discourse factors play in such a situation,⁷⁰ and the attitude of the reporting speaker toward the proposition: if backshifting occurs, it conveys impartiality, but if the reporter omits to backshift, the implication is that the reporting speaker might consider the proposition to still be true at their time of speaking (not just the original time of speaking).⁷¹ To this author’s knowledge, reporter’s stance on an issue and pragmatic factors, albeit both quite important for reporting speech, are usually not part of the grammar courses provided in the L1 Serbian/L2 English environment.

A further standard definition of the SoT dates back to the beginning of the twentieth century and the work of Jespersen (1924, pp. 290–9). In short, what he refers to as the SoT is a means of choosing and combining tense forms in a reporting clause (in Serbian: *uvodna rečenica*) and reported clause (in Serbian *navedena rečenica*). These sentences which represent speech are by definition complex, with the reporting verb functioning as the predicate of the independent/matrix clause and with a bound tense form in the dependent/complement clause which conveys the proposition. Jespersen stated that the combinations or alignment of tenses between the matrix and independent clause need to strictly adhere to the formal properties of English language syntax. Thus, formal syntactic rules are enforced immediately upon the reporting verb taking a past tense form.

Let us consider the following examples and the temporal relations that hold between the independent/matrix clause and the dependent clause, and the possibility of not adhering to the rules at hand in every situation:

[103a] *She said the door is ajar.*

[103b] *She said the door was ajar.*

[103c] *She said the door had been ajar.*

proposes that sequence of tenses is not a rule... that relevance in the present time or the past time plays an important role. Here is a simple example of what it means to rely on sequence of tenses as a rule: Comrie (1986, p. 265, original emphasis) discussing the example:

[102] *John said that he was sick.*

whereby the main verb in the complement clause needs to comply with that of the main verb in the independent clause “because it has past time reference, and the second is because it follows a main clause verb in the past tense” (Comrie, 1986, p. 265).

⁷⁰ Defined by Comajoan-Colomé (2022) as, *inter alia*, foregrounding and backgrounding in narratives or the pragmatic use of the imperfect.

⁷¹ For more detail, see Charkova and Halliday (2011).

[103d] *She said the door had been left ajar.*

In example [103a], despite the tense forms of the matrix and subordinate clause belonging to the past and present time sphere, respectively, we are still able to create a sense of current relevance/continuing applicability. This example is one in which the aforementioned pragmatic factors take precedence over formal syntactic rules. In example [103b], due to the inclusion of two preterites, we have a clear indication of (perceived) temporal simultaneity. In sentence [103c], we find an example of anteriority in relation to the speech time referred to in the matrix clause. We also encounter the implication conveyed by the inclusion of the preterite perfect, which surfaces in certain instances, and that is the signal that a change has ensued: yes, the door had been ajar, but had in the meantime, once again prior to the moment of speaking, been closed by someone. In this instance, we cannot rely solely on formal syntactic factors, but must take pragmatic factors into consideration as well. And finally, in example [103d] we have clearly outlined anteriority (*had been left ajar*) in relation to a past tense orientation time (*said*) which is the result of adherence to the strictly formal syntactic rules at times required by the SoT.

Continuing applicability ties directly into the use of adjuncts of temporal location. For instance, *yesterday* renders continuing applicability null and void. And yet, adverbs such as *before*, *after* or *earlier*, *later* do not depend on the time of speaking, but have to do with the situations themselves and when we perceive them to have occurred on the imaginary time-line. It would behoove any learner of English to be able to make these distinctions, to prevent them from, when translating a text from Serbian into English, “realigning” the situations so that it would seem that they were related to an orientation time other than that of the speaker as anchor. This should particularly be borne in mind when determining combinations of the preterite and the preterite perfect.⁷²

Since virtually similar tense forms are linked to both formal syntactic properties and pragmatic factors, both need to be taken into consideration for proper tense alignment in reported speech. This, however, might be confounding for the L2 English learner. What follows is an excerpt from Declerck et al. (2006, p. 446, original emphasis) outlining just such a situation where the L1 Serbian/L2 English learner might say *but why even bother with the SoT*, when both options (the preterite and the preterite perfect) are acceptable:⁷³

It should be remembered that the temporal relation which exists between two situations in the real world is not necessarily expressed by the verb forms of the clauses reporting these situations. [...]. This explains why sentences of the type *In May I spoke to the*

⁷² Consider what Huddleston and Pullum (2002) referred to as an ‘intermediate’ tense which they invoked in situations when this combination of tenses was required.

⁷³ For instance, some might be tempted to point out that it would be possible to say both:

[59] *They all felt tired because of all the cleaning they had done.*

and

[59a] *They all felt tired because of all the cleaning they did.*

boy whose father had died in the February bomb attack can alternate with sentences like *In May I spoke to the boy whose father died in the February bomb attack.* [...] In the former case *had died* temporally subordinates the situation time of the subclause to the situation time of the head clause: *had died* is a relative tense form expressing T[emporal]-anteriority in a past domain. However, there is no temporal subordination when the preterite is used: *died* is an absolute preterite establishing a new domain.

This is frequently the case in clauses beginning with *after* or *before*, since the temporal conjunction clarifies the temporal relation. Let us also take a look at the following example:

[104a] *June said that she is tired.*

It conveys the current relevance/continuing applicability we have previously discussed, which requires that we adhere to the intentions of the speaker. The reporting verb always takes an absolute tense which creates what is known as an intensional domain (that we feel obliged to adhere to while representing). It is the speaker's choice of temporal focus that we need to align ourselves with, and thus have to take into consideration (in this instance, the creation of a past domain, with the added inference of current relevance). To achieve this, we also take into consideration the aforementioned formal syntactic factors, semantic factors, as well as pragmatic and discourse factors (which, ultimately amounts to us taking context into consideration).

This is actually the point which distinguishes between different accounts of the SoT phenomenon. Comrie's (1985, 1986) formal syntax places considerable emphasis on the choice of tense form of the reporting verb in the independent/matrix clause, as it later 'binds' the tense form in the reported or subordinate clause. On the other hand, later accounts of reported speech (primarily those outlined in the work of Declerck 1986, 1990, 1995, 1997; Declerck et al., 1996; Declerck et al., 2006) actually propose that both tense forms need to be taken into consideration, the absolute tense and the relative tense, and that formal syntactic considerations cannot be, and can in fact be proven not to be, the only guidelines for the SoT or alignment of tenses.

Let us take a look at the example that we introduced just a few paragraphs ago:

[104a] *June said that she is tired.*⁷⁴

and some related examples:

[104c] *June said that she was tired.*

[104e] *June says that she is tired.*

⁷⁴ Let us also consider the potential translation equivalents for [104a], [104c], [104e], and [104g]:

[104b] *Džun je rekla da je umorna.*

[104d] *Džun je rekla da je umorna / da je bila umorna.*

[104f] *Džun kaže da je umorna.*

[104h] *Džun kaže da je bila umorna.*

[104g] *June says that she was tired.*

The combination of tense forms indicates just how important it is for us, when reporting someone's words or when translating, not to make a mistake and to 'relocate' the reference straight into a completely different temporal domain.⁷⁵ The first sentence, [104a], on the surface, seems to be clearly in the present temporal domain and is most closely linked to deictic time. The same is actually true of sentence [104e] as well, despite the difference in the absolute tenses and the fact that a present temporal domain is invoked in this sentence.

But sentence [104c] gives us a different interpretation, as it links both situations to a past temporal domain, and we, based on pragmatic factors, perceive the 'saying' and the 'being' to, in that sense, be simultaneous. Firmly locating the situation of 'being tired' in a past temporal domain is also visible in example [104g]. Here, we actually have a very illustrative example of the differences between absolute and relative tenses. The absolute tense 'says' sets up a temporal domain that is located in the present time, while the relative tense, the one located in the subordinate/complement clause sets up a clear past temporal domain.

If we look at the examples, and their translation equivalents in Serbian, we can see that Jespersen's (1924) ideas about the SoT do not fully hold under this view of tense form location and distribution. When past tense forms are found in both clauses, then the relative tense is subordinate to, or 'relates to' the time where the situation referred to by the tense form in the main clause is located. Absolute tenses, on the other hand, appear to have 'a direct relation' to the time of speaking.⁷⁶ To that we may add Comrie's (1986) aforementioned notion of continuing applicability (the current relevance of a past situation which might be considered a supplement to his SoT rule), which later found support in the work of Costa (1972, p. 45) and Fillmore (1976, p. 95), as well as the implied sense of immediacy. It is clear that formal syntactic rules will not always be our go-to choice.

Let us take a look at another example, one that we could even consider to be a template for analyses of this kind:

[105a] *Verica je rekla da se rastužila jer joj Jelena beše bacila lutku.*⁷⁷

⁷⁵ A temporal domain can potentially be defined as a set of points in time (found on the imaginary time-line that are related in different ways based on the tense forms used to refer to them). A temporal domain is established by an absolute tense form (which we have identified to be the preterite or the past simple tense quite often) and are expanded by relative tense forms because relative tense forms also create their own temporal domains within them. This is best illustrated by the fact that relative tenses are linked to other relative or absolute tenses. According to Declerck (1995, p. 6), "[a] temporal domain is a set of times which either consists of the time of a single situation or comprises the times of several situations that are temporally related to each other by tense forms".

⁷⁶ This is just a reminder, but the time of utterance refers to the time the report is being made, i.e., is also known as the temporal zero-point (t_0).

⁷⁷ Once again I would like to thank one of my reviewers for pointing out that the pluperfect, although grammatically correct, would probably not be the choice opted for by the majority of native Serbian language speakers.

and its potential translation equivalent:

[105b] *Verica said that she was sad because Jelena had thrown her doll (away).*

In the latter sentence, the tense form *said* is an absolute tense form, while *was* is a relative tense form. The temporal relation between them is one of simultaneity (as previously defined). The tense form *had thrown* is another relative tense form, and in relation to the tense form *was* expresses the temporal relation of anteriority. What we actually come across here is an expansion of the past temporal domain created by the absolute tense form, while the relative tense form in the complement clause relates the situation it refers to directly to the t_0 .

Consider the following example:

[106a] *Meri je rekla da je sada srećna.*

and its potential translation equivalent:

[106b] *Mary said that she is happy (now).*

The absolute tense form in the latter example is *said*, but at the same time, there is another absolute tense form in the same sentence, and that is *is*. Both of these tense forms establish temporal domains, and there is no expansion by means of a relative tense. Interestingly enough, what we do find is the temporal relation of anteriority, in the sense of the feeling of happiness preceding Mary saying how she feels.

If we were not to take the SoT into consideration, if we were not to state both what happened as well as when it happened, and if we did not clarify the temporal relations that hold between different tense forms, then we would not be able to make distinctions such as the following one:

[107a] *She says she likes to run cross country.*

[107b] *She says she liked to run cross country.*

There is a strong link that needs to be acknowledged by L1 Serbian/L2 English learners between the preterite, the preterite perfect, the SoT (tense backshifting),⁷⁸ and indirect speech. Indirect speech (Đorđević, 1996, p. 341) is primarily related to the category of time, since the tense form of the dependent clause in a reporting sentence undergoes the process of backshifting⁷⁹ as part of the sequence or alignment

⁷⁸ The first to introduce backshifting as a term was Comrie (1985, 1986).

⁷⁹ Backshifting is a particularly interesting part of English language grammar for researchers and practitioners alike as it requires one to not only take into consideration simple formal syntactic factors, but pragmatic factors which refer to the discourse as a whole, and even the reporter's stance on the 'validity' of the proposition being conveyed. For more details, see Charkova and Halliday (2011) as well as an earlier version provided by Nakayasu (1998). However, at the same time, other authors have indicated what might prove to be a point of difficulty for L2 English learners (such as Davidse and Vandelanotte, 2011) and that is the potential informational redundancy of past perfect tenses that are related to the process of backshifting, i.e., are an outcome of the process of backshifting. More on this topic can be found in Chapter 7.

of tenses. To quote (Đorđević, 1996, p. 342): “Ovi pomereni oblici se ne odnose na prošlost, već samo predstavljaju oblik gramatičkog slaganja sa uvodnim glagolom. Pomeranje u indirektnom govoru je obično fakultativno, ali ako ostane prezent, on u indirektnom govoru naglašava da se situacija nije promenila.” This is a reflection of our construal of how situations are located on the imaginary time-line, and what we think the best way of conveying this to our listener/reader is, so that they are able to reconstruct the sequencing (chronologically, or in a cause-and-effect way), as well as gain an understanding of the stance of the speaker in relation to the proposition.

The preterite perfect can mistakenly be replaced by the preterite by L1 Serbian/L2 English learners. However, for the sake of clarity we must indicate that there are instances where, strictly speaking from a formal syntactic point of view, the two might be interchangeable, with the caveat that the choice of one tense form over the other is always an implication of a particular meaning. But those are not the situations that we would like to focus on at this point. These kinds of ‘replacements’ should be avoided in the subordinate clauses of reporting sentences (unless certain pragmatic or discourse factors are at work, or speaker intent needs to be conveyed), or in subordinate clauses which indicate a ‘logical mutual dependence’ between clauses, including situations when a relation much akin to a cause-and-effect relationship is being conveyed.

When it comes to using the SoT, in particular within the scope of representing speech, it is important to provide a clear example of what identifying absolute and relative tenses in complex sentence structures looks like. So, for the sentence:

[108] *John suddenly complained that he felt ill.*

Declerck et al. (2006, p. 16, original emphasis) had the following to say: “[the sentence] is analysed as having an absolute tense form *complained*, which locates the complaining in the past (relative to the time of speech), and a relative tense past form *felt*, which represents the situation of John feeling ill as simultaneous with the situation referred to by *complained*. [...] It is clear [...] that a relative past tense still has an ‘absolute tense’ component [...] in its semantics: the time of orientation with which a relation of simultaneity is expressed must form part of a ‘temporal domain’ [...] which is past with respect to the temporal zero-point.”⁸⁰

This is why we mostly rely on the preterite to determine whether the text that we are translating lies squarely in the past, or alternatively, in the present, in which case an instance of the present simple tense, another absolute tense, establishes a present temporal domain. It is within these temporal domains, once we determine whether we are dealing with a present or past domain, that we determine the existing temporal relations, decide which tense forms to use (present or past tenses), and conclude

⁸⁰ However, please note the following example:

[109] *We were happier when we lived in London.*

where the time of us living in London can in no way be considered simultaneous to the time of us speaking, despite the occurrence of the two same tense forms.

where along the imaginary time-line we can locate the situations in question.⁸¹

With this in mind, we end this chapter with a list of constraints that Declerck and Tanaka (1996, p. 291) provided, which can preclude the present tense form from being included in the following represented sentences:

- reporting verbs with intensional force (inclusion),

[110a] John imagined his wife *was/??is* pregnant.⁸²

- the stance of the reporting speaker not coinciding with that of the reported speaker,

[111] John wrongly believed that her name *was/??is* Mary.

- formal syntactic binding of tense forms between the two clauses,

[112] What John imagined was that his wife *was/?is* pregnant.

- ‘past focus’ ascribed to the reporting clause because of a particular verb of manner used, since such verbs emphasize the status of the reported speaker as a pragmatic source by forcing us to focus on their *here and now*, the deictic time at which the utterance was spoken or shared with an interlocutor,

[113] Ann whispered that she *loved/*loves* him.⁸³

⁸¹ Whether we are dealing with the expansion of a past domain or one of its subdomains, we still rely on the same tense forms: the preterite perfect to indicate T-anteriority, conditionals for T-posteriority, and the preterite for T-simultaneity.

⁸² “That is, the content of John's imagining can only make sense contextualized against the past context of his thoughts - in effect, what he imagined existed only at the time he imagined it.” Salkie and Reed (1997, p. 336)

For hypothetical situations such as this one, for those that do not align with the (T_o), it is best to use the *irrealis*. It is just far less likely that this statement is true in the (T_o) world, and that is reflected in our choice of tenses. In this particular example, the present tense form can actually be counterfactual (see Huddleston, 1989, p. 336). The situation is much the same for the following example:

[110b] *I wish I knew where she was/*is.*

⁸³ With manner of speaking verbs, the reporting speaker is more concerned (we might be led to conclude) with the speech act itself and less with any temporal relations it might take part in (Declerck and Tanaka, 1996, p. 294). It is actually difficult to have present focus when the focus is, by choice of the speaker themselves, on the manner of speaking. A similar situation is that of *wh*-questions found in the matrix clause, since the focus is on the past situation; otherwise, why would someone even be asking the question. The focus is on the details of the situation, and there is no overt link to the (T_o).

PRACTICE SECTION

Please translate the following sentences into English. Make a note of whether the main verb will take a present or past tense form and why, i.e., whether the speaker is referring to past time or to present time.

- [1] U školu je pošao ubrzo nakon što je napunio šest godina.
- [2] Nakon što je održan sastanak iz zatvorenih vrata, organizatori su se obratili medijima.
- [3] Neki gosti su već otišli pre nego što je poslužno glavno jelo.
- [4] Neki gosti su otišli pre nego što je poslužno glavno jelo.
- [5] Prvi put kad sam je posetila ona je u Kanadi živela skoro petnaest godina.
- [6] Prvog ljubimca usvojili su devet godina nakon što su počeli da žive zajedno.
- [7] Zajedno su bili više od deset godina pre nego što su se odlučili na brak.
- [8] Rekao je da je bio veliki fan naučne fantastike kada je bio mlad.
- [9] Rekao je da voli da jede tu tortu.

CHAPTER 5: ASPECT

A brief overview

Key terms: bounded, unbounded, iterative, the internal temporal structure of a situation

This chapter will provide a cursory overview of what aspect is. If we wish to successfully identify the location of particular situations on the imaginary time-line in the English language, it is necessary that we combine tense and aspect. The concept of aspect refers to the way in which we view the level of completion of a particular situation that is expressed by a verb form. To quote: “[a]spect refers to the manner in which the verb action is regarded or experienced” (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 91) or “[t]he term aspect applies to a system where the basic meanings have to do with the internal temporal constituency of the situation” (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 117). Since complex verb forms are known to be the ‘exponents’ of the progressive and perfective aspect (Taylor, 2002). This indicates that in the English language, it is the lexical verb that contributes the aspect, while the auxiliary verb refers to the time (quite different than in the Serbian language).⁸⁴

Traugott (1975, p. 208) states that aspect is a way of looking at a situation located on the imaginary time-line (since tense is ‘essentially locative’), in particular in relation to duration. Duration can only be determined if we have some fixed point to refer to, usually an end point on that same time-line, and the relationship between the location of a situation and a particular point in time renders it either bounded (in Serbian: *situacija koja je ograničena ciljem*) or unbounded (in Serbian: *situacija koja nije ograničena ciljem*). For example (Traugott, 1975, p. 208) provided the following two examples:

[114a] *She has planted the flowers.*⁸⁵

which is seen as bounded in relation to the time of speaking, i.e., has been completed prior to it, while

[115a] *She is planting the flowers.*⁸⁶

⁸⁴ For more information on the relationship between tense and aspect, please see Binnick (2021), Bybee & Dahl (1989), Kroeger (2005), Salaberry & Shirai (2002), inter alia.

