



THE CATEGORY OF ASPECT IN ENGLISH GRAMMAR

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ABSTRACT

The actuality of this article lies on the implementation of the latest reforms in the system of education, particularly in teaching foreign languages and preparing competent language teachers for every branch of education. Writing this article also will be my contribution to the development of science and innovative technologies.

Keywords: aspect, English grammar, aspectuality, scientific grammar, internal temporal structure, grammar, temporal structure, grammatical aspectual distinctions, particles, separate verbs, verb phrases, perfective–imperfective distinction, perfect and imperfect verb forms, neutral, progressive, perfective, progressive perfective, English linguistics, continuity, progressiveness, completion, resultativity, instantaneousness, lexico-grammatical meaning, continuous and the non-continuous forms, ingressive aspect, durative aspect, terminative aspect, effective aspect, iterative aspect, indefinite aspect, syntagmatic semes, habituality.

Introduction

The aim of this article is a closer examination of aspectuality in English, that is to say, to thoroughly investigate the theme "Aspect" and reveal its specific grammatical, pragmatic, stylistic, lexical and semantic peculiarities. It highlights the importance of a category which has merely barely received attention in the study of the English language. There is a closely connection between the category of 'aspect' and tense, because it provides important information about the internal temporal structure of situations. However, it is often less familiar to speakers of the English language, referring to, among others, the works of Comrie, Brinton, Binnick and Kortmann. According to their studies, English lacks formal markers of aspect, whereas the realization of tense in English is quite obvious and thus much discussed.

Aspect in the English language has been described through different categories and terminologies, which might lead teachers and students into some



misunderstandings. Considering the importance of understanding the systematic representation of this concept in learning a foreign language, I review and compare the various ways aspect is presented in some descriptive English grammar books. Besides that to state the practical use of the theme I have addressed to internet sources and modern books on teaching English.

The function of Aspect and its usage and comparison with other languages

In English grammar, aspect is a verb form (or category) that indicates time-related characteristics (A. M. Peshkovsky puts it, “the distribution of the action in time”, or the “temporal structure” of the action), such as the completion, duration, or repetition of an action, to be exact, a grammatical category that expresses how an action, event, or state, denoted by a verb, extends over time. The term 'aspect' (was introduced "at the beginning of the nineteenth century) comes from Latin (the root of the term is **spect** from **spectare-**“ to see”), meaning "**how [something] looks**" (Boogaart, 2004). In English, aspect is expressed by means of particles, separate verbs, and verb phrases.

As this concept is considered as a new one in English grammar, it would be impossible to learn it not comparing to other languages. Different languages make different grammatical aspectual distinctions; some (such as Standard German) do not make any. The marking of aspect is often conflated with the marking of tense and mood. Aspectual distinctions may be restricted to certain tenses: in Latin and the Romance languages, for example, the perfective–imperfective distinction is marked in the past tense, by the division between preterits and imperfects. Explicit consideration of aspect as a category first arose out of study of the Slavic languages; here verbs often occur in pairs, with two related verbs being used respectively for imperfective and perfective meanings.

The concept of grammatical aspect should not be confused with perfect and imperfect verb forms; the meanings of the latter terms are somewhat different, and in some languages, the common names used for verb forms may not follow the actual aspects precisely.

Looking at the notion of aspect in more detail, I find out its use in early history. The Indian linguist Yaska (7th century BCE) dealt with grammatical aspect, distinguishing actions that are processes (bhāva), from those where the action is considered as a completed whole (mūrta). This is the key distinction between the imperfective and perfective. Yaska also applied this distinction to a verb versus an action nominal.



Grammarians of the Greek and Latin languages also showed an interest in aspect, but the idea did not enter into the modern Western grammatical tradition until the 19th century via the study of the grammar of the Slavic languages. The earliest use of the term recorded in the Oxford English Dictionary dates from 1853.