⁸⁵ Let us also consider the potential translation equivalents:

[114b] *Već je posadila cveće. / Posadila je cveće.*

⁸⁶ Let us also consider the potential translation equivalent:

[115b] *(Trenutno) sadi cveće.*

is seen as unbounded in relation to the time of speaking, as it is perceived as being ongoing. The example:

[116a] *The mouse ran in and out of the hole for three hours.*⁸⁷

is seen as iterative but also bounded at the same time, considering that completion is implied by the adjunct of temporal location (*for three hours*), and finally:

[117a] *Wherever the mouse runs he leaves a trail.*⁸⁸

which is both iterative and unbounded, as it is perceived as a situation that will recur at some point in time.

A definition provided by Declerck et al. (2006, p. 72) reads as follows: “[the] ontological aspect concerns the lexical representation of kinds of situations (non)static, (non)durative, (a)telic, etc. [...] while grammatical aspect refers to the grammatically expressed distinction between ways of looking at the internal temporal structure of a situation.” This establishes the basis necessary for the discussion of boundedness, so similar to the category of telicity (in Serbian: *телиčnost*).⁸⁹ Namely, bounded situations are perceived as if they can reach a terminal point of their own within the clause that refers to a particular situation, while unbounded (also known as homogenous) are not. For example:

[118a] *Tomorrow we drink!*⁹⁰

[119a] *Tomorrow we drink the whole case of wine!*

What is interesting to consider is how we would translate the sentence:

[120a] *Jim walked two kilometers.*

Would an accurate translation be:

[120b] *Džim je pešao dva kilometra.*

or

[120c] *Džim je prepešao dva kilometra?*

What would determine the (un)bounded interpretation? In short, the discourse and pragmatic factors that affect or further influence the interpretation of the text itself. For example, Declerck et al. (2006, p. 76, original emphasis) speak about the

⁸⁷ Let us also consider the potential translation equivalent:

[116b] *Tri sata je miš trčao u rupu i iz nje.*

⁸⁸ Let us also consider the potential translation equivalent:

[117b] *Gde god miš trči, ostavi trag iza sebe.*

⁸⁹ However, an important distinction still has to be made: telicity is related to the structure of the verb phrase, while boundedness has to do with the structure of the clause.

⁹⁰ Let us also consider their potential translation equivalents:

[118b] *Sutra ćemo piti! / Sutra ćemo se napiti!*

[119b] *Sutra ćemo popiti punu kutiju flaša vina!*

personal, individual component that is important in the perception process of various situations:

Within the last week John has been at home only three times.

Within the last week John hasn't been at home at all.

In these examples, the VP is not telic, but the situation (which is a hypersituation consisting of a series of subsituations) is bounded because the speaker ^{MEASURES} it: he is concerned with the number of actualizations there have been in the period identified by the inclusive adverbial. Self-evidently, 'measuring' a situation means considering it from beginning to end. Nonbounded (actualizations of) situations cannot be measured.

Grammatical aspect

Key terms: aspect vs aspectuality, perfective and imperfective, progressive and non-progressive, external and internal view

There are two sets of contrasting aspects in the English language: the perfective (in Serbian: *perfektivni / svršeni vid*) and the imperfective (in Serbian: *imperfektivni aspekt*) on the one hand, the progressive (in Serbian: *progresivni / nesvršeni vid*) and the non-progressive (in Serbian: *neprogresivni oblik*) on the other. It is grammatical aspect that indicates to us, as the listeners or readers, how the speaker perceives an activity: in progress (the progressive or continuous aspect), incomplete (the imperfective aspect), completed (the perfective aspect), occurring regularly (habitual), or as repeated (iterative).

A distinction exists between what is known as the imperfective and the perfective aspect (a category of form; in Serbian: *glagolski vid / aspekt*) and aspectuality (a category of meaning, in Serbian: *gramatičko obeležje aspektualnosti*). In the case of the imperfective aspect, the situation is being viewed from within (the 'internal temporal structure'), while in the case of the perfective aspect, the situation is such that it is being viewed as a whole 'independent of time'. Thus, the focus is on completion (or lack thereof) and not on when the situation is actually occurring/has occurred, whether in the past or in the present time. Even though the two seem to be mutually exclusive, it is possible for the same verb to have both readings.⁹¹ For example:

⁹¹ To quote: "The meaning of 'perfect aspect' is defined in terms of 'current relevance' (i. e., the anterior situation referred to by *have ... -en* is still relevant at the time to which it is represented as anterior), which is sometimes narrowed down to 'resultant state': *John has arrived* represents John's arrival as still relevant at t_p , or expresses the resultant state 'John is here'. This definition of the present perfect is essentially aspectual: the perfect focuses on the fact that the situation is finished and on the ensuing resultant state (in the same way as the progressive focuses on the middle of a situation)." (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 109, original emphasis). In this book, the claim is made that the same relation holds for the

[121] *He plays the flute.*

can be used as an illustration of the imperfective aspect since it indicates a situation that recurs, as there is no implication that this particular individual plans on forgetting what he knows about playing the flute. The imperfective aspect also refers to situations which are incomplete as in:

[122a] *She is reading a novel.*

When we choose to use the imperfective aspect, what we are doing is merely looking at a very short interval of time during which a situation is actualized, which Huddleston and Pullum referred to as a time “viewed from within” (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 52).

Contrary to that, the perfective aspect is illustrated by the sentence:

[122b] *She read a novel.*

which indicates that a situation is seen as a whole or once again, to quote Huddleston and Pullum (2002, p. 52), is “viewed from the outside”, whereby the actualization of the situation is seen in its entirety.

The example:

[123a] *He whistles.*

can, for instance, indicate a habit/skill. But what if we are reading the stage directions to a play, and the emphasis is on the perfective aspect, i.e., the person whistles once, catches someone’s attention, and then does not proceed to do it again? It would be interesting to consider what the translation equivalents of this sentence would be that indicate these differences in meaning.⁹²

As a further illustration of aspect, compare the following two sentences:

[124a] *He cries.*⁹³

and

preterite perfect and preterite combinations, wherein the former has a current result conveyed by the latter. Please note: current result is not to be confused by present result, as current result can refer both to past and to present time, depending on encoding time.

⁹² The potential translation equivalents might be:

[123b] *On (ume da) zviždi.*

for the first interpretation. If we do not wish the translation to convey a habit, but a current activity, the translation might be:

[123c] *On (trenutno) zviždi.*

or

[123d] *On se oglasi zviždukom.*

These sentences would likely have the same translation equivalent in English.

⁹³ Let us also consider their potential translation equivalents:

[124b] *On (ponekad) ume da plače / da zaplače.*

[125b] *On (trenutno) plače.*

[125a] *He is crying.*

In the case of these two examples, it is important to mention that the time being referred to does not change (in both instances the reference is to present time), even though the tense does. What is reflected by the different tense choices is the way we view (construe) the situation: in the former, our view of the situation is external, we are observing it from the outside without indicating its brevity or its duration. In the latter, we assume the aforementioned internal view of the situation, as if we were watching it unfold. It is also important to note that this distinction would not have been lost if the two sentences had illustrated different tense forms referring to the past time:

[126a] *He cried.*⁹⁴

and

[127a] *He was crying.*

Even though the reference to past time does not change, what does change is the point of view assumed by the speaker while viewing the situation (in terms of duration, or in terms of completion for instance). This might make it easier for us as English language learners to grasp the use of the present simple tense, and the preterite by extension, as indicators of states. The point of view is articulated or contained within the span of time we spend observing a situation. States, ultimately, are not considered to have an ‘internal temporal structure’. In other words, there are no individually discrete phases that ‘occur during a state’ that can be identified.

Imperfectives on the other hand can be either statives (which do not inherently indicate a change) or inherently dynamic activities (whereby things happen, things get done, a change is evident but there is no clear end point in sight). The imperfective aspect will view the actualization of a situation as having an internal temporal structure, as having a beginning, middle, and an end. What is foregrounded by the imperfective aspect is not the completion of a situation, but one of these internal temporal components associated with it. Therefore, we can distinguish between different kinds of the imperfective aspect: the ingressive, the egressive, and the progressive. The ingressive refers to the beginning of a situation, foregrounds it, and is best illustrated in the English language by means of verbs such as *start*, *begin*, *commence*. The egressive aspect refers to the end of a situation, foregrounds what is known as ‘the terminal part’ of the actualization of a situation. In the English language, it is best illustrated by verbs such as *stop*, *break off*, *finish*, *cease*. And finally, there is the progressive aspect. Another name for it is the durative aspect, and it foregrounds the middle of a situation, disregarding the beginning and the end. What is specific about this aspect is its relationship to what is known as a window or a ‘vantage time’. Declerck et al. (2006, p. 33, original emphasis) define it as:

⁹⁴ Let us also consider their potential translation equivalents:

[126b] *On je zaplakao / je plakao / je znao da zaplače.*

[127b] *On je (u tom trenutku) plakao.*

a 'VANTAGE TIME' from which [one] views the situation as in progress ('ongoing'). This vantage time may be either punctual, as in *At 7 p.m. I was still working*, or a durative interval, as in *From 2 to 4 I was reading a book*. According to the kind of tense that is used, it may vary as to its location in time:

I was reading a book. (*The situation was in progress at some past time of orientation, functioning as vantage time.*)

Since then I've been working hard on my dissertation. (*The situation, which started before the temporal zero-point t_0 , is still in progress at t_0 , which functions as vantage point.*)

This time tomorrow I'll be flying to Morocco. (*future vantage time*)

I'm still studying the case. (*t_0 functions as vantage point.*)

Quirk et al. (1985, pp. 95–97) provided us with a list of types of verbs that tend to frequently occur in the progressive aspect. They include the following dynamic verbs:

- activity verbs such as *abandon, ask, beg, call, drink, eat, help, learn, listen, look at, play, rain, remind, read, say, slice, throw, whisper, work, write* (which in the progressive tend to express incomplete activities)
- process verbs such as *change, deteriorate, grow, mature, slow down, widen* (which also tend to express incomplete activities in the progressive)
- verbs of bodily sensation (*ache, feel, hurt, itch*, etc.)
- transitional event verbs (*arrive, die, fall, land, leave, lose*, etc.), which tend to convey a different meaning depending on whether they are used in the progressive aspect or not
- momentary verbs (*hit, jump, kick, knock, nod, tap*, etc.), which can indicate repetition when used in the progressive.

In the case of stative verbs, Quirk et al. (1985, p. 97) list the following:

- verbs of inert perception and cognition: *abhor, adore, astonish, believe, desire, detest, dislike, doubt, feel, forgive, guess, hate, hear, imagine, impress, intend, know, like, love, mean, mind, perceive, please, prefer, presuppose, realize, recall, recognize, regard, remember, satisfy, see, smell, suppose, taste, think, understand, want, wish*, etc. What is specific for this type of verbs is that they are followed by *that* nominal clauses and rarely take the progressive.
- relational verbs: *apply to (everyone), be, belong to, concern, consist of, contain, cost, depend on, deserve, equal, fit, have, include, involve, lack, matter, need, owe, own, possess, remain (a bachelor), require, resemble, seem, sound, suffice, tend*, etc.

However, it is worth mentioning that there is the possibility of the progressive aspect indicating that a situation may be subject to change. Compare the following two sentences (Taylor, 2002, p. 404):

[128a] *Where do you live?*⁹⁵

indicates longevity, a state, a fact, a situation that we understand to have begun at a point of time in the past, and whose current state in the present time is of interest to us, since the present tense extends to the moment of speaking. Yet in:

[129a] *Where are you living?*

the sense of temporariness inherently found in the continuous aspect does indicate to the listener/reader that a change may take place at any time.

Let us analyze the following examples and the inferences gleaned from their potential translations:⁹⁶

[130a] *Kada je izašao iz njenog stana, ona je još uvek sedela za stolom.* Inference: she had been seated at that table for quite a while, a situation which may have preceded his entry into/arrival at her apartment, continued throughout his stay, and did not end with his departure.

[131a] *Kada je izašao iz njenog stana, ona je sedela za stolom.* Inference: she may or may not have been sitting down prior to his arrival/at the time of his arrival, but at some point during their interaction, she had sat down. He may have left her in an altered state compared to the one he had found her in. Perhaps it was due to some bad news he had delivered, perhaps it was due to a sense of shock...

[132a] *Kada je izašao iz njenog stana, pripremila je sebi kafu.* Inference: one situation had to be completed (his leaving) in order for another to begin (her making coffee). They are not only sequential, but may also be bound by a cause-and-effect relationship: she had to wait for him to leave before she could make herself some coffee. Maybe he was against her drinking it, maybe she did not want to offer him any...

[133a] *Kada je izašao iz stana, ona je pripremala sebi kafu.* vs *Kada je izlazio iz stana, ona je pripremala sebi kafu.* Would these two sentences have identical translation equivalents? What would be the difference, if any? It has been implied that in the former sentence, the subordinate clause provides a timeframe for the activity foregrounded in the main/matrix clause. The question is, would that interpretation hold for one, either, both, or neither of the sentences.

While the imperfective aspect inherently indicates the lack of any reference to a start or finish, but at the same time, may indicate iteration, the perfective aspect usually

⁹⁵ Let us also consider their potential translation equivalents:

[128b] *Gde živiš? / Gde stanuješ?*

[129b] *Gde trenutno živiš? / Gde si trenutno smešten/smeštena?*

⁹⁶ Let us also consider their potential translation equivalents:

[130b] *When he left her apartment, she was still seated at the table.*

[131b] *When he left her apartment, she was sitting at the table.*

[132b] *When he left her apartment, she was making herself a cup of coffee.*

[133b] *When he left the apartment, she was making herself a cup of coffee.* vs *When he was leaving the apartment, she was making herself a cup of coffee.*

indicates that the ‘termination’ or the end of a process is inherently included in the situation (Taylor, 2002, pp. 394–401). Perfectives, from this point of view, are inherently ‘bounded’ since we can, in a way, “see” or construe the completion of a situation in its entirety (which implies both ingress and egress, or a beginning point and an end point).

Perfectives are linked to punctual events (activities that took place over a specific period of time, usually quite brief, virtually instantaneous) and extended events (activities that took place over an extended period of time). But the brevity or duration of a situation is said to be wholly dependent on the construal of the speaker, who relies on various adjuncts of temporal location and lexical aspects (or ontological aspects, also known as *aktionsart*) of verbs to convey one type of situation or another.

The perfective aspect is a component of the actualization of a situation, whereby the speaker/writer wishes to convey whether the situation itself has been completed in its entirety. Interestingly enough, this implies a lack of internal structure (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 30). If we were to view a situation as completed, we are not foregrounding its internal structure, we are not interested in whether it has a beginning, middle, or end, or even when each of these parts began, ended, how long they lasted, etc. The specific terminology states that this is known as a ‘temporally unstructured’ situation. Thus, we primarily associate the perfective aspect with what are known as completed situations.⁹⁷

Another key concept is change. The distinction between the imperfective and perfective is based on change that can be perceived or completed. The perfective means that some sort of change has been completed, for example a door has been closed or a book has been read. The imperfective implies a state, a series of identical states that seem to go on in perpetuity, such as possession or ownership as in:

[134] *I have an apartment.*

But with the perfective, there is a sequence of situations unfolding over time which we can, in a sense, reconstruct sequentially, where every single segment of the situation differs ever so slightly from the previous one. For example, a book being read implies reading one page after the other and over time the pages that have been read accumulate on the left and the number of pages that remain and are found on the right of the book is getting progressively smaller. With the example of reading a book it is much easier to sequentially follow individual situations (such as the reading of each page), but in the example of a door closing we cannot always perceive these accumulating changes. We would need a slow-motion camera effect showing the door inching ever closer to being closed.

⁹⁷ These situations are referred to as *telic*, i.e., situations whose end can be inferred or determined, as in *read a book*.

Lexical aspect

Lexical aspect (in Serbian: *leksički aspekt*) refers to the classifications of verbs based on the types of situations that are actualized. To make these determinations, we must rely on what are known as the semantic features of verbs. These features classify verbs in the English language into stative and dynamic verbs. Stative include *hope, know, contain, need, own, resemble, understand*, etc. The feature they have in common is that they denote states and not activities. These states are emotional, cognitive, and even physical. Stative verbs are less likely to take verb forms which include the progressive aspect, as they denote unchanging features, states that seem to go on indefinitely. This is the reason why they are also known as atelic verbs, or verbs with ‘no end point’, which allows us to combine them with verbs such as *start* and its synonyms, *stop* and its synonyms, but not with verb such as *finish* and its synonyms.

Dynamic verbs on the other hand require that an animate entity perform some sort of activity. They can further be classified into activity verbs (such as *work, grow, develop*), achievement verbs (which express instantaneity, i.e., an activity that finishes virtually as soon as it begins), and accomplishment verbs (which terminate at “an end point that is logical in terms of their action”, (Cowan, 2008, p. 353). Activity verbs are also atelic in that they convey continuity (*run, sit, stare*) or change (*develop, decline*). Achievement verbs can be punctual (*hit, kick*) or change of state verbs (*find* + DO or *cross* + DO), both of which are telic, i.e., we can identify the end point of the activity they express. Accomplishment verbs are verbs such as *draw, build, make, solve, write*, all of which are examples of telic verbs.

Lexical aspect is unfortunately often overlooked in typical instruction aimed at L1 Serbian/L2 English language learners.⁹⁸ However, in addition to the aforementioned tense and aspect combinations on the one hand, and the inevitable L1 influence on the other, it has a considerable impact on L2 production, as it pertains to the use of the SoT. In addition, the case can be made that certain types of verbs are simply used more frequently with certain tenses (Cowan, 2008, p. 379). Cowan (2008, p. 379) cites that Bardovi-Harlig and Reynolds (1995) found that English language learners usually have more success in learning how to use telic verbs (achievement and accomplishment verbs) than atelic verbs (stative and dynamic verbs). They also found that there was a sort of linear progression to be identified among this population: when it comes to past tense forms, EFLs are more likely to successfully learn to use them with telic verbs first, then stative verbs, and finally with activity verbs. So, past tense distribution among this population can be seen as “spreading from telic to atelic verbs” (Cowan, 2008, p. 379). Now, the issues with the learners’ L1, in the case of L2 English language learners whose L1 is Serbian, is that we do not necessarily rely on backshifting (in situations where the pragmatic factors are

⁹⁸ A similar situation was also reported by Comajoan-Colomé (2022) in the Spanish linguistic environment.

such that avoiding backshifting is not an option), which can sometimes lead to either ungrammatical sentences or to unnecessarily informal structures.

Telicity

The situations that we refer to by means of tense forms can also be telic and atelic. In the former case, as previously indicated, we are referring to situations that have an understood ‘inherent point of completion’, where the situation is considered to have ended, and after which it can no longer continue. Atelic situations are precisely the opposite, they do not have an inherent end point that can be inferred. Bearing that in mind, compare the following two sentences:

[135a] *He swam across the channel.*⁹⁹

[136a] *He swam.*

Any discussion of telicity is linked to a discussion of boundedness, and how it reflects our perceptions of the actualization of situations. To quote Declerck et al. (2006, p. 61, original emphasis): “In both *John wrote a book* and *John was writing a book* the reference is to the actualization of a situation that is of the telic kind, i.e., which involves a development towards a natural point of completion, but only the former sentence represents the actualization of the situation as bounded (in this case: as having come to an end, hence as ‘completed’).”