Sometimes, English has a lexical distinction where other languages may use the distinction in grammatical aspect. For example, the English verbs "to know" (the state of knowing) and "to find out" (knowing viewed as a "completed action") correspond to the imperfect and perfect forms of the equivalent verbs in French and Spanish, "savoir" and "saber". This is also true when the sense of verb "to know" is "to know somebody", in this case opposed in aspect to the verb "to meet" (or even to the construction "to get to know"). These correspond to imperfect and perfect forms of "conocer" in Spanish. In German, on the other hand, the distinction is also lexical (as in English) through verbs "kennen" and "kennenlernen", although the semantic relation between both forms is much more straightforward since "kennen" means "to know" and "lernen" means "to learn".

The Germanic languages combine the concept of aspect with the concept of tense. Although English largely separates tense and aspect formally, its aspects (neutral, progressive, perfective, progressive perfective, and [in the past tense] habitual) do not correspond very closely to the distinction of perfective vs. imperfective that is found in most languages with aspect. Furthermore, the separation of tense and aspect in English is not maintained rigidly. One instance of this is the alternation, in some forms of English, between sentences such as "Have you eaten?" and "Did you eat?".

Disagreement among scientists about the category of Aspect

The analysis of aspect has proven to be one of the most complex areas of English linguistics: the four correlated forms, the indefinite, the continuous, the perfect, and the perfect continuous, have been treated by different scholars as tense forms, as aspect forms, as forms of mixed tense-aspect status, and as neither tense nor aspect forms, but as forms of a separate grammatical category.

The study of it has been likened to a dark and savage forest full of "obstacles, pitfalls, and mazes which have trapped most of those who have ventured into this much explored but poorly mapped territory." Tense is perhaps equally confusing, but at least it is a well-known traditional area with concepts intuitively clear to



speakers of the familiar Western European languages. Whatever tense, or the tenses, may be, speakers have some sort of notions about them: it is satisfying, for example, to consider the past tense to express past time. But aspect is not a traditional concept in the same way, and speakers of most European languages have no very clear notions concerning it. Nonetheless, it is equal in importance to tense for the purpose of understanding how temporal relations are expressed in language.

Aspect is often confused with the closely related concept of tense, because they both convey information about time. However, rather than locating an event or state in time, the way tense does, aspect describes "the internal temporal constituency of a situation", or in other words, aspect is a way "of conceiving the flow of the process itself". That is to say, while tense relates the time of referent to some other time, commonly the speech event, aspect conveys other temporal information, such as duration, completion, or frequency, as it relates to the time of action. Thus tense refers to temporally when while aspect refers to temporally how. Aspect can be said to describe the texture of the time in which a situation occurs, such as a single point of time, a continuous range of time, a sequence of discrete points in time and so on, whereas tense indicates its location in time. For example, consider the following sentences: "I eat", "I am eating", "I have eaten", and "I have been eating". All are in the present tense, indicated by the present-tense verb of each sentence (eat, am, and have). Yet since they differ in aspect each conveys different information or points of view as to how the action pertains to the present.

Aspect deals with the placement of an action with regards to time and not necessarily the actual time the action occurs, unlike tense. It is all about the complement of an action that the verbal group describes. Note that the verbal group that can indicate tense, aspect, agreement and mood is finite in nature; and the first element in the verbal group selects for tense (usually the non-modal and modal auxiliaries) while the main verb selects for aspect. Under aspect scholars understand a mode (a phase) of an action, that is, continuity, progressiveness, completion, resultativity, instantaneousness, etc.).

The following problems are open to discussion here: 1. Some scholars don't recognize the existence of this category in English. They hold that aspectual relations of completeness/ incompleteness, continuity, resultativity are expressed contextually by lexico-grammatical means. The continuous and perfect forms are treated as tenses. 2. Those who recognize it find it either a logical or a



grammatical category. 3. Scholars who treat aspect as a logical category distinguish **5 aspects**. **The ingressive aspect** denotes the initial phase of an action (He went running. He started reading.). **The durative aspect** denotes a progressive action(He is eating). **The terminative aspect** represents an action as a finished whole (It hit the target). **The effective aspect** denotes the final point of an action (He has done it. He came running). **The iterative aspect** denotes repeated actions (He often gets sick. He would come here every day last month). Those who recognize aspect as a grammatical category distinguish either **3 aspects** {**the imperfect aspect** (He was doing it);**the perfect aspect**(He has done it); **the indefinite aspect**(He did it)} or 2 aspects(the common and the continuous). 4. Debated is the paradigmatic meaning of the continuous form. It is interpreted as duration or limited duration (Jespersen), simultaneity (Vorontsova), continuity within certain time limits (Ilyish), development(Bloch). 5. The category of aspect penetrates other verbal categories. The categories of tense and aspect are blended, they are inseparable and should be treated jointly. This view was advanced by professors Vorontsova and Ivanova. According to professors Barkhudarov, Smirnitsky, Ilyish tense and aspect are two distinct categories, tense showing the time of an action and aspect showing the development of an action.

Professors Smirnitsky, Barkhudarov, Ilyish, Khlebnikova find aspect to be a grammatical category based on the binary privative opposition of two forms: read-am reading , reads-is reading, has read- has been reading and so on, which represent **the common aspect** and **the continuous aspect**. M.Y. Bloch distinguished the aspectual category of development which is based on the opposition of **the continuous** and the **non-continuous** forms. The distinction between the continuous and the non-continuous forms can be neutralized (You are always complaining = you always complain). So, semantically, continuous forms are redundant. But, stylistically, they are of extreme importance, as they actively participate in the creation of sentential and textual emotiveness, expressiveness, intensiveness and evaluation (positive and negative).

The semantic content of continuous forms comes to be rather complex. We can distinguish in it the paradigmatic invariant seme of continuity and the syntagmatic semes of permanence, timelessness, futurity, emotiveness, intensiveness, expressiveness, evaluation.

Traditionally we name forms like “is writing”, “was writing” as the Present continuous and Past Continuous tense. Such terms do not seem to be satisfactory



from the theoretical point of view, because we deal not with different tenses in such oppositions.

The tense is the same in both marked and unmarked members of the opposition but in the marked member the basic tense category is modified by the additional category of aspect. If we agree that Present Continuous is a special tense form which is contrasted to the Present Indefinite tense, then we'll have to agree that continuous is another tense category and the action is developing in two different tenses – present and continuous – at once and that is hardly acceptable.

Hence, forms like “is writing” should be called the Present Tense of the Continuous aspect. Finally, it is necessary to say that continuous verb-forms are more expressive than non-continuous, and so they are very often used in colloquial speech or for stylistic purposes even with verbs which denote a process and are not usually used in the continuous aspect (love, like, understand etc).

That is to say, there are some verbs in English that do not normally occur with progressive aspect, even in those contexts in which the majority of verbs necessarily take the progressive form. Among the so-called ‘non-progressive’ verbs are think, understand, know, hate, love, see, taste, feel, possess, own, etc. The most striking characteristic that they have in common is the fact that they are ‘stative’ - they refer to a state of affairs, rather than to an action, event or process. It should be observed, however, that all the ‘non--progressive’ verbs take the progressive aspect under particular circumstances. As the result of internal transposition verbs of non-progressive nature can be found in the Continuous form: Now I'm knowing you.

Such forms as: “I'm loving you” (become stylistically marked and express a peculiar emotional state of the speaker).

I am not understanding you (some additional feelings are expressed).

To be exact, there are some factors in modern English which occasion the frequent usage of continuous forms. Important are artistic considerations, as continuous forms are more emphatic than non-continuous forms. There is psychological explanation of the growing usage of continuous forms. The British are becoming more impulsive, forgetting about their traditional reticence (suffice it to remember about the aggressiveness of British football fans). Continuous forms are more frequent in the speech of females. As a result of semantic disagreement between the non-dynamic meaning of the verb and the dynamic meaning of a continuous form a grammatical metaphor is being born which makes discourse more dynamic, emotive, evaluatory (I'm not listening, I'm not



seeing, I'm not feeling. I'm falling in love with you again). In artistic texts authors most often impart dynamism to normally undynamic verbs (Now he was remembering everything. Is she still liking England? Loving it). Continuous forms participate in the creation of an ironic effect, which is based upon contrasts and contradictions (You are being very charitable today). A person, normally, cannot be charitable for a very limited period of time.