Sometimes the point of completion is, to borrow a term from pragmatics, ‘conventionally implicated’ as can be seen from examples such as *read a book* or *bake a cake*. The point of completion is in both cases indefinite, but the situation itself is evolving towards a finite end point. At other times, we find ourselves facing a situation where an adverbial will indicate the general time, or even very precise time, of the completion of an activity, as in: *sleep for two hours* (when it comes to time, or duration) or *run a marathon* (which indicates distance), or *board an airplane* (which involves ‘a goal that is reached’).

In addition to being used to classify different types of situations, telicity as a feature can also be used to indicate the difference between a simple and a continuous tense. Let us analyze the translations of the following pairs of sentences:

[137a] *Da li si ga čula juče kako svira?*

[138a] *Da li si ga ikad čula kako svira?*

This pair of sentences, decontextualized as they are, offer a variety of possibilities for

⁹⁹ Let us also consider their potential translation equivalents:

[135b] *Preplivao je kanal.*

[136b] *Plivao je.*

translation equivalents, including:

[137b] *Did you hear him play yesterday?*

for [137a] and:

[138b] *Have you ever heard him play?*

for [138a]. However, if we wanted to point out the link between aspect and telicity, then the following two translation equivalents could also be possible:

[137c] *Did you hear him playing yesterday?*

for [137a] and:

[138c] *Did you ever hear him play?*

for [138a]. The translation of the second sentence would come as no surprise, despite the presence of the adverb *ever* in [138c], which is a textbook example of an adverb whose presence is an indicator for a perfect tense. Also, the translation equivalent of [137c] might not have been the first choice for many, especially due to the presence of the adverb *yesterday*. However, in the case of verbs of perception, usually linked to verbs such as *start* and *stop* to illustrate differences in meaning, we can use the progressive to indicate that the hearing coincided with the playing for a while, that there was an overlap, but that the playing started before the hearing, and no doubt continued after it.

In the following two examples, we have much the same situation, one of completion, and one of partial overlap.

[139a] *Jovana je lepo slikala (kao dete).*

[140a] *Jovana je lepo slikala (kad sam je prekinula).*

The proposed translation equivalents would be:

[139b] *Jovana was very good at painting as a child.*

for [139a] and:

[140b] *Jovana was painting very nicely when I interrupted her.*

for [140a]. Once again, the former indicates completion at a point anterior to the time of speaking (the reference is therefore to past time, and that might, as it does here, indicate a sense of completion), while the latter indicates a perceived overlap between two situations, wherein the feature atelic would be ascribed to the act of painting, and telic to the interruption.

PRACTICE SECTION

Please translate the following sentences into English. Make a note of whether the main verb will take a present or past tense form and why, i.e., whether the speaker is referring to past time or to present time, even possibly future time. Also, please take aspect into consideration when deliberating which translation to provide. If a verb has been provided in parentheses, please include it in your translation.

- [1a] Ranjenik je preminuo.
- [1b] Ranjenik je umirao.
- [2a] Papagaj je skočio.
- [2b] Papagaj je skakao.
- [3a] Kašljao je.
- [3b] Nakašljao se.
- [3c] Zakašljao se.
- [4a] Po dogovoru, ručaćemo u 1. (*have*)
- [4b] Obično ručam u 1. (*have*)
- [4c] Ovih dana ručam u 1. (*have*)
- [5a] Ono što sam ja uradila jeste naučila da vozim.
- [5b] Ubedila sam je da nauči da vozi.
- [6a] Napisala je samo jedno pismo od 1999.
- [6b] Ima isti auto od 1999.
- [7a] Spava (već) tri sata.
- [7b] Spavala je tri sata (pre toga).
- [8] Ne mogu da spakujem tvoju jaknu. Zakopčala je torbu. (*zip up*)
- [9a] Pisao je uvod za novi rečnik.
- [9b] Napisao je uvod za novi rečnik.
- [10] Ništa nisam mogao da učinim. Izneli su (već) kante sa smećem.
- [11] Stigao je na stanicu rano izjutra.
- [12] Posmatrao je decu kako love žabe.
- [13] Mrzeli smo miris gume na asfaltu.

- [14] Malo je potrajalo, ali se je oporavila. (*recover*)
- [15] Iznenada je ugledala psa kako dolazi iza ugla.
- [16] Složila je slagalicu za manje od dve nedelje.
- [17a] Udario je lopticu reketom za tenis. (*hit*)
- [17b] Udarao je lopticu reketom za tenis. (*hit*)
- [18a] Recitovao je pesmu dok smo bili sami.
- [18b] Recitovao je poeziju kad smo bili mladi.

CHAPTER 6: ORIENTATION TIME AND SITUATION TIME

Key terms: time referred to (T_r), time of orientation (T_o), time of the situation (T_{sit}), deictic time (T_d)

One of the focal issues of this book are the temporal relations linked to a variety of tense forms (the preterite and the preterite perfect for the most part) in relation to the so-called temporal zero point t_0 (speech time/time of speaking/deictic time), or to any other way that we refer to our actual spatial and temporal environment.¹⁰⁰ Some tenses (the aforementioned absolute tenses), as stated by Declerck et al. (2006, p. 25, original emphasis), refer directly to t_0 , as illustrated in the following examples:

It is hot outside. (present tense)

Alex thought about his future. (past tense)

Have you ever been to Vienna? (present perfect)

Prudence will retire in a month. (future tense)

These examples indicate either simultaneity with t_0 , anteriority in relation to it, (whereby t_0 indicates an implied end point to the actualization of the given situation), or posteriority, in that order. A time other than zero time to which a temporal relation is linked is known as an orientation time (in Serbian: *vreme orijentacije*). Temporal relations to a t_0 can be both direct or indirect. In the latter case, we are referring to the use of relative tenses, as illustrated in the following examples (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 25):

- anteriority: the time of the situation is represented as preceding the orientation time (e.g., *He said he had got up early*).
- simultaneity: the time of the situation is represented as coinciding with the orientation time (e.g., *He said he didn't feel well*).
- posteriority (or futurity): the time of the situation is represented as following the orientation time (e.g., *He said he would save us*).

In none of these examples is the orientation time in relation to which we determine simultaneity, anteriority, or posteriority the t_0 . Everything that we have said so far regarding the classification of the English tense system and the numerous uses associated with its tense forms culminates with a particular point, one outlined in the Cambridge Grammar of the English Language (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002),

¹⁰⁰ For more information, please see Bender et al., 2012; Bender et al., 2014; Stegmaier, 2019; Tenbrink, 2011; Traugott, 1975.

which actually brings us closest to what we could perhaps say we intuitively know or can perceive regarding the use of tense forms to convey temporal relations. This point is summed up in the following way: “The main use of the tenses is to express the relations between T_r and T_o .” (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 127), or alternately, our goal when using tense forms to indicate temporal relations is to “[relate] the time of one situation to that of another” (2002, p. 142).

What this means is that there are orientation times that we need to be familiar with other than t_0 that can help structure our construal of situations along the imaginary time-line.

Since the only way to locate a situation in time is to take a point in time whose location is known, and then locate the situation in relation to this point, this means that any tense linguistically expresses the temporal relation between the time of actualization of a situation and some other time, which may be the temporal zero-point (which is normally the moment of speech) or some other ‘time of orientation’ (i.e. time to which another time is related by a tense [...]), such as the time of another situation. (Declerck et al., 2006, pp. 95–96)

Let us consider the following example:

[141] *Angela is just telling us how Dawn said that Bill had hit Mark.*¹⁰¹

There are different situations that are being invoked by means of this complex sentence: for one, speech time, where Angela is telling someone a story; then there is another situation, remote or anterior in relation to speech time, which revolves around Dawn narrating a particular event in an unspecified moment in past time; and then we have a third situation, which is anterior or remote to the past time situation of Dawn narrating, and that is the situation when Bill physically assaulted Mark. So how many different points in time is that in fact? The tense form *is telling* is closely linked to t_0 which in and of itself is an orientation time. The tense form *said* indicates that the actualization of the situation revolving around Dawn speaking is located firmly in the past, and that time is also known as an orientation time, which establishes a temporal relation with the situation of Bill hitting Mark (a temporal relation of anteriority, as exemplified by the tense form *had hit*). This is a clear illustration of the logic behind referring to the preterite perfect tense as ‘past in the past’.

The sample sentence that we have just analyzed can also be found in ‘reduced’ form, but would still require the same analysis, as we understand certain situations to be implied if not explicitly stated (this is a clear reference to there always being a link to the t_0):

[142] *Dawn said that Bill had hit Mark.*

So, the only thing “missing”, or not overtly stated, is the time of speaking. The two situation times, that of Dawn speaking and of Bill assaulting Mark, still hold, with

¹⁰¹ We relied on the use of the present continuous tense *is just telling* to indicate a sense of immediacy so that the speech time will more clearly be linked to deictic time.

the addition that their mutual relation is such that Dawn speaking is also known as an orientation time based on which the anteriority of Bill hitting Mark can be determined. In other words, every situation has its own situation time, but only certain situations function as orientation times.

When it comes to more complex syntactic structures and subordination “[w]e say that the situation time located by a relative tense is ‘temporally bound’ by (or ‘subordinated’ to) the orientation time from which the temporal location of the situation time takes its starting point. [...] In the same way, we speak of ‘binding orientation times’ and ‘bound situation time.’” (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 157)¹⁰² Temporal subordination means that the tense form of the subordinate clause tends to adjust or adapt to the tense of the main clause (also known as backshifting or the SoT).

There are several points in time to take into consideration when appropriately interpreting the tense system of the English language for the purpose of correctly translating tense forms from Serbian into English. One would be the moment of speaking (T_d), the time of the utterance, the present time that each one of us finds ourselves in when interacting with the text. The second, a particular time of orientation (T_o). The third, the relatively undefined time when the situation actually occurred (T_{sit}) which we are trying to locate and translate accurately. Lastly, there is time referred to (T_r) and its particular relation to T_{sit} .

To identify these points and the temporal relations that hold between these points, let us consider the following:

[143a] *He is known to have written that book.*

Inference: the reference is to present time, so the T_o is in the present. T_r is anterior to it.

[143b] *He was known to have written that book.*

Inference: the reference is to past time, so the T_o is in the past. T_r is once again anterior to it.

[143c] *He will be known to have written that book.*

Inference: the reference is to future time, T_o is in the future, T_r is still anterior to it.

Now let us dive into more detail. We will begin with what is known as the time referred to (T_r) and time of orientation (T_o). At this point, it is important to remind ourselves that when discussing temporal relations, it often happens that we find ourselves dealing with ‘a story within a story’ scenario. It is a good piece of practical advice to, prior to translating a text, always remind ourselves of where we as the reader are actually located in time, which in fact is the present time. Then, to think about the deictic time of the narrator, and then about where in time the particular situation we are referring to is located. The deictic time of the reader/translator (the time of speech or what they

¹⁰² For purposes of clarification, the aforementioned sentence was *Meg had bought a bike*, that is, *Meg said that she had bought a bike*.

perceive as present time) differs from the deictic time described or invoked in the text and related to the author/narrator/protagonist (their time of speech or what they perceive as present time). These are two very distinct deictic/present times. To that, we add, on the one hand, the past time that is anterior to our present time, and on the other, the past time that is anterior to the deictic time referred to in the text itself. This means that our time of speaking is insufficient for us to properly determine the location of situations on the imaginary time-line. There is always a more distant past that is related to this past time (the aforementioned 'past in the past'). That is one of the reasons why it is important for us to take into consideration concepts such as T_r and T_o , as it is of key importance for us to understand both our time of orientation as well as that of the author/narrator.¹⁰³

When it comes to the present time, T_r is easily identified in a text if it is simultaneous with our T_o , which usually in such cases coincides with our deictic time T_d . That would mean that $T_r = T_o$, that the situations to be located are both found in the present time. For past time, we say that it is anterior to (chronologically speaking) the time of orientation. This is represented as $T_r < T_o$ and means that the situation we are trying to locate by means of the appropriate tense forms has preceded our time of speaking. And finally, there is future time, which is construed as posterior to the time of orientation, expressed as $T_r > T_o$. The time referred to is one after our time of speaking, a point in the future when we expect the given situation to be actualized.¹⁰⁴

To these two times, we now need to add the time of the situation (T_{sit}) (in Serbian: *vreme situacije*) and what we have already touched upon, deictic time (T_d).¹⁰⁵ T_{sit} is in fact the time when we determine a particular situation to have happened, whether it be present time, past time, or even future time. Whatever the case may be, T_{sit} only has to do with the chronological order of events as presented in the text, and is unrelated to T_d . T_{sit} is determined in relation to T_r and T_o . When it comes to the perfective aspect, we say that T_r is T_{sit} and that the time being referred to is T_{sit} . When it comes to the imperfective aspect, T_r is included within T_{sit} , meaning that the time being referred to is a part of the still ongoing situation. Such a construal requires us to look at the situation from within, watch it unfold, as opposed to looking at it from the outside in, having a sort of 3D objective view of it, which allows us to identify its beginning, its middle, and its end. As a reminder, the former actually represents our view of a particular situation as a whole, while the latter refers to us viewing just a single segment or phase of the situation.

This is reminiscent of the temporal relation between the past continuous tense and the past simple tense that was previously outlined. Understanding whether or not

¹⁰³ To quote Salkie and Reed (1997, p. 327): "If uncertainties arise in interpreting the deictic expressions in the content of the thought, this is because there is another pragmatic source in the context – the character."

¹⁰⁴ The representations of the temporal relations were taken from Huddleston and Pullum (2002).

¹⁰⁵ Gronn and Stechow (2016) use the term speaker's temporal focus or reference time and discuss its relation to the speech time (when such a relation exists, they refer to such tenses as deictic or absolute).

something was ongoing at a particular point (T_r or T_{sit}), whether we are looking at a particular situation in its entirety, or whether we are merely analyzing a sliver of it, is equally important. If we do not comprehend the temporal relations, that network of intricate relations among various situations, it could be very difficult for us to use the tense forms of the English language, or any language for that matter, correctly, which would inevitably result in imprecision, inaccuracy, and ultimately even incorrect ‘reconstructions’ during the process of translation.

The mutual relationships that hold between these times was exemplified by Huddleston and Pullum (2002, p. 126) in the following way:

T_{sit}	time of situation	
T_r	time referred to	identified with T_{sit} when aspectuality is perfective
T_d	deictic time	normally the time of utterance
T_o	time of orientation	identified as T_d in the default case

Bearing this in mind, let us analyze the following examples:

[144] *He was born into a large family.*

T_o is the time of the utterance, which is the time when the words were spoken. It is not overtly marked in the sentence but is inferred. Ideally, the utterance is heard as it is being spoken, but even if that is not the case, the same temporal relations hold for written language. We therefore understand that the birth occurred prior to the utterance. T_r is anterior to/precedes T_o . We understand this sentence to be a reference to past time in relation to the present time of the T_o .

[145] *I give you this ring.*

In this example, unlike the previous one, the reference is to present time. The act of giving is taking place in the present time, in fact, it refers to the very time of speaking, as the wording itself indicates the performance of a speech act. The utterance and the act of giving are simultaneous, so $T_r = T_o$.

[146] *If you leave tonight, wake me up before you go.*

The reference in this example is to future time. There is no explicitly mentioned T_o , it is assumed/inferred, and correctly so, to be the time of the utterance itself, but the T_r has definite future reference. T_r is therefore posterior to T_o , or $T_r > T_o$.

In the previous example of:

[145] *I give you this ring.*

where $T_r = T_o$, we say that the tense is interpreted deictically. But what are the instances when it is not? In which instances is T_o not simultaneous with T_d ? Huddleston

and Pullum (2002, p. 126) say they are the following and provide the following explanations:

[147] *If she beats him, he'll claim she cheated.*

T_d is the time the utterance was made, T_r is anterior to T_o , but T_d is not T_o . How so? Because this potential act of cheating is not determined in relation to the T_d or the time of the utterance, but instead to the time when the claim of cheating will be made, which is the T_o . The potential act of cheating is anterior to the potential claim of cheating.

[148] *If you eat any more, you'll say you don't want any tea.*

T_d is the time the utterance was made, T_r is posterior to T_o , but T_d is not T_o . How so? Because this potential act of refusing tea is not posterior to the time of utterance, but instead to the time of the saying (which is expected in the future).

In these terms, the main use set out for the preterite would be to identify the T_r as anterior to the T_o , when $T_o = T_d$. However, since the term deictic implies a strong present time reference, it is also important to note the following: "The preterite expresses the relation $T_r < T_o$, with T_o non-past; normally T_o is identified as T_d , but it can also be some future time identified in a matrix clause." (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 139)

A case in point would be the following:

[149] *If you don't accept the offer now, you will soon regret the fact that you didn't.*

We have already pointed out that some English language learners might say that the use of the the preterite perfect is unnecessary and that the preterite could be used. This is true to a certain extent, because the grammar of the English language tells us that there is a correspondence between the preterite perfect and the preterite in this instance. However, if we opt to equate the two, simply because of a correspondence, certain temporal relations will be lost that are important for the way we view the chronological sequence of events and for identifying T_o and T_r (T_d being the moment of speech/the present time).

So, let our starting point be that the distinction between the two tense forms is considerable and that our analysis will reflect that. Having said that, let us turn our attention to the following example which contains two structures of predication (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 146):

[150] *He had lost his keys so he couldn't get in his room.*

Structure of predication 1: subject – he, predicate – lose

Structure of predication 2: subject – he, predicate – get in

The one closer to our T_d (our present time) will be labeled with the superscript ¹, the other, which indicates a more remote past time, will be labeled with the superscript ². At this point, we should mention that the latter is linked more frequently with the

use of the the preterite, while the preterite perfect is considered to refer to an even more remote past.

Thus, for the clause *he couldn't get into his room*, the following holds: $T_r^1 < T_o^1$ where T_r^1 is known as the intermediate point, the point in time between T_r^2 as the more remote past (him losing his keys), and T_d , as the present time, or the time the utterance was actually spoken. Interestingly enough, the same relationship holds for T_r^2 and T_o^2 , the aforementioned losing of the keys: $T_r^2 < T_o^2$. It is suggested that in the interpretation of this sentence, the focus is on T_r^1 , and not on T_r^2 , that is, his inability to get inside the room and not the loss of the keys. This kind of analysis is in fact supportive of the claim of the existence of a cause-and-effect relationship that holds between the preterite perfect and the preterite. The focus is in fact, on the 'end result', the effect, which in this case is the inability to get inside a room.

We have also previously seen examples where the T_o is actually inferred and not directly expressed, and we understand the reference to be to time in general, where "temporal identification of T[ime]O[f]S[peaking] is given by the larger context" (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 140). So the question is, what happens in situations when inferences regarding temporal orientation times need to be made? We then need to refer to the situation at hand by taking pragmatic factors into consideration. It rarely happens that when someone is asked to recount a sequence of events, they do not understand how they sequentially unfolded one after the other; they are usually able to recreate both anteriority and posteriority with considerable success. That means that the sequential or chronological order of events is understood even if certain syntactic elements are missing from a given sentence. What is problematic is determining whether to use the SoT once we have correctly identified the temporal orientation times. In the present time, when T_d equals T_o (or T_{o1}), anteriority is indicated by the use of the preterite. Any time we need to convey information that is not directly related to the present time (any time we do not find ourselves to be the deictic center), T_d does not equal T_o , which automatically means that T_o is located in the past time (or T_{o2}), and there is a high chance of us being required to use the SoT.¹⁰⁶

Once the role of the deictic center is assumed by either the protagonist or the narrator, once we in a way forgo our egocentric (or ego-centered) point of view,¹⁰⁷ it becomes easier for us to understand that the same rules apply: when $T_o = T_d$, anteriority is indicated by what we know as the preterite (in this instance we are referring to T_{o1}). When T_o does not equal T_d , when T_o is in the past time (in this instance we are

¹⁰⁶ There is such a thing called the preterite non-perfect, which indicates anteriority in relation to *right now*, in relation to T_d . In this instance, anteriority is, usually without any error, labeled as the preterite. It is only in instances when we are dealing with the preterite perfect that we need to understand that the T_o (the T_{o2} most likely) is always the preterite.