Furthermore, there are also debates about the perfect form. There are several interpretations of the perfect form. 1. According to the tense view, the perfect is a peculiar tense form (H. Sweet, O. Jespersen, M. Ganshina, G. Curme, M. Bryant, Yu. Korsakov,). It is an anterior tense which coexists with the other primary expressions of time (Present, Past and Future) (I shall have done it by 5 o'clock). 2. According to the aspect view, the perfect is an aspect (Nestfield, West, Deutschbein). It is treated as the aspect of completion or the aspect of succession. 3. According to the tense-aspect blend view, the perfect is recognized as a form of double temporal- aspective character (I. P. Ivanova). 4. According to the time correlation view, the perfect form builds up its own category, different from tense and aspect. A Perfect form, representing the category of correlation, is polysemantic. It has a semantic structure constituted by the paradigmatic meaning of precedence and variable syntagmatic meanings which can be revealed combining the contextual analysis with the componential method {resultativity, completeness, successiveness, an implication for the future, repeatedness, retrospective conclusion (People have talked like that from time immemorial. Don't think it has been a happy marriage).

The meaning of the perfect depends on several factors. One of them is the meaning of the verb. Verbs can be durative and terminative. Durative verbs denote an action that goes on indefinitely (to go, to walk, to love, to dislike, to speak); terminative verbs denote an action reaching a limit (to come, to close, to bring, to lose to break).

Nevertheless, some linguists disagree as to the category of time correlation the 'perfect' belongs to. Some Russian authors (Ilyish, Vorontsova) think that it forms part of the aspect system (Ilyish calls it the 'resultative' aspect, Vorontsova - the 'transmissive' aspect. This point of view is shared by quite a number of grammarians both in our country and abroad.

Other linguists treat the 'perfect' as belonging to the system of tense. Ivanova regards the 'perfect' as part of the 'tense aspect' system. The first to draw attention to the fact that opposemes like writes - has written, wrote - had written



and so on represent a grammatical category different from that of tense was A.I. Smirnitsky. If we take a close look at the 'perfect', we can say that the 'perfect' serves to express priority, whereas the non-perfect member of the opposeme leaves the action unspecified to its being prior or not to another action, situation or point of time. Smirnitsky calls the category represented by writes-has written the category of time correlation.

"Traditionally, both aspects [perfect and progressive] are treated as part of the tense system in English, and mention is made of tenses such as the present progressive (e.g. We are waiting), the present perfect progressive (e.g. We have been waiting), and the past perfect progressive (e.g. We had been waiting), with the latter two combining two aspects. There is a distinction to be made, however, between tense and aspect. Tense is concerned with how time is encoded in the grammar of English, and is often based on morphological form (e.g. write, writes, wrote); aspect is concerned with the unfolding of a situation, and in English is a matter of syntax, using the verb be to form the progressive, and the verb have to form the perfect. For this reason combinations like those above are nowadays referred to as constructions (e.g. the progressive construction, the present perfect progressive construction)."

-present perfect progressive: God knows how long I've been doing it. Have I been talking out loud?

-past perfect progressive: He had been keeping it in a safety deposit box at the Bank of America. For months she had been waiting for that particular corner location.

"The perfect aspect most often describes events or states taking place during a preceding time. The progressive aspect describes an event or state of affairs in progress or continuing. Perfect and progressive aspect can be combined with either present or past tense...Verb phrases can be marked for both aspects (perfect and progressive) at the same time: The perfect progressive aspect is rare, occurring usually in the past tense in fiction. It combines the meaning of the perfect and the progressive, referring to a past situation or activity that was in progress for a period of time.