¹⁰⁷ Bender et al. (2012) discuss the so-called Moving Ego (ME) perspective, which proposes that it is the Ego that is seen as approaching future events, and thus in fact leaving them behind, as opposed to vice versa. This means that we determine location (be it physical, or be it more abstract) based much on the direction of our gaze. For more, see Bender and Beller (2014) or Tenbrink (2011) inter alia.

referring to T_{o2}), anteriority is indicated by what we know as the preterite perfect. Such situations where the T_d is only inferred, or need not explicitly be mentioned, indicate that it is involved only passively, since the time referred to as T_{sit} is actually anterior to T_o (what we usually refer to as T_{o2}), and not to T_d , which is not overtly or actively involved.

Let us compare the following three sentences and determine where the situations that are in focus are located on the imaginary time-line:

[151a] *I pronounce you man and wife.*

In this particular sentence, we have a performative verb, *pronounce*, in the present simple tense form. What this might mean is that the speaker is performing a speech act, of course if all the necessary (felicity) conditions have been met (the right person speaking the right words at the right time and in the right place to the right person). One of the main features of a speech act is that it directly refers to the present time. Thus, T_d equals T_o (T_{o1}), T_r and T_{sit} . They are all, in a way, lined up.

[151b] *I have pronounced you man and wife.*

In this particular instance, the reference is to present time, but unlike in the previous example, T_d cannot be equated with T_r even though the reference is to present time. T_d , the moment of the utterance, occurs whenever this particular wedding ceremony took place (from the tense form it is clear that a certain level of recency does exist). In this particular instance T_d is actively involved because the reference is to present time. That is why with the present perfect tense the focus is on the present time even though T_r or T_{sit} are not equated with T_d .

[151c] *I pronounced you man and wife.*

In this particular instance we have a clear case of reference to past time, which is further corroborated or supported by the use of the preterite. There is no reference to T_d , it can only be invoked passively, as T_o is firmly in the past time (T_{o2}), just as the situation itself is also in the past time.

In the following instances, the situation under discussion is completed virtually at T_d , and the connection with it is more or less direct. The focus is not on when these situations began, but on the fact that they extend to the T_d :

[152] *I have been to Egypt several times.*

compared to:

[153a] *I still have not finished that book.*

which implies that the possibility still exists of the speaker completing it, and

[153b] *I still had not finished that book.*

wherein the situation taking place cannot be completed by T_d and extends past it. We would have to look to the adjuncts of temporal location included in the sentence for

confirmation of where the speaker stands in relation to the idea of completion.

[153c] *I still had not finished that book at the time.*

implies that the situation ended, but that the point of completion lies firmly in the past time, thus T_r is not the same as T_d . The idea of the potential for change or lack thereof is of considerable importance for any of the perfectives, i.e., the present and past perfect (continuous) tense.

Let us analyze the following (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 144, original emphasis):

[ia] *It is better than it has ever been.*

[ib] *It's better than it was.*

In [ia] the comparison is between its quality now and its quality at any time within the time-span – clearly the potential for it to be of such and such quality still exists. In [ib] the comparison is between now and then; the past is contrasted with the present, the ‘then’ situation is over and excludes now.¹⁰⁸

There are other examples that can illustrate the difference between the present perfect and the preterite (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 144) regarding the duration of the time span that the situation extends over:

[154a] *Have you seen Jim?*

and

[154b] *Did you see Jim?*

If we were to translate these two sentences into Serbian, the chances are that the translation would be similar for both sentences:

[154c] *Jesi li / Da li si videla Džima?*

Perhaps we should mention that in the case of the former sentence, the translation into Serbian might be expanded to include an adjunct of temporal location for the sake of accuracy:

[154d] *Jesi li / Da li si ikada videla Džima?*

or, if the context allows it:

[154e] *Jesi li / Da li si ti ikada upoznala Džima?*

In the case of the latter sentence, adding an adjunct of temporal location which is not part of the original sentence would affect the intended meaning, as it has either been explicitly mentioned in the previous text or can be inferred based on the context.

¹⁰⁸ Let us also consider their potential translation equivalents:

[1ia] *Bolje je nego što je bilo ikada do sada.*

and

[1ib] *Bolje je nego što je ranije bilo.*

Furthermore, in the case of sentence [154a], the expected answer to the question is rarely *Yes, yes I have*. The question is formulated in such a way that the response needs to contain a reference to the time when the situation actualized, that is, it should contain the T_r . But in the case of sentence [154b], it is to be inferred that T_r/T_{sit} are understood by both interlocutors, and that the reference is to a point in time that is for some reason prominent or understood, which is why the response *Yes* is acceptable.

A further distinction is that the former sentence within the implied time span specifically ends with T_d (the *now*), wherein that is not the case with the latter sentence. This leaves the situation open for a back-up question such as:

[155] *Can you be a bit more specific?*

This might even be one of the reasons why people prefer the latter question, irrespective of the situation, as it allows the interlocutors to better find their footing in the conversation, i.e., identify the T_r . To quote: “[there is] a significant correlation between the present perfect and recency, whereas the simple preterite is quite indifferent as to the distance between T_r and T_o .” (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 145)

A similar situation occurs when it comes to the preterite perfect: we can have a variety of different T_o points and still get grammatical sentences. The use of the preterite perfect, according to the aforementioned authors, is “doubly anterior” (2002, p. 140).¹⁰⁹

Let us analyze the temporal relations in the following examples:

[156a] *At the time, I had only completed half of the book.*

There are two temporal relations that need to be identified. The T_o needs to be inferred, and to do that we look at the adjunct of temporal location: *at the time*. Thus, we understand the T_o to be in the past time. That is the intermediate time referred to previously in footnote 110, or an additional time of orientation. It is referred to as T_{o1} (linked to T_d , the present time in a broader sense), rendering the other T_o T_{o2} (one that is more closely linked to T_{sit}).¹¹⁰ The numeration is required because of anteriority, as we use both the preterite and the preterite perfect to refer to situations in the past. Now, the question we may be in a hurry to ask ourselves is: *yes, this is all fine for past time, but does it hold for present time as well?*

To answer that question, compare sentence [156a] with:

[156b] *Now I have completed one half of the book.*

¹⁰⁹ This refers to our aforementioned ability to understand the different times that a variety of speakers find themselves in. As previously mentioned, imagining that you as the reader and I as the writer find ourselves in the same room at the same time makes it easy to determine that we share the same T_d , but then, there is an anterior T_d which is actually an intermediate time referring to situations where I wish to recount or retell a narrative (however brief) from the point of view of a different author.

¹¹⁰ The notations were taken from Huddleston and Pullum (2002).

In order to make an inference as to the T_o , we need to take into consideration the adjunct of temporal location *now*, which indicates that the reference is to deictic time. However, an intermediate time is still needed, as the perfective aspect always carries with it the inference of an intermediate orientation time. Remember that the first T_o is the time of the utterance/the time of speaking/the T_d .

Then we have

[156c] *I completed one half of the book.*

or

[156d] *At the time, I was only half-way done with the book.*

When it comes to the preterite, an intermediate step is not required between T_r and T_o / T_d , which is why this temporal relation is known as simple anteriority. T_r is completed (actualized), wholly, before T_o . This is why the imperfective aspect is always marked for a non-deictic T_o , due to the presence of an intermediate time (the non-deictic T_o , an orientation time other than the time of speaking associated with the reader). Therefore, the present/past perfect tense indirectly indicates anteriority in relation to *now*, while the past simple tense directly indicates anteriority in relation to *now*.

However, it might be the case that the preterite perfect refers to a situation that is ongoing, that has not as yet been actualized. In such instances it will always refer to a situation that will include a non-deictic T_o . It will either end before it, or end with it, it might even continue past it, but will certainly include it. This is known as complex anteriority. For example:

[156e] *I said I had been working on that book and still saw no end to it.*

or

[156f] *She said she had been working on that book and still saw no end to it.*

When we have an introductory tense form such as the preterite, and then somewhere else in that very same sentence as part of a different clause we find the preterite perfect, the interpretation is as follows: this primary tense (the preterite) provides us with the location not of the situation itself (T_{sit}) but it gives us the time of orientation (T_o , the kind that is not equal to T_d but is marked as T_{o1}). It is this primary tense that indicates T_o (which would actually be T_{o2}). It is only in reference to that T_{o2} that we determine the SoT, that is, determine the anteriority and the posteriority of the situations in relation to each other.

Let us consider the following sentence and its translation equivalent into English:

[157a] *She has lived in Berlin since she got married.*

[157b] *Živi u Berlinu otkad se udala.*

This sentence has what is known as a continuative reading: the inference is that she will continue living in Berlin. This is an indication of the imperfective aspect. However,

[158a] *She has lived in Berlin.*

[158b] *Živela je u Berlinu.*

is said to have a non-continuative reading, where the inference is that the situation has ended prior to the T_o . This is an indication of the perfective aspect.

Present result/current relevance/continuing applicability

Declerck et al. (2006, pp. 37–38, original emphasis) discuss the so-called ‘perfect aspect’¹¹¹ as found in the English language: “This term is introduced to capture the observation that when one of the English perfect tenses is used, the situation referred to is often viewed from a particular *perspective*, namely from the perspective of the time when a result yielded by, or the relevance of, an anterior situation expressed by the perfect form is perceptible. In this terminology, *I have had a walk* expresses perfect aspect, because it can suggest something like ‘I’m feeling rather {tired / hot / cold} now’, ‘That explains my being wet’, etc. – present results which are not hinted at by *I had a walk*, which is therefore claimed not to express ‘perfect aspect.’” Hence the implied cause-and-effect relationship.

The idea of a present result can most easily be linked to the use of the present perfect tense, or perfect tenses in general, where current relevance/continuing applicability is virtually embedded in the way this tense form is defined for L2 English learners. Let us compare two examples from two different times, one referring more to the present time, the other more to the past:

[159a] *Bill has been writing his thesis with much dedication. The manuscript is now ready for publication.*

[159b] *Bill had been writing his thesis with much dedication. The manuscript was now ready for publication.*

The idea of continuing applicability holds both in the present perfect/present simple combination and in the past perfect/past simple combination. The perfect tense indicates the actualization of a situation, and the corresponding simple tense indicates a state, in both instances, of completion, i.e., a present result (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 38). It is important not to get confused by the use of the word *now* in these two examples, nor by the idea of what is known as a *present* result. In both of these instances the reference is to the time of speaking, whether it be located in the present time (akin to T_d) or some unknown past time. The outcome is quite the same, the process virtually identical, it is simply a matter of recognizing that the same kind of relation holds between two situations in either the present time or the past time.

¹¹¹ In this instance the term *so-called* is used to indicate that not all classifications agree that this is in fact an aspect, indicating that this refers more to tense than to grammatical or lexical aspect.

Recognizing and adopting various orientation times

As previously indicated, the preterite perfect is said to encode double anteriority, anteriority in relation to the T_d (which is indirect), and anteriority in relation to its T_o (which is a direct relationship; but since this T_o is anterior to the T_d , we have double anteriority). This is also more simply known as a shift back in time from the T_d . The first one is a shift back to the T_o of the matrix clause (for ease of comprehension consider a reporting clause that contains the verb *say* or *tell*). The second is a shift back once again, to determine the T_r of the subordinate clause. The created effect is that of the preterite being located between a perfect tense and a present tense, resembling a link in a chain. Consider the following example:

[160] *I think he said she'd already left by the time he got to the theatre.*

So, what are the implications for the way we perceive complex and simple tenses? Huddleston and Pullum (2002) state that based on the temporal relations between these points in time, for simple tenses (the T_r - T_o relationship), the focus is on a single relationship of this kind, as the connection to the T_d is more directly and overtly made. For more complex tenses, we recognize two T_r - T_o relationships: that of the matrix clause, which is then used to determine that of the subordinate clause.

The temporal zero-point, as the time of speaking, should be the most easily recognizable point in time, despite not always being directly conveyed. For example, adding an introductory clause such as:

[161] *What I'm saying is he had left when I arrived.*

would make it easier for us to remember to take into consideration the moment of speaking, the temporal zero-point from which all other temporal relations ensue.

However, for communication to take place, this is not necessary. It is always assumed. It is considered a starting point or an origin because all temporal relations that can be conveyed by the tense forms of a particular language indicate the relations of anteriority, posteriority, or simultaneity in relation to it. It is from this starting zero-point¹¹² that we determine the aforementioned orientation times (which within this book are mostly conveyed by means of the preterite) that allow us to locate and organize other situations along that imaginary time-line, while once again expressing the aforementioned anteriority, posteriority, or simultaneity.¹¹³

That leaves us with a lot of considerations about past time (the past time at which the text was being written by the author; situations unravelling in the protagonist's life at some points which to that very same protagonist represent the present time; past situations that have already unfolded for that very same protagonist, situations the protagonist perceives as having occurred at a time that he considers to be past time),

¹¹² A note to the reader: zero-point is always considered (I might say quite logically) as being punctual.

¹¹³ In a way, to use terminology we have used before, zero-point would actually be encoding time.

about times of speaking, and about orientation times in general. The current speech time, the *here and now* of us as the deictic center is the point in time the narration had in a way travelled through time to get to. And recounting that story requires that we go back into what we perceive to be the past.

Once again, we find ourselves facing another broad discourse situation where we can imagine the author of a book sitting down to write, or retell, or recount a story for us and to us. The default tense that we might resort to for this time of speaking could be any of the present tenses, in instances such as the narrating present of the Serbian language. But that is an idiosyncrasy of the Serbian language. If we were to use the exact same tenses for these two different times, the same tenses to refer to the time of actualization of the situations contained within the published text and to the time when the text was being written, what would be lost is the distinction between them. And that distinction is vital. Otherwise, the effect created would be one of simultaneity. And there are instances where this simultaneity is welcome, and where it is expected, in fact where it is deliberately created (as in the aforementioned running commentaries, for example). So, in order to convey that there is a difference between these two times, we use different tenses, and in such instances, it is customary to use the past tense in the English language. As previously indicated, the narrative tenses in the English language tend to be past tenses such as the past simple, the past continuous, the past perfect, or the past perfect continuous tense, for example. The following is an illustration of this principle, accompanied by an explanation:

Brother Cadfael went out from chapter to his work in the garden with the rear view of that shabby little figure still before his mind's eye. { A stickler, *was* Father Elias, he *would not easily give up*. Somewhere, somehow, he *must find* a reason to convince himself that Alwin ***had died*** in a state of grace, and see to it that his soul *had* all the consolation and assistance the rites of the church *could provide*. But it *seemed* he had already tried every cleric in the town and the Foregate, and so far fruitlessly. . . . } Cadfael felt a dual sympathy for the perfectionist priest and back-sliding parishioner. At this moment their case seemed to him to take precedence even over Elave's plight. { Elave *was* safe enough now until Bishop Roger de Clinton *declared* his will towards him. If he *could not get out*, neither *could* any zealot get in, to break his head again. His wounds *were healing* and his bruises fading, and Brother Anselm, precentor and librarian, ***had given*** him the first volume of Saint Augustine's 'Confessions' to pass the time away. So that he might discover, *said* Anselm, that Augustine did write on other themes besides predestination, reprobation and sin. } (Ellis Peters, *The Sanctuary Sparrow* (London: Futura, 1984), 140-1)

The simple past tenses in this extract all refer to situations which overlap Cadfael's thought time. It is possible that *said* in the last sentence of this example refers to an anterior past situation, i.e., that Anselm said this when he gave Elave the book, but it is more likely that *said* describes a state overlapping Cadfael's thought time. (Salkie & Reed, 1997, p. 338, original emphasis)

The use of different tenses, past and present among others, as well as the perfective and imperfective aspect, indicate that we are conveying the construal of a situation of an individual with whom we do not share the same time of speaking. For each of us the time of speaking is referred to by means of the present tense as that is how we establish links to deictic time. But each one of us will, when we think about things that happened in what we perceive or know to be past time, resort to using past tenses. Thus, as translators we find ourselves in a very specific situation, which we must acknowledge. We must, by using the appropriate tense forms, indicate our remoteness in space and in time, from both the author and the protagonists. Otherwise, it will appear that we (the reader/translator), the author, and the protagonist(s) are all located in the same space at the same time.¹¹⁴ When translating, especially when it comes to carefully choosing the alignment of tenses (for the purpose of understanding the chronological order of events, any ensuing backshifting, flashback narration, reported speech, *inter alia*), adopting the correct speech time and identifying the correct orientation time is key.

Once we understand what the speech time is (deictic time/the zero point), and once we determine the temporal domain, for which we need at least one situation time and one absolute tense, the multitude of relations that hold or are established between the various tenses will continue to hold, irrespective of whether we are referring to a past time domain or the present time domain. As an illustration, please compare the following:

[162a] *Two weeks ago I found the very same puppy that I had given as a present to an acquaintance of mine for Christmas roaming the street.*

[162b] *I have just found roaming the street that very same puppy that I gave as a Christmas present to an acquaintance of mine.*

To quote Declerck et al. (2006, pp. 508–509, original emphasis):

(a) The past perfect forms in [...] are instances of ‘the past version of a present perfect’. This means that these past perfect forms imply the existence of a period leading up to (but not including) a pseudo-past orientation time. [...] The pseudo-past orientation time in question remains unspecified.

(b) The past perfect forms [...] are instances of the past version of an indefinite present perfect. [...]

(c) When a durative situation has never actualized in a period up to t_0 but is actualizing at t_0 , the speaker can choose between the present perfect and the past perfect to refer to it:

¹¹⁴ A similar account was presented by Davidse and Vandelanotte (2011) and Vandelanotte (2002, 2005, 2006, 2009), who in addition to absolute and relative tense, also added the original zero point related to the time the actual speaker’s utterance and a ‘surrogate’ zero point within it, as well as actual and represented speaker. Such a division of terminology does make it easier to clarify the ongoing events to L1 Serbian/L2 English learners.

I have never dreamed of meeting these people before. (*before* = 'before t_0 ')

I had never dreamed of meeting these people before. (*before* = 'before I started meeting these people a short time ago')

[...]

(e) Because the past perfect requires that the initial point of the post-present situation function as a pseudo-past orientation time, i. e. as an orientation time that is past with respect to (and hence treated as disconnected from) the pseudo- t_0 , the past perfect is only possible if there is no link (other than the temporal one) between the situation referred to by the past perfect and the pseudo-past binding orientation time. This means that it is the present perfect that has to be used if the speaker is to express a resultative link between the anterior situation and what is the case at the pseudo-past binding orientation time.

However, there is something to consider: once we have a variety of temporal relations at play, it is necessary to determine whether they will be in a mutual relation of 'coordination' or 'subordination'. The central t_0 is the key tense form that establishes the temporal domains and the remaining tense forms which belong to the same domain are in fact 'temporally subordinated' to the central t_0 . That is why it is so important to determine the temporal relations within them before we begin translating. Thus, the first step is: to determine what the central t_0 is (also known as a binding t_0) and build temporal relations and choose tense forms from there.

"If there are no constituents in the sentence indicating or suggesting a specific past time, such a time may still be recoverable from the linguistic or extralinguistic context." (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 203) This statement ties in directly with what we said in reference to pragmatic and discourse factors playing a role in determining orientation time that cannot be overlooked. For example, in the sentence:

[163] *Did she remember to let the dog out?*

the implicit time is probably the time right before the female mentioned in the sentence was either heading off to bed or to work, etc. Or in:

[164] *I simply had to try the lamb cutlet.*

the implicit time is mostly likely one when the speaker found themselves in a restaurant. The point of relevance is that this time needs to be identifiable to either the hearer or to the speaker (even though it involves them directly). In order for communication to take place, all that is required is that both the hearer and the speaker agree that it is 'given' that the speaker found themselves at a restaurant at some point in the past.

Reportedly, there are five types of orientation times (both specific and unspecific) according to Declerck et al. (2006, p. 117):

- zero-point/speech time/deictic time,

- the situation time which is part of a temporal relation either as an orientation point we know to be located at a particular point on the imaginary time-line or one whose location we are trying to establish based on a known orientation point as either anterior, posterior, or simultaneous to it (related to the predicated situation),
- an unspecified orientation time which we have to locate on the aforementioned time-line relying on pragmatic and discourse factors,
- *adv*-times which can be located on the time-line based on the presence of adjuncts of temporal location, and finally,
- implicit orientation times.

Any of the aforementioned can function as the starting point of a temporal relation. In instances where we do not have specified orientation times, illustrated by the inclusion of adjuncts of temporal location, we find ourselves facing implicit situation times and need to rely on the aforementioned pragmatic and discourse factors. For example, in:

[165] *John had woken up early that day.* (Declerck, 1995, p. 7)

the preterite perfect is a tense form anterior to an implied t_0 or one provided previously in the text/context (otherwise the phrase *that day* would have implied the use of the preterite).

And finally, we end this section with two definitions of unspecified orientation times provided by Declerck et al. (2006, p. 118, original emphasis):

in *Bill had left*, the time of the predicated situation is represented as anterior to an unspecified orientation time which (in the prototypical use of the past perfect [...]) is understood as being anterior to t_0 . An unspecified orientation time is an orientation time which forms part of the tense structure of a tense, but which is neither t_0 nor the time of a predicated situation which is referred to in the sentence itself. However, for a full understanding of the sentence it is necessary that this orientation time be identifiable (given) in some way. For example, the unspecified orientation time may be the time of a predicated situation referred to in the linguistic context, as in [*It was no longer dark when she woke up.*] *Bill had left the room.* Here, *she woke up* provides the unspecified orientation time to which Bill's leaving is anterior.

and:

He had got up early that morning. (This could be the first sentence of a novel. In that case the unspecified orientation time is not immediately recoverable, in the same way as the referent of he is not. Starting a novel this way, with a sentence containing one or more 'unbound variables', is an often-used rhetorical device.) (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 119, original emphasis)

A brief note on adjuncts

Certain adjuncts can have a both specific

[166] *I had lunch two hours ago.*

or indefinite reading (not quite or specifically known by the speaker/writer)

[167] *I honestly don't know when I saw her last.*

What matters is that what we could generally refer to as *(back) then* can be retraced and is sometimes known as the 'anchor time'. It will suffice for us to be able to build a past time domain in that case and produce other combinations of past tense forms. The hearer/reader merely needs to be aware that such a situation exists on the imaginary time-line, one that can be used as an orientation time. Pinpointing it exactly is not necessary,¹¹⁵ a minimal understanding of the existence of such a situation time is enough, for which hearers/readers can sometimes rely on pragmatic and discourse factors (the immediate situation of speaking, historical events, or other situations).

When it comes to situations in general, a combination of various adjuncts and conjunctions can be used to indicate or pinpoint the precise location of situations on an imaginary time-line. Most of the adjuncts of temporal location are self-explanatory: *yesterday, tomorrow, in the past month, in 1993, even in 3025*. However, there are certain conjunctions which require precise knowledge of speech time and of other potential orientation times. The former refers to the perceived point in time where the speaker/writer find themselves and it refers to our physical reality, while the latter refers to the point along the linear 'flow' of time based on which we determine the location of other situations in the same time domain. Sometimes these two points in time overlap, but it is more frequently the case that they in fact do not. It is precisely because of this that words such as *now* and even *today* can be particularly tricky in 'indicating or helping us determine the tense that we are supposed to use'.

Now can sometimes be the default setting that most L2 English learners opt for, in the sense of their *here and now*. *Today* is subjected to the same pattern of use. However, both of these words can very easily refer not to the speech time, but in fact to orientation time. What is often overlooked is the fact that the *now* of the author, the *now* of the protagonist, and the *now* of the reader do not always, if ever, overlap to the extent that we will use identical tense forms to refer to situations in these various times, especially without using specific adjuncts (and tense forms) to indicate that we are shifting to and from the past, the present, and even future time. We must once again refer to each of these individuals, alive or make-believe, as deictic centers in their own right, in order to understand exactly whose point of view we are adopting.

¹¹⁵ About the absolute past tense in particular, the following holds (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 195): "The semantics of the absolute past tense is its tense structure: the situation time is located in the past time-sphere. (The past tense itself does not give information as to where exactly the situation time is located in the past time-sphere.) The absolute past tense always establishes a past domain."

Now and *today* are good examples of conjunctions that are used in relation to a deictic center and can be used to refer to both present and past time. This does not mean that other conjunctions, much like the ones previously mentioned, such as *yesterday* for example, are not used in the same sense, as *yesterday* can refer to the day prior to speech time as much as it can refer to the day prior to the event time. However, it is usually the case that *now* and *today* tend to be confounding for the L2 learner more so than for example *yesterday*, mostly due to the fact that use of the adverb *yesterday* will almost ubiquitously require the use of the past simple tense, irrespective of the deictic center, while that will not always be the case for *now* and *today*.

Identifying orientation times, locating situations, temporal validity

Key terms: T-relations and W-relations

What we have previously referred to as formal syntactic features and pragmatic or discourse features, in their work, Declerck et al. (2006, p. 121) refer to as T(ense)-relations and W(orld)-relations, respectively. The former refer to relations established by tense forms (the linguistic context), while the latter refer to relations established by the discourse, by worldly relations (the non-linguistic context). A holistic approach is most certainly called for in order for us to be able to fully comprehend the sequence of situations along the imaginary time-line. T-relations link a situation time and an orientation time and indicate the temporal relations of anteriority, posteriority, or simultaneity.

Declerck et al. (2006, p. 448, 523) provided the following definition of T-simultaneity, which is linked to the combination of preterite tense forms:

In order to represent a situation time as T-simultaneous with an orientation time in a past domain we use the relative past tense (preterite), irrespective of whether the binding orientation time is the central orientation time or another orientation time in the domain. (In other words, the relative past is the only tense that can express T-simultaneity in a past domain or 'subdomain' [...]) T-anteriority in a past domain is expressed by means of the past perfect, irrespective of whether the binding time is the central orientation time or another orientation time within that past domain.

What follows is a diagrammatic representation of a sample sentence (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 449):

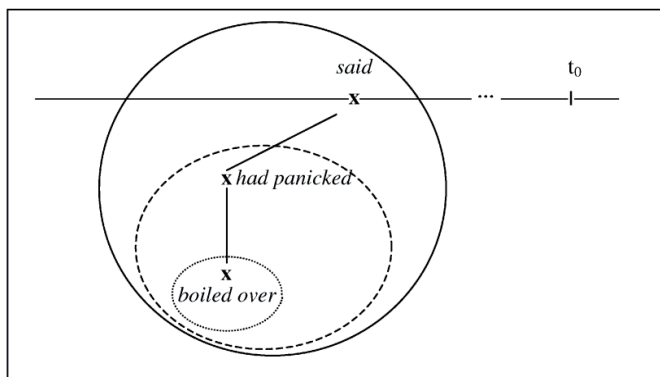


Figure 9.2. The tense structure of *He said he had panicked when the milk boiled over.*

Source: Declerck et al., 2006, p. 449.

Please note that when it comes to anteriority or posteriority, there is no indication of the distance between the orientation time and the situation time, which means it can be remote in relation to it, or could lead right up to it. It all depends on how we perceive the situation at hand. Examples include (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 125):

[168] *I knew I had locked the door.*

and:

[169] *I told them that we had been friends since we first met.*

as well as,

[170] *He said he would do it the next day.*

and:

[171] *He said that from then onwards he would treat me as a friend.*

Further examples of situations ‘at a distance from’ the orientation time (which in all the following cases is located in past time) might include the following:

[172] *He said that Jake had reminded him that he had paid for the surgery.*

In sum, the preterite perfect refers to a situation time anterior to an orientation time other than the zero-point, all in the past domain. *Had reminded* refers to a situation anterior to *said* (the central orientation time), while *had paid* refers to a situation anterior to that referred to by *had reminded*. This means that we are dealing with an orientation time (in the past time domain) other than that of *said*.

[173] *Nancy left the company after she had been wrongly accused of having divulged trade secrets.*

The central orientation time is referred to by *left*, and the preterite perfect anterior to it is that of *had been wrongly accused*. The other non-finite *having divulged* relates its situation time to an unspecified orientation time in the past when the alleged divulging of information had taken place. It is, in essence, a ‘remote past’ in relation to *had been wrongly accused*, which, in and of itself, is already a ‘remote past’.

[174] *They said they would inform the authorities that their neighbors had accused them of having scratched their car.*

The binding of tense forms in this example is a little more complex, but it does illustrate the interesting way of working our way back to the preterite, or the moment closest to the time of speaking. The non-finite *having scratched* is bound by its orientation time of *had accused*, which in turn is bound by its own orientation time of *would inform*, which is then again bound by its own orientation time of *said*.

So, the preterite perfect conveys the same type of anteriority that links the preterite to the time of speaking, and by replicating that same binding temporal relation with its own orientation time, it tends to resemble the preterite in its link to the time of speaking. Simply put, the preterite perfect requires two orientation times: the time of speaking to act as the orientation time to the preterite which in turn acts as the orientation time to the preterite perfect. Thus, the semantics of the past perfect is a “situation time anterior to another orientation time in a past temporal domain’ [...] In *John said that he had been ill*, the past perfect form *had been* is a relative tense form because its situation time is represented as anterior to the situation time of the absolute tense form *said*. The relation between the situation time of *had been* and t_0 is not expressed.” (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 120, original emphasis)

The aforementioned temporal relations that hold can be seen in the following diagram:

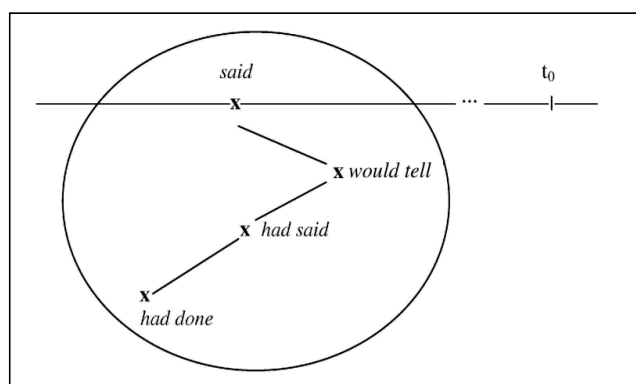


Figure 9.1. The tense structure of *She said that she would tell Mary that John had said that he had done it all by himself.*

Source: Declerck et al., 2006, p. 444.

If T-relations are similar to what we might refer to as formal syntactic features, or the SoT, W-relations are what helps us orient ourselves when we find we are *in medias res* when translating, that is, they remind us most closely of pragmatic and discourse factors (i.e., contextual information). And interestingly enough, even though these are not tense relations, the relations of anteriority, posteriority, and simultaneity still hold among them. Examples include:

[175] *The wife was busily typing away at the antiquated machine, the husband was absent-mindedly smoking his pipe, and the cat was purring ever so softly.*

[176] *When she had first set eyes on the new school, she hadn't even noticed all the pairs of eyes looking out at her from the windows.*

In example [175], the assumption of simultaneity is actually not indicated by the tense forms, but is a consequence of our ability to reconstruct the situation and construe the situations as happening at the same time, which is a result of our understanding and knowledge of the world around us. In example [176], the tense form *had set eyes on* is anterior to an unspecified orientation time located in the past (we do not exactly know when it happened, due to the absence of any adjuncts of temporal location), but once again we understand that the two situations are simultaneous based on the aforementioned W-relations. Thus, based on the context, we rely on our pragmatic interpretation to provide a linguistic representation of our construal and not in fact of the W-relations, which merely help us locate situations along the imaginary time-line (see Declerck et al., 2006, p. 126).

Let us look at the following examples:

[177a] *Ljudi nisu uvek verovali da zemlja nije ravna.*

[178a] *Ljudi nisu uvek verovali da zemlja nije bila ravna.*

and consider their translation equivalents:

[177b] *People did not always believe that the earth is not flat.*

[178b] *People did not always believe that the earth was not flat.*

These examples offer a relatively simple illustration of how we have to take many factors into consideration when deciding on the use of the SoT in reported speech, and how important temporal relevance is, or more specifically 'universal temporal validity'. Did the shape of the earth in fact change? Was it flat at one time and yet not at another? The implications of the way we use tense forms are key.

Also consider the following examples:

[179a] *Rastužio se kad se setio da je njegova simpatija imala crnu kosu.*

[180a] *Rastužio se kad se setio da njegova simpatija ima crnu kosu.*

Here we look at temporal relevance from a completely different point of view. The translation of sentence [179a] could be

[179b] *He was quite saddened to remember that his sweetheart had once had black hair.*

the implication behind such a sentence is the implied change that is announced by the preterite perfect, or the lack thereof (in this instance it might mean that the woman has now gone completely grey, has dyed her hair, etc., but it might also mean that she is no longer among us), and the ensuing state that emerges from it (in this instance that is the sense of sadness). Considering the fact that the nature or specifics of the change in the woman's hair or the woman herself underwent are unclear, we must rely on pragmatic or discourse factors.

And as for sentence [180a], the translation might read

[180b] *He was quite saddened to remember his sweetheart has black hair.*

whereby the interpretation is such that the previously implied sense of regret or loss attached to the aforementioned sentence just does not hold as strongly here. So, once again, temporal reference (which in these two examples is illustrated by the potential implication regarding the woman's health status) plays an important part, as does the discourse factor which would fill in numerous blanks for us which exist because we do not have access to the context, and 'at the expense of' the implementation of the SoT rule. As always, there is more than one single factor at play, which only emphasizes the importance of this particular aspect of the English grammar.

Further examples illustrating the importance of W-relations can be found in the following (Tanaka, 1988, p. 66)¹¹⁶:

[181] *Bob told me that he was the son of an English lord.*

[182] *Isn't it exciting! Bob finally revealed to the public that he is the son of an English lord.*

whereby "[the former sentence] represents objective reports of situations which occurred in the past, with no particular attitude toward the proposition of the complement", but the following sentence "conveys the idea that the speaker believes in the truth of that proposition". (Tanaka (1988) quoting Riddle (1978, p. 10, original emphasis))

Also, let us consider the following:

[183] *She told me all about the operation on her hip.*

It seemed to have been a success.

It seems to have been a success.

The use of different tense forms actually conveys a different attitude towards the proposition, shifting focus to the second example containing the present tense verb form, while no such emphasis or focus is achieved in the example where the verb

¹¹⁶ The examples indicate that what is of particular relevance are the speaker's belief in the truth of the complement, subject involvement, and an unresolved state of affairs.

forms are past tense form. This is a clear indication of the role that discourse factors (what is ‘semantically dominant in the context’) play in the SoT.

Temporal subdomains

Among the relevant features of an expanded domain we find the fact that it contains several orientation times, is based on several temporal relations, and can further be expanded by the introduction of additional situation times (which in turn create additional temporal subdomains). The relations that hold within them are, of course, always the same: “[the temporal subdomain’s] ‘central orientation time’ (i.e., the orientation time from which the first T-relations in the subdomain start) is the newly introduced situation time. It is important to see that the tenses used to express T-relations in a past subdomain are exactly the same as those used to express T-relations in the overall past domain.” (Declerck et al., 2006, p. 159)

Let us take a look at several examples which will focus precisely on temporal subdomains:

[184a] *The driving instructor made a comment.*

In this instance, a single past domain has been created (*made*) and no expansions are hinted at.

[184b] *The driving instructor made the comment that I would some day understand roundabouts.*

A past domain is created by the tense form *made*, and in this case the domain experiences an expansion by the inclusion of a tense form that indicates posteriority (*would understand*). The latter tense form creates a temporal subdomain, one that does not undergo further expansion.

[184c] *The driving instructor made the comment that I would some day understand roundabouts that had been confusing me for years.*

A past domain is again established by *made*, *would understand* creates a subdomain indicating the temporal relation of posteriority in relation to *made* (the overall past domain), while *had been confusing* is an extension of this subdomain by creating a temporal relation of anteriority. It also in its own turn creates a temporal subdomain, but it is not expanded any further.

PRACTICE SECTION

Please refer to all the translations you have provided for the sentences included in Practice Sections 1 through 5 and identify the T_o , T_d , T_{sit} , and T_r in all of them. Also, complete the same activity for sentences 2 through 51 in Chapter 8, once you have translated them.

CHAPTER 7: REPORTED SPEECH

Key terms: reported speech, represented speech, the saying event, the reporting clause, the reported clause, the represented speaker, the actual speaker, temporal zero point (t_0), real t_0 , surrogate ground/surrogate t_0

It is impossible to study the SoT without referring to reported speech (in Serbian: *indirektni govor*). When it comes to reporting or representing speech, most L1 Serbian/L2 English students are taught the following: when reporting someone's words, if you do so by using a reporting verb in a past tense form, usually the preterite (for example *said, told, suggested*, etc.), then this independent clause determines to a considerable extent the choice of tense forms in the dependent clause.¹¹⁷ To ensure that this occurs, students are told to do the following: to "shift" the verb form in a particular tense to its "past time" counterpart. Simply put: if the direct speech contains a main (lexical) verb in the present simple tense, that verb form is replaced by the past simple tense, the present continuous tense by the past continuous tense, the past simple tense by the past perfect tense, the past continuous tense by the past perfect continuous tense.¹¹⁸ In other words, the presence of one verb/tense form simply increases the possibility of us expecting another.

The changes in tense forms are directly linked to our discussion on orientation time, whereby the use of different tense forms indicates that we are discussing different times (a difference between the present time and the past time, or a difference between a particular past time and, as previously indicated, remote past, anterior past, etc.). The orientation time in any example of reported speech is linked to the tense form of the introductory reporting verb (the aforementioned *explained, said, told, stated, suggested, invited*, so on).¹¹⁹ This particular shift (the use of past time 'counterparts')

¹¹⁷ For more information on the role that textbooks play in teaching reported speech, see, inter alia, Barbieri and Eckhardt (2007).