Primary aspects

Actually, there are various point of view about the types of Aspect. Let`s begin from the widely spread one.



There are two types of aspect in English: **the perfect** (sometimes called perfective) and the **progressive**, also known as the continuous form (Greenbaum,1996).

The Perfective Aspect

The perfect aspect describes events occurring in the past, but linked to a later time, usually the present. It most often describes events or states taking place during a preceding time. Perfect aspect is concerned with the speaker's perspective on the relationship between one time frame and an event that takes place in another time frame. An event which took place in the past may be seen as relevant to the present moment. Likewise, an event due to take place in the future may be seen as linked to the present moment. This type deals with the verbal groups which have the forms of 'have + verb (past participle); that is, have/has/has plus the perfective form of the verb. In other words, Perfective Aspect is always indicated by HAVE + LEXICAL VERB +-ED/-EN. Under the perfective aspect, we have two sub-types:

- the present perfective aspect (has/have + verb (past participle) and
- the past perfective aspect (had + verb (past participle)).

Examples of Present Perfective Aspect:

The boy has eaten his food.
John and Joe have eaten the food.
I have given him the letter.
We have submitted the forms.
She has seen the teacher
It has disappeared.
I have eaten breakfast.
They have broken the curfew
He has mended his shoes.

Sometimes, we can add modal auxiliaries. In this case, we have present modal perfective For ex.:

They may have arrived.
He could have travelled.
She must have gone by now.

Examples of Past Perfective Aspect:

Peter had eaten his food.
Jill and Scott had gone.



I had collected the key before he left.
We had submitted the forms earlier.
She had seen the principal.
The pen had disappeared.
I had eaten breakfast.
They had broken the curfew
He had mended his shoes.

We use perfect aspect to show that an action:

-is complete at the time of speaking. For ex:
I've finished the book. It was brilliant.
We've enjoyed having you all to stay.
Jo has borrowed the book, so I can't check now, I'm afraid.
-was complete at the time you are referring to. For ex:
Oh dear; I had forgotten my promise to Aunt Jane.
Sharon had lost her key, so she had to wait outside.
Sue had seen the film three times already, but she didn't mind.

The Progressive Aspect(also expanded, continuous)

The progressive aspect usually describes an event that takes place during a limited time period. It describes an event or state of affairs in progress or continuing. With the progressive aspect, the focus is principally on the duration of the event. It may therefore be used to indicate that something is ongoing, unfinished, or that it is extended but temporary. It may indicate that something is/was/will be in progress when something else happens/happened. In other words, the focus is not on the starting or finishing point of an event, but on the event as seen from its centre. Generally speaking, the Continuous form has at least two semantic features – duration (the action is always in progress) and definiteness (the action is always limited to a definite point or period of time).

This type deals with the verbal groups which comprise forms of the 'be-verb' + progressive form of the verb; that is, be, am, is, was, are, were, been, being plus the progressive form of the verb. Under the progressive aspect, we have two sub-types:

- the present progressive aspect (am/is/are + verb (progressive) and
- the past progressive aspect (was/were + verb (past participle)).

Examples of **Present Progressive Aspect:**

I am typing.
He is writing.



She is washing.

They are hunting.

Note again the possibility of adding modal auxiliary For ex.:

He may be driving.

She might be sleeping.

They could be coming.

Examples of **Past Progressive Aspect:**

I was typing.

He was writing.

She was washing.

They were hunting.

We use continuous aspect to show that an action:

-is going on at the time of speaking. For ex:

I'm having dinner at the moment. Can I call you back?

I know what you are doing!

Look! Someone's walking around in our garden!

-was going on throughout the time that you are referring to. For ex:

I was having dinner when he called.

I was waiting for her when she came out of the classroom.

We were driving home when we saw the accident.

-will be going on at the time that you are referring to. For ex:

We're going to Turkey for a holiday next year.