¹¹⁸ This refers to simply the formal syntactic level, and does not take into consideration the aforementioned pragmatic factors.

¹¹⁹ A point worth mentioning here is that the use of these verbs also requires the use of particular patterns. For example, one *says* something to someone, there is an implied pattern that requires both a direct object followed by an indirect object; then one *tells* someone something which requires a pattern consisting of both an indirect and a direct object; however, verbs such as *suggest* and *explain* must not be followed simply by a pronoun, as it would then take on the function of the direct object.

[185a] *She suggested me.*

and

[186a] *She explained me.*

would be translated as:

[185b] *Predložila je mene.*

is manifested by means of the SoT. In terms of construal, what we are doing is shifting from what would be the sphere of present time in general, to the sphere of past time in general, i.e., backshifting.¹²⁰

In order to indicate that a situation was actualized before we were able to talk about it, based on how we construe the distribution of situations on the imaginary time-line, and based on how we use tense forms to locate situations on this time-line, we frequently use the past perfect and the past perfect continuous as effective indicators. Therefore, reported speech is a simple exercise in the SoT, and could in fact prove to be an easier way of illustrating it than other grammatical structures.

To analyze the SoT in narration or in reported speech means to gain an understanding of the cause-and-effect relationship that exists between the preterite perfect and the preterite (or more simply put, a relationship where this causality is most clearly foregrounded), and to a lesser extent between sequences of past simple tenses. The past perfect tense(s) indicate(s) the (lack of) actualization, of the situation itself, while the past simple tense actually refers to a state, one that ensues or follows once a particular condition has or has not been met.

Based on what has been said and illustrated so far, how would you translate the following quote ascribed to the great Duško Radović:

[187] *Šta bi radili da vi niste došli u Beograd, kao što ste mogli da ne dođete i kao što bi bilo najbolje da niste ni došli?*

Which situations would you classify as being actualized, and which not? What would be the orientation times? What would be the implied resultant state? And how would that affect your choice of tense forms?

Reported speech is a particularly interesting topic because of the complexity of the temporal relations associated with it. In an attempt to define it, we could refer to reported speech as a means of conveying what was said (wherein the focus is primarily on the content), without always having to refer to the exact syntactic form that was used (Salkie & Reed, 1997, p. 321), which echoes our attempt to discuss slightly more than just the formal syntactic approach to reported speech, or even indicating the manner in which it was stated.

To begin with, reported speech is sometimes also known as represented speech, cleverly so, as it not only ‘represents’ the words of the represented speaker (someone who had said something that is being reported) but also at times their stance

and

[186b] *Objasnila je mene.*

respectively. In such instances, we either opt for the preposition phrase ‘to me’ as in *she suggested to me* or *she suggested that I* and *she explained to me that*, wherein *that* introduces the dependent clause containing the proposition. as in:

[185c] *She suggested to me that...*

[186c] *She explained to me that...*

¹²⁰ For a more recent review of indirect reporting see Capone et al. (2019) and Capone et al. (2016).

regarding the given proposition, as well as the stance of the actual speaker (the person repeating the represented speaker's words in their own time). Thus, a lot of information can be conveyed if one is careful to observe temporal relations and tense forms, as well as carefully consider the type of reporting verb, which is why reported speech is sometimes also associated with the term 'a described speech act'. Davidse and Vandelanotte (2011) refer to represented speech as a form of 're-enactment' of a particular situation, as if it were being 'dramatized' again in our here and now.¹²¹

As a result, there is even a division into different types of verbs that require the SoT, some obligatorily (*know, be aware, think, believe, wish, hope, allege, claim, maintain*), and others based on the relevance of the stated facts, i.e., where the SoT is optional (*forget, mention, regret, realize, discover, show, notice, say, report*). Of course, this kind of division comes with a caveat, and is not, as previously stated, a rule.

Any discussion of reported or represented speech cannot overlook its deictic nature. The reporting clause is the independent/matrix clause, while the reported clause is the dependent one, more specifically, it is 'deictically dependent' on the main clause. That means that the tense forms in the reported clause will align with the time of the independent clause, whether it be past or present time (on occasion we have referred to this occurrence as the tense form in the reported clause being bound by the tense form of the main or reporting clause). The 'default' setting would be the following: a present reporting clause requires no backshifting as the proposition of the reported clause is assumed "current" with the deictic time of the reporting clause. When the reporting clause refers to the past time, we tend to resort to backshifting because of the aforementioned deictic dependency, while taking into consideration issues of currency, factuality, or speaker stance (i.e., the aforementioned pragmatic or discourse markers).

The deictic time of the actual speaker is linked to what is known as the 'real' or 'current' temporal zero-point (t_0), which makes up only one of the two temporal domains associated with reported speech. This particular temporal domain is linked to the tense form in the independent/matrix or reporting clause and the deictic time of the actual speaker. However, there is a second temporal domain linked to the dependent or reported clause which is also known as the surrogate temporal zero-point linked to the deictic time of the represented speaker. When the words that are being reported were actually uttered, they were spoken in what was then the *here and now*, the deictic center of the represented speaker, who at that time was known as the actual or current speaker. The change in deictic person is associated with a change in deictic time, and since the new deictic center is the t_0 , i.e., is located in what for the current speaker is the present time; chronologically speaking the represented words

¹²¹ At this point we should refer back to what might be referred to as a standard or traditional approach to sequence of tenses, in this instance as defined by Boogaart (1996): that what we have called the situation being conveyed in the reported (dependent) clause precedes (chronologically, in what we might refer to as 'real time') the situation in the reporting clause. Of course, as we can see from the explanation, this description does not do justice to the complexity of the SoT as it merely refers to the possibility of backshifting.

now belong to past time. So, the represented speaker creates their own ‘surrogate’ temporal zero-point, as their zero point cannot just cease to exist. Let us take a look at the following example:

[188a] *She said they were looking for the Colosseum.*

She is known as the actual speaker, *they* as the represented speaker, *She said* is the representing clause and *they were looking for the Colosseum* the represented clause. Both tense forms *said* and *were looking* create temporal domains, as they are both linked to the deictic centers related to both of the speakers in turn. These temporal domains could be construed as being current. If the reporting takes place virtually immediately upon speech and despite the past time tense forms, the communication still retains a sense of immediacy. However, in the example:

[188b] *She said they had been looking for the Colosseum.*

the situation is somewhat different. We are no longer dealing with two absolute tenses as we had been in the previous example, both of which create temporal domains that are construed as simultaneous, without dependence. In this instance, the relationship between the temporal domains created by *said* and by *had been looking* is in fact one of anteriority, whereby the past perfect continuous tense indicates a situation which is ‘past in the past’, as we have previously referred to it.

Thus, both anteriority and posteriority are determined based on the temporal location of the reported clause and its surrogate t_0 . Davidse and Vandelanotte (2011) have on numerous occasions noted that both of these temporal domains need to be taken into consideration if backshifting is to be understood correctly, both the current temporal reference point of the reporting clause (linked to the actual/current speaker) and the surrogate temporal zero-point of the reported clause (linked to the represented speaker). They even defined the latter as: “the temporal reference point defined by the original speech act as described in the reporting clause” (Davidse & Vandelanotte, 2011, p. 236). Ergo, the surrogate t_0 is the deictic center of the represented speaker. Thus, reported speech, because it includes two deictic centers, is marked by deictic dualism.

Even though the two examples include a past time reporting clause, the relationship between the two related temporal domains can also be illustrated with a present time reporting clause. The relationship of construed simultaneity indicates that the two temporal domains are directly related to one another (more precisely, that the temporal domain of the dependent clause is perceived to be simultaneous to the one of the reporting clause). The reported clause always has a deictic center of its own, to which tense forms relate directly or indirectly. In the former instance, we are referring to them deictically (directly), which renders them absolute tenses. And if the relation is not deictic in the same sense, if it is indirect, then we are dealing with relative tenses.¹²²

¹²² “[T]he intrinsic meaning of absolute tenses is thus to locate situations as past, present or future vis-à-vis the t_0 , whereas that of relative tenses is to express relative chronology with regard to other situations”. (Davidse & Vandelanotte, 2011, pp. 237–238)

The importance of the role that absolute and relative tenses play in reported speech is directly linked to their susceptibility to the inclusion of additional situations, as it does not exist outside the scope of ongoing discourse (it does not exist out of context). The actual process of incorporating new situations can be defined as: “the basic choice on introducing a new situation in the unfolding discourse is between either relating the new situation directly to the temporal zero-point of the speaker (absolute tense) and creating a new temporal domain, or temporally relating that new situation to another situation (relative tense), i.e. incorporating it within an already established temporal domain”. (Davidse and Vandelanotte, 2011, pp. 237–238)¹²³

There is a distinction between the temporal domains created by the reporting and the reported verb. As previously indicated, the one related to the reported clause is often considered fictive (the aforementioned re-enactment), and this feature in the English language is usually conveyed through remoteness from the current deictic center, which means it is located in the past time. In practice, this means that the surrogate ground of the reported clause is backshifted (‘a shift into a past time of orientation’). This shift is responsible for rendering a tense form which was initially absolute, that was responsible for the creation of a temporal domain when the reported words were originally being uttered, to being ‘reduced’ to a relative tense, as it falls under the temporal domain of the current deictic center, the *here and now* of the actual/current speaker who is doing the reporting or the ‘re-enactment’. This links us directly to what Huddleston and Pullum (2002) called “an intermediate time”, only in this instance it is known as a ‘interpretative reference point’. However, they are essentially, despite the varying terminology, much the same.

Let us take a look at the following diagram representations of various tense relations:

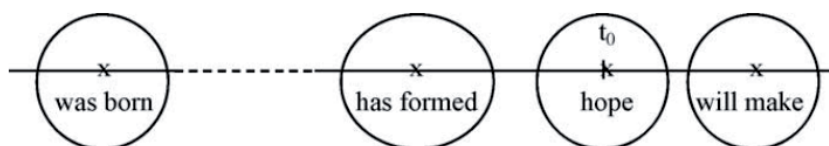


Fig. 1. Illustration of the four types of temporal domains as exemplified in (1).

Source: Davidse & Vandelanotte, 2011, p. 238.

The example sentence is said to outline all the absolute tenses of the English language:

[189] Ewan Gordon McGregor *was born* 31 March 1971 in Crieff, Scotland... McGregor *has formed* a production company with friends Jonny Lee Miller, Sean Pertwee, Jude Law and Sadie Frost. Called Natural Nylon, they *hope* it *will make* innovative films....

¹²³ A new temporal domain is created when reference is established directly to the zero-point (reference point) via an absolute tense. Indirect reference to such zero-points are usually reserved for relative tenses.

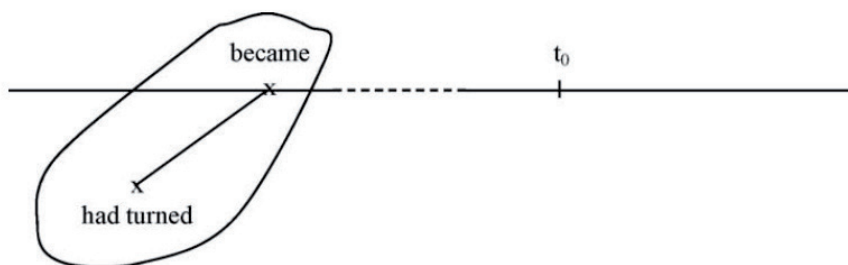


Fig. 2. Relative tense in (2).

Source: Davidse & Vandelanotte, 2011, p. 238.

Figure 2 provides an example which contains both an absolute and a relative tense:

[190] After he *had turned* 60, he became a star again. (CB)

And finally, Figure 3 provides an example which contains two absolute tenses but with the inclusion of an adjunct, which can sometimes be of key importance in interpreting the temporal relations in reported speech and thus the choice of tense forms. It illustrates the following sentence (Davidse & Vandelanotte, 2011, p. 238, original emphasis):

[191] They began sleeping together just after she *turned* 14. (CB)



Fig. 3. Absolute tense in (3).

Source: Davidse & Vandelanotte, 2011, p. 239.

If the head or reporting clause contains a past tense form, the subordinate clause tends to contain a relative tense form, and not an absolute one, as previously indicated. The relative tense form is always possible, if not probable, in accordance with the formal syntactic rules of the SoT. However, an absolute past tense form can be a representing speech complement. The tense form found in the reported speech clause can either link back to the time of the main clause (which is what the SoT rules essentially instruct us to do) or to the time of the utterance (t_0). How do we determine which is which? Among other things, by paying attention not just to the intent of the speaker, but also to the accompanying adjuncts. For example, the sentence:

[192a] *Vesna je rekla da je bila otišla kad je Tijana stigla. / Vesna je rekla da be(ja)še otišla kad je Tijana stigla..*

can have as many as two translation equivalents, which through differences in tense form bring about quite different interpretations,

[192b] *Vesna said that she was (already) gone when Tijana arrived.*

[192c] *Vesna said that she had been (already) left when Tijana arrived.*

So how do we go about determining whether backshifting is required or not when translating reported speech in the midst of what are clearly various tense form options? One of the first things to do is to consider which exact tense form the speaker would have used. Then one should look at the reporting verb to determine whether present or past time is being referred to. In the case of a past reporting clause, to check for anteriority to that reference point, or posteriority, one should determine whether it is possible to use the preterite perfect, and whether these tense forms would reflect what is known as 'real-world chronological order' on that imaginary time-line. If they are viable options, the preterite in the reporting clause is in fact a new reference point that binds the tense forms of the reported clause, which is, therefore, placed in a subordinate position. What is of key importance is determining the absolute tenses which function as reference points that 'bind' relative tenses, and therefore determine the relative tenses which are either anterior or posterior to them.

The Pragmatic hypothesis

In their Pragmatic hypothesis, Salkie and Reed (1997) precisely state the difference between the original utterance and the final output of represented speech. The hypothesis is actually presented as a contrasting viewpoint to the SoT, especially as it pertains to backshifting. Namely, if a pragmatic factor can override a purely formal syntactic one, and influence whether or not a tense form will be bound, then backshifting can be overlooked in the representation. If it is precluded once, what is there to stop it from being precluded again?

Since the reporting speaker is representing someone else's words, the speaker's stance to it should also be taken into consideration, in addition to the proposition. Which is why the precise syntactic form, as previously mentioned, is not always key. It is not just a matter of temporal simultaneity as shown in examples:

[8a] *John said he is happy.*

and

[8c] *John said he was happy.*

The authors claim that the hypothesis extends even to representations of the written word that are a part of playacting and theatrical performances, the way an actor represents, recreates, depicts, or ‘re-enacts’ the words written by the playwright. In that instance, we are focusing a lot less on the purely syntactic form, and much more so on the pragmatic factor brought into the mix by the inclusion of the reporting speaker and a different deictic time (a different *here and now*).

The authors (Salkie & Reed, 1997, p. 323, original emphasis) state that in a reporting plus reported clause situation, as in:

[193] Hamlet said, ‘I shall not look upon his like again.’

there are two pragmatic sources, but that in instances such as:

[194] I shall not look upon his like again, (uttered by Laurence Olivier on stage as part of a performance of *Hamlet*)

there is only one.

Another one of their illustrative examples of two pragmatic sources is the following:

[195] In 1968 John moved to Brighton, which *was/is* on the coast, so he started painting seascapes.

John’s motivation is clearly related to the past, but the point is that both John’s and the reporting speaker’s points of view must be taken into consideration when representing this sentence. To quote (Salkie & Reed, 1997, p. 333): “This means that the past tense in the because-clause presents the location of Brighton from John’s point of view - or rather, from John’s point of view as well as from the speaker’s. Brighton’s location is past (as well as present) for the speaker, but presenting it as past allows John’s point of view to play a role as well as the speaker’s. The use of the present tense only provides one point of view – the speaker’s. This does not mean that the because-clause with the present tense does not permit interpretation as descriptive of John’s motivation for moving to Brighton, but this motivation is not presented from John’s point of view, only as the speaker’s observation: in other words, John is not a pragmatic source in this interpretation.”

So, what does the Pragmatic hypothesis instruct us to do, in the most practical sense? By introducing more than one pragmatic source, it increases the importance of the pragmatic factor, but also reduces the pragmatic ‘relevance’ of the reported speaker. And of course, the hypothesis makes ample use of deixis. Here are some of the ways that is achieved (Salkie & Reed, 1997, p. 325, original emphasis):

- by incorporating speech reporting syntactically into the complementation system, with the complementizer *that* used to signal this fact,
- nonuse of the special intonation patterns (or their equivalent in written language, quotation marks) which set off the content of the speech report in D[irect]R[eported]S[peech]

- using deictic expressions which assume the reporter, rather than the reported speaker, as the deictic center,
- using a reporting verb which makes explicit the illocutionary force of the reported utterance (*promise, warn, etc.*), instead of leaving the illocutionary force implicit.

The takeaway, among other things, is the importance of ‘background information’ which is by default included in the reported/subordinate clause (sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly, and can more easily be illustrated by previous examples including adjuncts of temporal location). This would, according to Salkie and Reed (1997, p. 329), render the reporting clause a part of the narrative (and thus those past tense forms that we have spent quite a bit of time discussing), for which we find background information in the reported clause. It would seem that this provides a change in focus, or leads to foregrounding. It usually seems that the reported words are foregrounded, and in a semantic sense they are, that is unavoidably true, but in a more pragmatic sense, and in a chronological or sequential sense, the reporting clause steps up into the limelight.¹²⁴

Even though the Pragmatic hypothesis does not assign primary focus to the utterances themselves, including the original utterance and the way it was spoken, it does require that we pay much more attention to the reported and reporting speaker in their roles as pragmatic sources, and to focus considerably more on the deictic centers and on the ensuing temporal relations.

Some of the work done by other authors, primarily Declerck and Tanaka (1996), also touches upon pragmatic and discourse factors outlined in this hypothesis. The relationship is linked to what is known as ‘temporal focus’, as a speaker has the option of choosing/using a particular tense form to focus the listener’s attention on a particular time. This kind of behavior falls very close to the domain of pragmatic factors. To illustrate, let us consider the following examples:

[196a] *The pyramids towered over Giza.*

[196b] *The pyramids will tower over Giza.*

[196c] *The pyramids tower over Giza.*

[196d] *The pyramids have towered over Giza.*

[196e] *The pyramids had towered over Giza.*

In sentence [196a] we might not at all be dealing with a factual statement, but a part of a description, a segment from a description that the main character is providing us by viewing Giza from their balcony. The aforementioned descriptive element actually is a link between the situation and the (t_0), as it is somehow relevant, or has continuing

¹²⁴ To quote Salkie and Reed (1997, p. 336): “In summary, when we take an I[ndirect]R[eported]S[peech] sentence with a ‘past-or-present’ complement clause in isolation, the only context we have is a past one - that provided by the matrix clause.”

applicability. Sentence [196b] is virtually prophetic – the pyramids will stand the test of time and will be met with the awe of the generations to come. Sentence [196c] is closest to speech time (t_0) and locates the situation directly in a present and current temporal domain. Sentence [196d], as in many instances involving the perfective aspect, implies a change – they have at one point done so, but this statement's “validity” lasts only until speech time. And finally, the very strong implication that a change occurred is found in the final sentence, [196e]: it always seems like there is a ‘however’ coming, as if this description is the background for some effect that will be conveyed by the preterite that will outline the change, as in “for millennia, but they do so no more” for instance.

When discussing pragmatic/discourse factors, we need to take into consideration the concept of an intensional domain (which is also temporal), one with its own presuppositions, own truth conditions, etc. Once these domains are created (using verbs such as *say*, *believe*, etc.), the situations under discussion are incorporated into them, i.e., their locations within them are sought and determined.¹²⁵ The establishment of these domains is such that any reported speech segment should be interpreted as if the content of the complement clause actually holds true in this established domain and not necessarily elsewhere. So, on the one hand, we have a domain in which the speaker's proposition holds true, but then, on the other, there is also the domain of the reported speaker, as well as a multitude of others, and it is within them that we must be able to discern what holds and what does not.

So, let us consider the example:

[197a] *Mary says that she is happy.*

In the complement clause, we find the present tense form *is* which makes the proposition true at (t_0). In other words, we assume that the speaker holds it to be true and is not deliberately telling a falsehood. The relationship between past intensional worlds and worlds that hold at (t_0) is the way to explain the variety of sentences involving Mary:¹²⁶

[198a] *Mary says that she was happy.*

[199a] *Mary said that she is happy.*

[200a] *Mary said that she was happy.*

¹²⁵ Please refer back to the definition of intensionality provided by Salkie and Reed (1997) found in footnote 10 in the book.

¹²⁶ Let us also consider their potential translation equivalents:

[197b] *Meri kaže da je srećna.*

[198b] *Meri kaže da je bila srećna.*

[199b] *Meri je rekla da je srećna.*

[200b] *Meri je rekla da je (u trenutku govora) bila srećna.*

[201b] *Meri je rekla da je (nekada) bila srećna (ali da to verovatno više nije).*

Situations such as this one would be explained by the inclusion of adjuncts of temporal location.

[201a] *Mary said that she had been happy.*

Let us also look at the following example:

[202a] *Rekli su mi da je on u Australiji.*

and its potential translation equivalents:

[202b] *I was told he is/was in Australia.*

In either of the translation equivalents, the tense forms are solely the result of the speaker's choice, i.e., of pragmatic factors, knowledge of the background or contextual information that holds in a particular intensional domain. Then there is also another example:

[203a] *Zar nisi čula da se ošišala?*

and its potential translation equivalent of:

[203b] *Didn't you hear she just got a haircut?*

[203c] *Didn't you hear she had just gotten a haircut?*

or possibly:

[203d] *Hadn't you heard she got a haircut?*

[203e] *Hadn't you heard she had gotten a haircut?*

if you wished to indicate heightened incredulity or perhaps reproach or even making fun of the interlocutor for not knowing something you expected to be known.

And, finally, there is:

[204a] *Rekli su mi da sam najkvalifikovaniji kandidat koga su pozvali na intervju.*

and its potential translation equivalent of:

[204b] *They told me that I was/am the most qualified candidate they have/had invited for an interview.*

Backshifting

Quirk et al. (1972, p. 789) state that backshifting is actually a shift “to ‘past in the past in the past’”, indicating the complex relationship that exists between the time of speaking and the situations that preceded it, i.e., the time of speaking and the variety of orientation times that we are directly given or need to infer from the proposition itself. The process of reporting is a process of “temporal distancing”. This is very reminiscent of the intermediate step that Huddleston and Pullum (2002) proposed when it comes to determining the relationship between the time of speaking, the preterite, and the preterite perfect.

As previously indicated, reported speech¹²⁷, along with backshifting (often translated into Serbian as *slaganje vremena*), are topics of particular interest when it comes to studying the SoT, which in this book are limited to the temporal relation between the preterite and the preterite perfect. When we backshift the preterite, we are attempting to locate the T_r (or T_{sit}) not in relation to the T_o (or T_d), but instead in relation to the time referred to in the matrix clause, the one containing the reporting verb (T_o ² in that case). The backshifting, as previously indicated, takes place in the subordinate clause.

Still, it is possible to have situations when the preterite has present time reference, situations where there are issues with factuality, or counterfactuality to be precise, and when we do not rely on backshifting (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 152):

[205a] *If he knew she had too many commitments, he would do something about it.*¹²⁸

[206a] *I wish he realized that she had too many commitments.*

In both instances, the preterite has present time reference, and, thus, these are not instances of the backshifted preterite. In these two instances, the time of ‘knowing’ and the time of ‘wishing’ are in the present time, and the ‘possession of commitments’ is also a situation obtaining in the present time. Thus, for backshifting to occur, we are looking for matrix and subordinate clause combinations where both clauses have past time reference. This holds for matrix clauses that include a perfect tense form as well (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 153):

[207] *I have never said she had too many commitments.*

What is the difference in meaning, if any, between the ordinary preterite and the backshifted preterite, if we take into consideration the fact that the main task of using tense forms is to indicate specific points in time (T_r , T_{sit} , T_d , T_o), and convey the temporal relations between them to our interlocutors or audience?

When it comes to an ordinary preterite, using it to identify the correct T_r is based on the assumption that its anteriority in relation to T_o is the same as to T_d . But in the case of a backshifted preterite, it seems to be more of a two-step process.

¹²⁷ Comrie (1986, p. 293) claims that “the distribution of tense in indirect speech in English is determined by a rule of sequence of tenses”.

¹²⁸ Let us also consider their potential translation equivalents:

[205b] *Da on zna da ona ima previše obaveza, uradio bi nešto po tom pitanju.*

[206b] *Volela bih kada bi on shvatio da ona stvarno ima previše obaveza.*

Furthermore, consider the changes that ensue, if we were to use the preterite perfect, as in examples [205c] and [206c]:

[205c] *If he had known she had too many commitments, he would have done something about it.*

[206c] *I wish he had realized that she had too many commitments.*

Their translation equivalents could be:

[205d] *Da je on znao da ona ima previše obaveza, uradio bi nešto po tom pitanju.*

and

[206d] *Volela bih da je on shvatio da ona stvarno ima previše obaveza.*

The T_d is the time of the utterance/the time of speaking and is always related to the present time. And yet, the T_o of the matrix clause (the clause containing the reporting verb) has to have past time reference. Furthermore, T_r (which is referred to in the subordinate clause) is identified as being anterior to this T_o (which in and of itself has past time reference). This past time reference is determined based on the relationship between the T_o in question, and the T_r of the matrix clause (the one containing the reporting verb which refers to past time, irrespective of tense).

Thus, in backshifted use (to quote Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 154): “the relation between the subordinate T_r and its T_o is not directly expressed by the preterite”. The “default” setting is $T_r = T_o$, and there is no anteriority. But when the T_r of the matrix clause defines the T_o of the subordinate clause as referring to past time, we are obliged to use the preterite perfect. “[...] the perfect is required here for the same reason as in past time remote conditionals [...]: the primary past tense is not being used to express the anteriority relation $T_r < T_o$, and hence the secondary past tense has to be introduced for that purpose.”

In reported speech, it may at first glance seem easy to determine this anteriority, because of the presence of an intermediary verb (the reporting verb), which assumes a particular analytic form, and the form assists us by referring to the aforementioned past time. Issues might arise in situations when backshifting would be required, and yet there is no reporting verb in the same sentence that would overtly indicate the location of the T_o in the past time. This would apply to using the SoT when translating a text, or translating a narrative sequence of events. In such situations, the translator must be wary of the existence of T_o points found in other sentences, or implied in the text itself, i.e., they must rely on contextual clues, as every T_r has its own T_o , overtly or indirectly stated.

There are instances where we do not have “strictly semantic motivation” for the preterite form, as in the aforementioned examples containing the verb *wish* in the matrix clause, or in instances of unspecified orientation time. This verb usually has present time reference, but the proposition indicates counterfactuality. For that reason, backshifting is considered to be a grammatical phenomenon, because we need to identify both T_r and T_o (first identify the time reference of the T_o and then identify its temporal relation to the T_r , whether anteriority or posteriority). Due to the fact that the T_d always has present time reference, the aforementioned intermediate step needs to be taken into consideration when referring to the location of the preterite perfect, as previously stated in the text.

And once again, a backshifted tense is non-deictic (as opposed to that of the ordinary preterite), as stated in the following (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 155): “ T_o is identified not with the reporter’s T_d , but with the original speaker’s, and the preterite encodes this anteriority of T_o .” In this instance, we would be well within our rights to identify the aforementioned ‘reporter’ as either the narrator, or the protagonist, depending on the type of narration (whether third- or first-

person). The backshifted preterite can never be considered deictic because its T_o is determined based on the matrix clause and the verb form therein, and not in any way by the T_d (which has that present time reference that is most akin to the specific moment we find ourselves in).

PRACTICE SECTION

In examples [1a] and [1b] (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 242, original emphasis), do we find examples of one temporal domain¹²⁹ or of two?

[1a] John said Mary *was* ill (at the same time as when he was speaking).

[1b] John said Mary *was* ill (ten days ago).

Please translate the following sentences into English. Make a note of whether the main verb will take a present or past tense form and why, i.e., whether the speaker is referring to past time or to present time.

- [2] Medicinska sestra: *Možete da uđete u čekaonicu.*
- [3] Marko, trying to ingratiate himself: *Još uvek imam onaj poster koji si mi poklonio za rođendan.*
- [4] Aleksa, complaining to his friend: *U proteklih nedelju dana sam tri puta išao službeno za Piroć.*
- [5] An angry individual to their partner: *Neću baš ništa!*
- [6] An inventor to a captivated audience: *Tek ćete se vi posle čuditi.*
- [7] An emergency room doctor to the attending nurse: *Gde je ranjen?*
- [8] A spokesperson eager to win over the gathering crowd: *Ko će sa mnom!*

¹²⁹ “When the head clause is in the past tense, the domain established can be expanded by means of various relative tense forms: the past tense is used to express simultaneity, the past perfect to express anteriority, and the ‘conditional tense’ to express posteriority in the past domain.” (Declerck & Tanaka, 1996, p. 286, footnote 4)

CHAPTER 8: BUILDING TRANSLATION SKILLS

Please take a note of the following individual sentences as well as short texts. Please read and translate the sentences carefully. Additionally, please read the texts in their entirety. You will see that all the material, all of which are examples of naturally occurring language¹³⁰, contains many combinations of the past and present tense forms, as well as of forms illustrating the perfective and the imperfective aspect. The samples were all chosen with one thought in mind, and that is to illustrate the possible combinations of past tense forms, as previously illustrated in the preceding chapters.

The individual sentences provided for translation are not accompanied by additional exercises. However, once you have read the shorter texts, you will be tasked with a particular set of assignments. It will be necessary for you to, based on your comprehension of what happened in the paragraph, carve out the chronological order of events as they occurred. That means explaining the occurrence of every tense form that you will use in your translations of the texts in relation their orientation time. Only then will you be tasked with completing additional, vocabulary-related exercises.

Also, attempts have been made to ensure that the material has been presented to convey an increase in length, which means we begin with shorter sentences first, and slowly move on to longer segments of text.

Please ask yourself the following questions prior to translation:

- What is the speaking time or zero time?
- What is the situation time (the time referred to in the main clause)?
- What is the orientation time (the starting point of a temporal relation)?
- Are there any intermediate orientation times?
- Has a new temporal domain been created, or has an existing one been expanded?
- What are the absolute, and what are the relative tense forms in the text?
- If you had to present any segment of the text in diagram form, what would it look like?

¹³⁰ The material consists of excerpts from Mihajlo Pupin's book *Sa pašnjaka do naučenjaka*, as well as a compilation of short stories written by Laza Lazarević. References to the source were made wherever possible. The texts in their entirety are available at: <http://www.antologijasrpskeknjizevnosti.rs>, a freely available domain.

Task 1. Please translate the following sentences. The first sentence has been analyzed as a model. (Source: Mihajlo Pupin, *Sa pašnjaka do naučenjaka*, Laza Lazarević, *Pripovetke*)

1. U toku boravka u Berlinu, bavio sam se istraživanjem pritiska pare slanih rastvora.

Consider at this point in time your two options: the past perfect and the past simple tense of the verb *deal with* as potential translation equivalents. Which of the two options would you choose: *During my stay in Berlin I dealt with* or *During my stay in Berlin I had dealt with*? What is the difference in meaning, or in other words, what is implied with the use of one tense rather than the other? Are there any pragmatic factors that will come into play? There may be more readers out there who would be willing to opt for the past simple tense *dealt with* because of the adverbial of time at the very beginning of the sentence (*during my stay in Berlin*). However, we have determined that pragmatic factors are known to outweigh formal syntactic ones. So, the question no longer is whether it is grammatically incorrect to use the past perfect tense, but what explanation we would provide. Has any semantic component of meaning been added to the interpretation of the sentence? Is there perhaps a sense of finality that is created, an implied conclusion that the author in fact no longer dealt with that particular issue after his stay in Berlin? Since this is a sentence taken out of context, would it be reasonable for us to conclude that at some previous point in this book the author had already spent an entire chapter writing about his time in Berlin, and had in the meantime moved on to other chapters in his life, and was just now returning to this point in his life, which is, based on all the events that took place in the meantime, past in the past. Would this assumption affect our choice of tense forms? Would we be more inclined to use the past perfect tense, to indicate remoteness, the perceived distance in the passage of time that the author actually had us experience while taking us on the journey of his life? It is very important to keep in mind that more than one option is possible, and contextually dependent. It is also extremely important to remember that every tense has a meaning, a semantic component, sometimes maybe even more than one, and that in making our choice of tense, we have to be careful to choose the correct one. Ultimately, it is our job to ensure that our reader should not make any incorrect inferences.

2. Ućutasmo.
3. Ali bolest osvajaše.
4. Treba ostaviti stvar.
5. Blagoje se kao munja brzo okrete.
6. Maks se iskašljavaše kad uđe u sobu.
7. Odavno je već bilo zvonilo na večernje.
8. Prevrtaše misli da prosije iz njih ono što je crno.

9. Mi više ne vidjesmo popa.
10. Nije šala, naš pop! [...] Ta priliči mu da je sam vladika!
11. Tebe sve nešto zadirkuju. Sve bi htele da ti za njih sve rintaš i radiš. Kao da si ti došla iz neke gole kuće!
12. Da mu je samo da ga ne pogledâ onim očima, a on bi njoj sudio.
13. Pričao je mnoga čuda što je vidio u Biogradu, da mu jedva vjerovasm.
14. Nju su sagradili, rekli su mi, nemački seljaci iz Ečke.
15. Nikad se nije šalio; ni s nama decom, ni s majkom, ni s kim drugim. Čudno je živio s mojom majkom.
16. Čudno da mlađi ljudi, ma koliko da su voljeli Maru, smatraše cijelu stvar za izgublenu, i da nije starijih ljudi, ne bi možda ni u potjeru išli.
17. Zemlja bješe svuda vlažna, a sa dudu spram vrata još nijesu isparile kišne kapljice, pa ga obasjalo jutrenje sunce, te se cakli kao polej u varoškoj crkvi.
18. Ne zna niko, pa ni on sam kad se rodio. U ono doba gdje vam počinjem pričati, računali smo mi, a i on, da će mu biti tako pedeset godina.
19. Kao da je znala da postoji bitna razlika između Škotlandana i Srbina.
20. Ovaj, veli, kad pročita pismo, otišao je s njime i sa Marom kući nekog profesora Vučetića, i tu je Maru predao.
21. Pa ni moj otac ni moja majka nisu znali čitati ni pisati.
22. Tako se između Bilharca i mene širio sve veći jaz.
23. Nijedno drugo otkriće koje sam zapamtio u svom životu nije privuklo toliko pažnje kao otkriće X-zrakova.
24. Kao da su čitali moje misli, svi su me uveravali da ja više dajem Adelfi akademiji nego što dobijam od nje.
25. Znao je da voli devojkę kojom će se oženiti i znao je da će njegov život teći istim kolosekom kao i životi njegovih predaka.
26. Vrlo brzo je ostavio na mene utisak kao da sam ga oduvek poznao i da mi je stari i odani prijatelj.
27. Nije bilo nikakog pitanja ni zadatka života, ma kako on bio težak, a da ga one odmah lako i prosto ne reše.
28. Preporučio mi je da obradim neke, meni manje poznate, oblasti matematike da bih se bolje uključio u grupu.
29. Dugo vremena posle ove konferencije, razmišljao sam o mnogim stvarima koje sam morao pomenuti, a što nisam učinio.

30. Saznao sam da je onima koji su tamo stanovali, nametnuo strog režim i da je zato njegovo ostrvo bilo idealno mesto za one koji traže usamljenost.
31. Bio je to vrlo govorljiv čovek, ćelave glave, crvenog nosa, koji je svaki čas šmrkao burmuticu kao da u njoj nalazi nove interesantne teme.
32. Kapetana kao da neka ledena ruka ščepa za srce, ali ta ruka isto tako naglo popusti, jer on u isti mah opazi kako se preko ćuprije kreće jedan čovek u prostom vojničkom odelu, a bez desne noge i leve ruke.
33. Svaki čas zapitkivaše koga po štogod; obrtaše se neprestano, kao da ga cela snaga svrbi pa ne zna odakle da se počne češati; ulažao u staničnu gostionicu i čisto kao da će odocniti usplahireno istrčavaše ponovo napolje, upirući pogled daleko preko mirne Save.
34. Od tada nijedan predlog koji sam dao na sastanku gradske skupštine nije propadao, ali sam bio veoma oprezan i ništa nisam preduzimao dok se ne bih uverio da idem pravim putem.
35. Pre nego se aplauz stižao predsednik, koji je ujedno bio i gradonačelnik, pristupio mi je i upitao ne bi li želeo da kažem koju reč ovom velikom skupu učenog sveta ovog grada.
36. Kenig je pogledao na svoj sat kao da se iznenada setio nekog važnog sastanka, okrenuo se i otišao bez uobičajenog naklona i pozdrava. Njegov nacionalni ponos bio je, očigledno, povređen.
37. Sistem vuče na njujorškoj podzemnoj železnici je praktično isti onaj koji je bio predložen Parsonu, glavnom inženjeru, i on ga je prihvatio nekoliko godina posle 1893. godine kada smo zajedno putovali u Njujork.
38. U brzom vozu koji me je opet vodio rodnom mestu, nisam se osvrtao ni desno ni levo, na reke i polja, na gradove i sela, na zaposlene ljude na zlatnim poljima koji su sakupljali letinu.
39. Većina bi ih bila eliminisana iz američkih koledža ako bi se tamo upisali, ukoliko ne bi promenili svoj izgled i svoje ponaimanje. O sebi su, međutim, imali visoko mišljenje.
40. Nikada nisam sumnjao u to da se sposobnost Amerikanaca za prilagođavanje svim prilikama mora pripisati u velikoj meri i tome što se oni još iz mladih dana vežbaju u svim manuelnim radovima.
41. Kada sam skoro dospeo do telesne garde brucoša u sredini, nestrpljiv i željan da se priključim odbrani šta, jedan brucioš druge godine po imenu Frenk Henri, zgrabio me je i povukao natrag govoreći da nemam šta da tražim ovde jer sam sudijsku liniju prešao suviše kasno. Nisam poznao pravila igre i mi se povukosmo u stranu i uhvatismo u koštac.