They're coming to us for Christmas this year.

Moreover, according to abovementioned point of view, these types can be used as a combination form. But it is not pointed as another type of aspect.

The perfect progressive aspect

Co-occurrence of the Perfective/Progressive Aspects

Verb phrases can be marked for both aspects (perfect and progressive) at the same time: The perfect progressive aspect is rare, occurring usually in the past tense in fiction. It combines the meaning of the perfect and the progressive, referring to a past situation or activity that was in progress for a period of time.

That is to say, perfect forms can express both the time (actions preceding a certain moment) and the way the action is shown to proceed (the connection of the action with the indicated moment in its results or consequences). So the meaning of the perfect forms is constituted by two semantic components:



temporal (priority) and aspective (result, current relevance). That is why perfect forms have been treated as tense-forms or aspect-forms.

The perfect progressive combines the perfect and the progressive to refer to the completed portion of a continuous action, with another words, the compound tenses are a combination of present or past tense (shown through an auxiliary verb) with continuous or perfect aspect. But when this happens, the progressive aspect always comes last. It is not possible for the perfective aspect to come after its progressive counterpart. Both the modal and non-modal or primary auxiliary come handy in this situation.

Present Tense, Progressive Aspect, Perfective

This can also be rendered as Present, **Progressive-Perfective**. For ex.:

The children have been crying all day.

He has been dreaming of travelling abroad.

She has been dying to meet the singer.

We have been coming a long way.

The plane has been hovering since morning.

I have been eating breakfast.

He has been mending shoes.

They have been breaking the curfew.

Past Tense, Progressive Aspect, Perfective

We can also have this as **Past, Progressive-Perfective**. For ex.:

The police had been marching since.

I had been writing with a special pen.

The ship had been sailing on the high seas.

They had been competing since their school days.

She had been singing for five years.

I had been eating breakfast.

He had been mending shoes.

They had been breaking the curfew.

Then, if it has present and past forms, the future form also should be mentioned.

Future Progressive (or Present progressive, Future time)

Future progressive verbs express actions that will begin in the future and be continuous. In future progressive, the main verb is paired with the future tense of the verb “to be” (will be) to show that the action will begin in the future. For ex:
I will be heading home around nine o'clock.



He will be traveling around the Yukon later this year.

Present Perfective Progressive, Future Time

Verbs in future perfect progressive express a continuous, completed action that will have taken place in the future. Use “will have been” combined with the -ing form of the main verb. For ex:

(If he is arrested today,) He will have been breaking the law (for six months).

By the time the winter ends, we will have been getting a foot of snow every week.

This spring, I will have been working for Cool Stuff for twenty years!

Past Perfective Progressive, future time, impossible condition

(If he were to be arrested today,) He would have been breaking the law (for six months).

The simple aspect

The second view point is that there are two main types of aspect, however, it is a little bit distinctive from the first one. They are Perfective and Imperfective aspects (Quirk et al, 1980). There is the concept of **imperfective aspect**. This perfective or imperfective point of view guides the basic categorization of aspect proposed by Comrie. And the main differences between perfective and imperfective forms could be explained, in terms of meaning, as it follows. The perfective aspect would indicate a look at the situation from outside, “presented as a complete event, without further subdivision into successive temporal phases,” such as in John read that book yesterday. So, the perfective would have the effect of reducing a situation into a blob, namely, the situation would be seen as a three-dimensional object with clearly circumscribed limits, although it might have internal complexity. On this note, Comrie clarifies: “it follows that perfectivity involves lack of explicit reference to the internal temporal constituency of a situation, rather than explicitly implying the lack of such internal temporal constituency.”

The other differences between Perfective and imperfective aspects are as follows:
-perfective aspect is used in referring to an event conceived as bounded and unitary, without reference to any flow of time during (“I helped him”) while imperfective aspect is used for situations conceived as existing continuously or repetitively as time flows (“I was helping him”; “I used to help people”).

-the perfective aspect looks at an event as a complete action, while the imperfective aspect views an event as the process of unfolding or a repeated or habitual event (thus corresponding to the progressive/continuous aspect for events of short-term duration and to habitual aspect for longer terms).

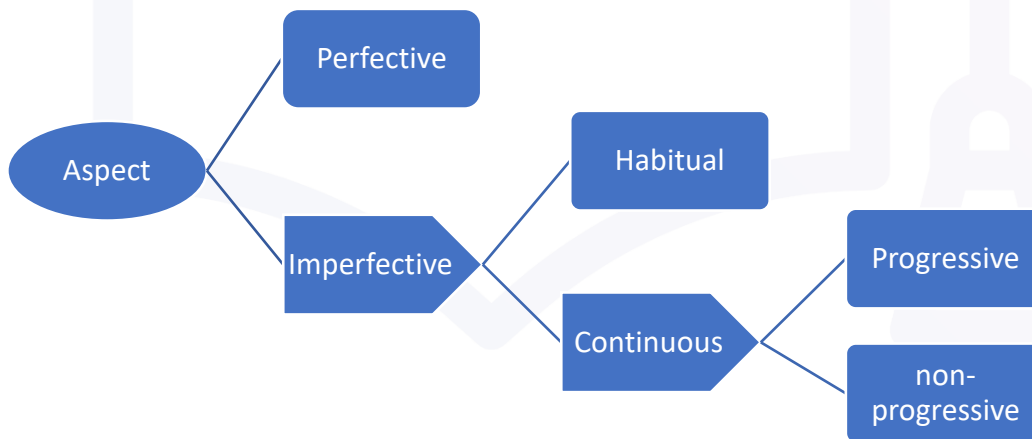
-Perfectivity indicates that entire situations are presented as a whole. That implies a person, who looks at the situation from the outside, without distinguishing any of its internal temporal structure. According to Comrie "the whole of the situation is presented as a single unanalysable whole, with beginning, middle, and end rolled into one; no attempt is made to divide this situation up into the various individual phases that make up the action of entry". The imperfective, on the other hand, provides an internal perspective that looks inside its internal temporal structure. When it comes to the aspectual viewpoint, Kibort (2008) suggests that "perfectivity and imperfectivity are not objective properties of situations, and so the same situation can be presented from either viewpoint." For ex:

1. John read that book yesterday::2. While he was reading the book, the postman came. (Kibort 2008)

Examples show the same situation presented with a difference in aspect. The first illustrates a perfective situation presented from external viewpoint, whereas the second depicts an imperfective situation presented from an internal viewpoint.

Comrie defines aspect as different views on the "internal temporal constituency" of a situation. He distinguishes between perfectivity and imperfectivity, subdivides imperfective meaning into **habitual** and **continuous** and the latter again into **non-progressive** and **progressive**.

To be exact:



Habituality "refers to situations which are characteristic of an extended period of time" The situation itself can therefore be seen as a "characteristic feature of a whole period". Habituality is one of the notions associated with Imperfectivity, although this concept is not explicitly mentioned in the grammar books. However, the internal constituency of a situation might also be highlighted



through the idea of continuity, as provided by the use of the progressive form in English, such as in "John is reading now". Comrie uses another definition for habituality which according to him exists when "the situation referred to is viewed not as an incidental property of the moment but, precisely, as a characteristic feature of a whole period." Thus it can be concluded that habitual situations need a high degree of regularity to be counted as habitual.

Further distinctions can be made, for example, to distinguish states and ongoing actions (continuous and progressive aspects) from repetitive actions (habitual aspect).

In describing longer time periods, English needs context to maintain the distinction between the habitual ("I called him often in the past" – a habit that has no point of completion) and perfective ("I called him once" – an action completed), although the construct "used to" marks both habitual aspect and past tense and can be used if the aspectual distinction otherwise is not clear.

In some sources habituality, which is considered as the sublevel of imperfective aspect by Comrie is pointed as one of the main types of aspects, naming Indefinite aspect (sometimes is called simple aspect).