42. Samo čvrsta vera u boga i uverenje da će uslišiti molitve moje majke, dala mi je snage da savladam strah i da se hrabro suočim sa strahotama razbesnelog okeana.
43. I još danas mi je pred očima slika njegove glave bez kose i divnog čela nad gustim obrvama kroz koje su svetlucale njegove duboke utonule oči, svetleći kao mesec kroz iglice starog bora.
44. Osećao sam kao da me je ovaj čin ponovo vratio u ono duševno stanje u kome sam bio nekada u Idvoru. Kada sam to saopštio majci, ona mi je odgovorila da je i želela da tako bude, da Idvor ne misli da sam se otuđio i pogospodio.
45. Sećajući se obećanja koje sam dao majci da ću se oženiti samo Amerikankom, rekao sam svojoj gazdarici:
9. - Nikad! Ja sam već dao svoju reč jednoj koja mi je bliža srcu, nego što bi to mogla biti bilo koja pruska lepotica.”
46. Pitao sam ih, kao u šali, šta bi oni radili kad bih se ja oženio njome, šta bi rekla naša mati na sve to, itd., itd. Pismo je bilo napisano pola u šali pola u istini, ili, bolje reći, tako da sam se ja u svako doba mogao povući i kazati im da je to sve šala i da sam ih ja hteo malo poplašiti.
47. Iznenadena gomila okupila se oko kapije, a stariji seljaci koji su sa mnom išli u školu u detinjstvu, upitali su me da li je telegram zaista došao iz Amerike. Kada sam im potvrdno odgovorio i podvukao da je poslat još toga jutro, oni su se zgledali kao da jedan drugog upozoravaju da paze da im ne podvalim nekom američkom dosetkom.
48. Ne samo da je vrlo slikovito opisivao šta se zbivalo u Austriji i Rusiji u vreme Napoleonovih ratova, u kojima je i sam učestvovao, nego je očaravao svoje slušaoce pričama o austrijskim pohodima protiv Fridriha Velikog o kojima mu je pričao njegov otac po povratku sa ratovanja u Šleziji.
49. Kada smo se približili Idvoru, zamolio sam ih da pođu zaobilaznim putem i da me provedu kroz idvorske pašnjake i vinograde, gde sam proveo svoje najsrećnije dane detinjstva. Tamo, kao u snu, video sam dečake kako posmatraju svoja krda volova tačno onako kako sam i ja to činio, i igrali su iste igre kao i mi nekada. Vinogradi, letnje nebo iznad njih, reka Tamiš u daljini, gde sam učio da plivam i ronim, sveje bilo isto kao nekad.
50. Kada sam Lukaniću kazao kako se zovem, on me upita za ime mog oca, a kad mu rekoh da se zvao Kosta i da je živio u Idvoru, u Banatu, njegove oči zasjaše od radosti. Prigrli me i jedna velika suza kliznu niz njegov obraz. “Ko će kao bog!” - reče radosno. Onda mi ispriča kako se pre trideset godina sprijateljio sa mojim ocem i da je često bio gost u našoj kući, kada god bi ga njegova torbarska putovanja nanosila u Idvor. Zamoli me da iduće nedelje dođem da ručam sa njegovom porodicom.

51. Oh, bože, šta to sve вреди? Ma šta ja radio, mene je ipak bila ponela, celoga ponela ta misao. Ja sam ogledao da je se otarasim, ali sam se opet, grčevito i veselo koprcajući se, predavao njoj, pokrivaio se njom i uvijao u nju, kao ono što golišava deca skaču u hladan krevet i živo sa uzvicima uvijaju se u pokrivač.

Task 2. Please translate the following text into English.

U tom času se stariji par putnika uključio u razgovor sa visokim činovnikom o malo posle zlatom opšiveni službenik me obavestio da je moja karta od Beča do Praga plaćena i da mogu tim kraćim putem odmah nastaviti put. Onaj grubi kondukter koji me je malo, pre toga nazvao srpskim svinjarom, odveo me je do voza i učtivo mi pokazao mesto u prvoj klasi. Uskoro je i stariji par putnika ušao u isti kupe, pozdravljajući se sa mnom vrlo prijateljski, gotovo na dirljiv način. Kazali su mi da se raskomotim i skinem svoj kožuh i da ne brinem o svojim torbama kojima ovde ne pretili opasnost. Ispričao sam im šta me je poteralo u Prag, ističući posebno, mišljenje raznih ljudi da sam ne samo prerastao školu u svom rodnom mestu već i u Pančevu, ali da je glavni razlog bio taj što me mađarske vlasti nisu želele u Pančevu zbog mog naginjanja revolucionarnom nacionalizmu. Moji novi prijatelji su se na to značajno pogledali i nešto su rekli na jeziku koji nisam razumeo. Objasnili su mi da su govorili engleski i da su Amerikanci.

(Source: Mihajlo Pupin, *Sa pašnjaka do naučenjaka*)

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Task 2a. Please analyze the difference in meaning and the potential distribution of the following words: *gilded* vs *golden* vs *gold*. Also consider the different types of speech.

Task 2b. Consider the following possible translations of a segment from the very first sentence of this brief text. If both are possible, please explain why and determine the orientation time for both.

the ticket from Vienna to Prague had been paid for _____

the ticket from Vienna to Prague was paid for _____

Task 2c. Please write down all the synonyms for the word *rough*, as it pertains to both the behaviour of people and as it pertains to physical material. Please consider the overlaps and the differences in distribution patterns.

Task 2d. As translators, do we translate specific terms characteristic for the source language culture (such as *kožuš* in this example) when translating into the target language? If we do so, how does that process take place? If we do not, do we ever use italics in such situations?

Task 3a. What is the difference in meaning between the following phrases:

posted in Hamburg

posted from Hamburg

postmarked Hamburg

Task 3b. Please list as many verbs as you can that begin with the prefix *out-* or *over-* and their corresponding antonyms.

Task 3c. How many different verbs can you list that make suitable collocations with the noun *idea(s)*? Please provide a list. In particular, can you think of a collocation or expression that might mean *agree on*?

Task 3d. Provide a list of all the verbs you know to begin with the prefix *en-* or merely begin with these two letters.

Task 3e. Please provide as extensive a list as you can of the possible synonyms for the adjective *vast*.

Task 3f. What are some of the possible synonyms for the noun *accolades*, and which verbs form collocations with them?

Task 3g. One of the sentences in the text requires that one of its dependent clauses begin with the *after*. Can you determine the correct tense form that needs to be found both in the dependent clause as well as the matrix clause? Can you determine the orientation time? Is the temporal relation between these two tense forms one of simultaneity, anteriority, or posteriority?

Task 4. Please translate the following text into English.

P r iznao sam da zaista postoji osnovna razlika među ovim školama, ukoliko je Kirhof glavni predstavnik nemačke škole. A u isto vreme, na najblaži mogući način, napomenuo sam, da po mom skromnom mišljenju, ta razlika ide u korist engleske škole. Istina je da nisam dovoljno poznao materiju da bih dao takvo mišljenje, ali sam tako postupio jer sam se smatrao izazvanim. Kenig je pocrveneo od ljutine i ko zna do kakvih reči bi došlo da u tom trenutku nije stupio u moju sobu sam Helmholtz, kao da je iznikao iz zemlje. On je bio na svom uobičajenom obilasku svojih studenata - istraživača, da bi ustanovio kako napreduju u radu. I Kenig i ja smo izgledali zbunjeni, pokazujući da smo bili prekinuti u žučnoj verbalnoj diskusiji, što je Helmholtz zapazio.

(Source: Mihajlo Pupin, *Sa pašnjaka do naučenjaka*)

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Task 4a. Which of the two following possible translations of a segment of the very first sentence would you think more accurate and why? Please explain.

of the German school

of a German school

Task 4b. A different type of reporting verb should be used for each instance of represented speech in this text. Please list all of them and classify them based on whether they convey the way in which the reported words were uttered, or whether they convey the stance of the reporting speaker.

Task 4c. Please consider the following two translation options and indicate which would be the more accurate option. Please explain why and identify the orientation times.

as if he had sprouted _____

as if he sprouted _____

Task 4d. Are there any examples of emphatic structures in the text, and if so, which ones?

Task 4e. Please list as many different idiomatic expressions as you can referring to anger. Also provide a graded scale of adjectives which reflect the extent to which someone can experience anger.

Task 5. Please translate the following text into English.

A li kada je kriza prošla i moj lekar smatrao da sam dovoljno jak da podnesem udar teške novosti, saopštio mi je da je moja žena umrla pre nekoliko dana kao žrtva iste bolesti. Ona se zarazila ovom nemilosrdnom bolešću lečeći me. Moje oslabljeno srce izdržalo je šok, ali su mi nervi popustili. Prvi put sam u životu shvatio smisao snage volje. Shvatio sam ga jer sam znao da više nije bilo one duševne snage koju sam uvek osećao. Prvi put, od momenta kada sam napustio svoj rodni Idvor, pre dvadeset i šest godina, trebalo mi je da me neko vodi i da me čuva. Život mi nikad nije izgledao tako beznadežan kao tog strašnog proleća 1896. godine. Ali želeo sam da živim jer sam imao malu ćerku koju je trebalo odgojiti. Ovo je, u stvari, bilo jedino zbog čega sam želeo da živim. Sve drugo izgubilo je za mene interes, ili mi je bilo suviše daleko da bih ga domašio.

(Source: Mihajlo Pupin, *Sa pašnjaka do naučenjaka*)

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Task 5a. A case could be made that as many as seven distinct past perfect tense forms could be found in the translated version of the text. Are you able to identify all of them? Are you able to identify their related orientation times? And are you able to reconstruct the chronological order of situations, as they unfolded? Room for the first seven have been provided for you.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Task 5b. Please provide a list of all the verbs that collocate with the noun *news*.

Task 5c. Please provide as many synonyms as you can for the noun *condition* (as it pertains to someone's state of health).

Task 6a. Please find examples of the following in your translation:

- a combination of a past simple tense and a past continuous tense that was ongoing when the past simple tense ‘interrupted it’

-
-
- reported speech with an introductory reporting verb in the past simple tense and subsequent use of the past perfect tense (two instances)

-
-
- an example of a cleft sentence and an accompanying past perfect tense
-
-

Task 6b. Based on these responses, organize the events, activities, and situations outlined in the text in chronological, sequential order. The first one has been done for you. Please list as many as you can find (the list of five items may not be exhaustive).

1. the author is pondering a piece of information

2.

3.

4.

5.

Task 6c. Are there any examples of emphatic structures in the text? If so, which syntactic structures have been used to convey this particular effect?

Task 6d. What are all the possible synonyms of the verb *think* that you can list? How do they differ in terms of the amount of effort included in the activity and how do they differ in terms of register?

Task 6e. What differentiates the following two words: *advise* vs *advice*? What parts of speech do they belong to? If one of them is a verb, is it transitive or intransitive? What is its paradigm? What are all the possible words that can be derived from both?

Task 6f. While translating the text in task one, you will find yourself in the position to have to determine whether to use the noun phrase *the father* or the noun phrase *my father*. What is the implied difference in meaning between the two? Which one do you think more suited to the text and why? Do pragmatic factors play a role in your decision, or is it purely a choice made based on formal syntactic features?

Task 6g. What, if any, is the difference in meaning between the following two verbs: *to part* vs *to part ways*? Which would you find to be more suited to the given context? What are some of the collocations you may know that are related to these verbs?

Task 6h. What is the difference in meaning between the following two nouns: *pier* vs *dock*? Can you think of any other synonyms? Can you think of any other words or expressions linked to this particular semantic field? Which of the two do you think would be best suited to the text at hand?

Task 6i. What is the difference in meaning between the following two nouns: *feeling* vs *premonition*? What kind of connotations do you associate with these words? Can you think of any other synonyms? Can you think of any other words or expressions linked to this particular semantic field? Which of the two do you think would be best suited to the text at hand?

Task 6j. What, if any, is the difference in meaning between the following two verbs: *come back to* and *go back to*? Which would you find to be more suited to the given context? What are some of the collocations you may know that are related to these verbs? What would be some of the single-word verb counterparts for each of the two verbs?

Task 6k. Which other expressions do you know to be synonymous to that of *to till the land*? What other synonyms could you provide for the noun *land*? What are all the different contexts that they can be used in and what are the differences in meaning between them?

Task 6l. What are all the possible synonyms of the noun *burden*, and what are all the verbs that you can think of that collocate with this noun? In which instances is the sense physical, and in which instances metaphorical?

Task 6m. What are all the possible translation equivalents of the verb *osloboditi*? And what are all the potential derivations related to them?

Task 7a. Please provide a list of all the instances of reported speech in the translated version of your text:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Task 7b. Please discuss the difference in meaning that results from using the following tense forms in the translation of the very first sentence of the text:

visited _____

would visit _____

had visited _____

Task 7c. Is the text narrated from the point of view of anteriority, posteriority, or implied simultaneity? How can we tell, i.e., what is the orientation time?

Task 7d. Where in the translated version of the text can you find evidence of these three temporal relations, if at all? How can we tell, i.e., what are the orientation times?

Task 7e. How would you define the difference between a *house* and a *home*?

Task 7f. What are all the possible synonyms for the nouns *house* and *home* and what are all the possible ways we can refer to the people living in them? Try to provide at least four of each and explain which context we would come across each one in.

Task 7g. What are some of the possible synonyms for the noun *bewilderment*, and what would the adjectives derivationally linked to them be?

Task 7h. What are some nouns that can be used to refer to young boys of a particular age, and to young boys based on their level of impertinence? Note whether these terms have a positive or negative connotation.

Task 7i. Name all the possible situations where we are allowed/required to use inversion in the English language (name at least two), and conversely, when we are not (name at least one).

Task 7j. Name as many possible looks you could give a person as you can (take into consideration both more pleasant and less pleasant connotations). Additionally, name as many verbs as you can that collocate with the names of looks that you have listed.

Task 7k. What is the general stance on translating / not translating names from Serbian into English? When is it obligatory, and when is it optional? Also, please consider whether or not it is possible to retain inflectional suffixes from the source language when translating into the target language.

Task 7l. A different type of reporting verb should be used for each instance of represented speech in this text. Please list all of them and classify them based on whether they convey the way in which the reported words were uttered, or whether they convey the stance of the reporting speaker.

Task 7m. Please make a list of all the phrasal verbs that you opted to use in your translation of the text and provide their more formal single-word correspondents.

Task 8. Please translate the following text into English.

Jedno večer "Vilina" majka me je upitala kako je moja majka zamišljala moju budućnost. Sećajući se njenih napomena o duhovnoj ulozi američkih žena na mladu generaciju, vatreno sam opisivao svoju majku, a završio sam priču njenim rečima da ne očekuje da ja postanem američki farmer, već da želi da učim u Americi ono što nisam mogao naučiti u svom rodnom selu i u svojoj seljačkoj zemlji. Nju je sve ovo jako dirnulo i onda mi je jednostavnim i svečanim rečima otkrila istinu koju nikad neću zaboraviti a ta je da Amerika pruža jednake mogućnosti svima, da svaki Pojedinaac mora tražiti ove mogućnosti i biti spreman da ih iskoristi kada mu se ukažu. Toplo mi je preporučila da iskoristim sve mogućnosti koje mi se pružaju na farmi i savetovala me da pođem i tražim nove. "Vila" se složila sa svojom majkom i ja sam spremio svoje stvari i otišao sa gostoljubivih obala Delavera.

(Source: Mihajlo Pupin, *Sa pašnjaka do naučenjaka*)

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Task 8a. How would you go about translating the following segment of the first sentence (in terms of which question word you would use, as well as which tense form)? What is the orientation time that will help you make the accurate decision?

what my mother's plans were _____

what my mother's plans had been _____

how my mother planned _____

how my mother had planned _____

Task 8b. How would you continue the following sentences, based on the source text? Are they all viable options?

the spiritual impact that American women _____

the spiritual impact of American women _____

the spiritual role that American women _____

the spiritual role of American women _____

Task 8c. What are some of the synonyms you know for the adverb *fervently*? How does it differ in terms of meaning and distributional patterns in comparison to *warmly*?

Task 8d. Which is the more accurate translation of the two following options and why, based on the source text?

to become an American farmer _____

to become the American farmer _____

Task 8e. Please list all the idiomatic expressions that you know which contain the noun *truth* or whose meaning refers to telling or concealing the truth, as well as a list of all the verbs that collocate with the same noun.

Task 8f. Which of the following two options is more accurate based on the source text? What is the orientation time?

she had recommended _____

she recommended _____

Task 8g. Provide a list of all the verbs that collocate with the noun *opportunity(ies)*.

Task 9a. How many different instances of emphasis can you identify in the text, and what were the syntactic structures used to achieve this effect?

Task 9b. How many instances of hypothetical situations can you identify in the text? And which conditional sentence is used to convey such situations?

Task 9c. What is the difference in meaning between the words *emigrate* and *immigrate*?

Task 9d. Which of the following translation equivalents is the more accurate one? What are the relevant orientation times?

as I was at the time _____

as I had been at the time _____

Task 9e. Please provide as many synonyms you can for the noun *money* and explain the different contexts in which they occur and the differences between them.

Task 9f. What would be the difference in meaning between the nouns *piece* and *slice*? Please list as many partitive expressions that you can think of that are related to food.

Task 9g. Please provide as many synonyms as you can for the noun *survival*. Also provide all the related derivations.

Task 9h. List as many idiomatic expressions as you can which either include the noun *luck* or referring to having or not having any luck. Also, provide all the related derivations for the noun *luck*.

Task 9i. Please write out all the words derivationally linked to the noun *fortune*, as well as any verbs that you know to collocate with that noun.

Task 9j. Please provide as many synonyms of the adjective *broke* (in the meaning of having no money). Consider the role that register plays in determining the synonyms.

Task 9k. Please consider which of the two alternatives would be the more accurate option and consider the orientation time for both.

if he had decided to forge his own way _____

if he decided to forge his own way _____

Task 9l. Please provide all the derivations related to the verb *forge*. Also, please provide the synonyms for all the nouns you can identify and determine their potential collocations.

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**A PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH TENSES:
BUILDING ACCURACY IN SERBIAN TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION**

Publisher

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF NIŠ

For the Publisher

Natalija Jovanović, PhD, Dean

Publishing Unit Coordinator

Sanja Ignjatović, PhD, Vice-Dean for Science and Research

Proofreading

Ana Kocić Stanković, PhD

Technical Editorial Office

Darko Jovanović (Cover Design Assistance)

Milan D. Randelović (Technical Editing)

Publishing Unit (Digital Publishing)

Format

17 x 24

Circulation

20 copies

Press

UNIGRAF X-COPY, Niš

Niš, 2025

ISBN 978-86-7379-669-7

CIP - Каталогизација у публикацији
Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

811.111'255(075.8)

811.111'366.58(075.8)

VELIČKOVIĆ, Marta, 1981-

A practical introduction to English tenses :
building accuracy in Serbian to English
translation / Marta Veličković. - Niš : Faculty of
Philosophy, 2025 (Niš : Unigraf x-copy).

- 170 str. : graf. prikazi ; 24 cm

Tiraž 20. - Bibliografija: str. 165-170.

ISBN 978-86-7379-669-7

a) Енглески језик - Превођење b) Енглески
језик - Глаголска времена

COBISS.SR-ID 170253577