The simple aspect -verbs in simple present describe a habitual action that still occurs in the present. For ex:

My dad always enjoys novels about bakeries.

Grandma drops me off at the bus stop every morning.

It is used to express a single action, a repeated action, or a permanent state.

Permanent state: David lives in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Repeated or habitual action: He runs every morning.

Single action: He graduated from the University of North Carolina.

It must be emphasized that this peculiar characterization that is Comrie's Aspect 'alternative' - is due to the fact that its comparative character sheds light on the meaning that underlies the different linguistic forms across languages.

In other words, Comrie presents the different aspectual meanings that might (or might not) be morphologically realized in various languages. In contrast, traditional descriptions of the English language usually offer restrict conceptual explanations induced by the linguistic forms adopted in such languages. Thus, Comrie's perspective on aspect may be approached as an alternative one when compared to explanations on aspectual meanings based exclusively on the English verb forms.



Nevertheless, although this perspective is portrayed as alternative in some materials, this typological study is recognized as a reference in different linguistic areas, since it pioneered comparative studies on aspect.

In other resources, it is distinguished four types of aspects. They are called "Verbal aspect". "Verbal aspect" refers to the timing of the verb. More specifically, it addresses whether the action occurs in a single block of time, continuously, or repetitively. All verbs have both tense and aspect. Verbal aspect consists of simple, progressive, perfect, or perfect progressive, where each refers to a different fabric of time.

"Aspect" refers to whether a verb is continuous, completed, both continuous and completed, or neither continuous nor completed. It gives us additional information about a verb by telling us whether the action was completed, continuous, neither, or both.

The simple aspect is for actions that are neither completed nor continuous.

For ex: I wash the car.

The perfect aspect is for actions that are completed, but not continuous.

For ex: I have washed the car

The progressive aspect is for actions that are continuous, but not completed.

For ex: I am washing the car.

The perfect progressive aspect is for actions that are both continuous and completed. For ex: I have been washing the car.

To be Exact:

Present simple (not progressive, not perfect): "I eat"

Present progressive (progressive, not perfect): "I am eating"

Present perfect (not progressive, perfect): "I have eaten"

Present perfect progressive (progressive, perfect): "I have been eating"

(While many elementary discussions of English grammar classify the present perfect as a past tense, it relates the action to the present time. One cannot say of someone now deceased that he "has eaten" or "has been eating". The present auxiliary implies that he is in some way present (alive), even if the action denoted is completed (perfect) or partially completed (progressive perfect).)

Aspects of the past tense:

Past simple (not progressive, not perfect): "I ate"

Past progressive (progressive, not perfect): "I was eating"

Past perfect (not progressive, perfect): "I had eaten"

Past perfect progressive (progressive, perfect): "I had been eating"



According to scientists who support this view, all verbs have both tense and aspect. Because there are three verb tenses and four verb aspects, there are twelve possible combinations of tense and aspect. We need tenses to know if an event took place in the past, present, or future, but that's not all we need in order to know what happened. It is realized through the opposition Continuous: Non-Continuous (Progressive::Non-Progressive). The realization of the category of aspect is closely connected with the lexical meaning of verbs.

Conclusion

By making a research and learning the aspect, I understood that teaching and learning process related to aspect in English as a foreign language has been considered a challenge for students. I have noticed that the concept of aspect has been didactically described and formulated in various ways, which makes the topic become even more complex. For this article, I reviewed and compared the various books presented aspect and its types and found out a few misunderstandings and controversial ideas made by grammarians. In the analysis, it comes into view that, although aspect is approached in a considerably comprehensive way in various grammar books, there is consistent variance in the categorization and terminology adopted by the authors which might cause confusion for students or teachers who use them. To sum up, I believe this contrastive analysis help to understand the aspect. Furthermore, this clarification might enable students and teachers of English as a foreign language to reflect more deeply upon aspect, comparing aspectual forms and meanings in English and in Uzbek.

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