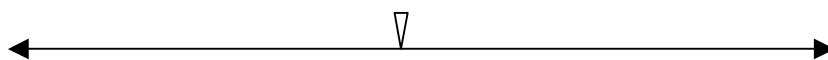


## 2. The semantic domain of the tense and the aspect

### 2.1 What is the tense? What does it mean to the use of the verb?



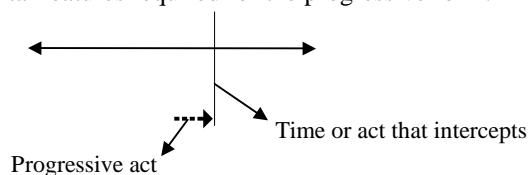
### 2.2 What is the aspect?

When we look at an action, an event, or a state of the verb, what do we “know” about the verb in question? For instance, when we see a dog “play” with a boy in the park, how many different “meanings” can this verb “play” represent considering all situations possible? Explain.

### 2.3 How to define the domain of each aspect specifically?

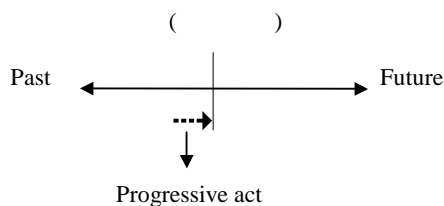
#### A. The progressive

The fundamental features required for the progressive form:



The five meanings related to the progressive aspect

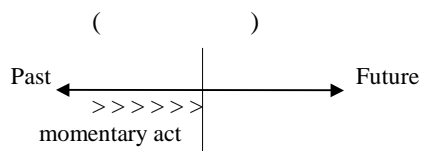
(1)



- Examples:**
- 1.1 The assistant *is still typing* the paper.
  - 1.2 Look. The boy *is still playing* the violin over there.

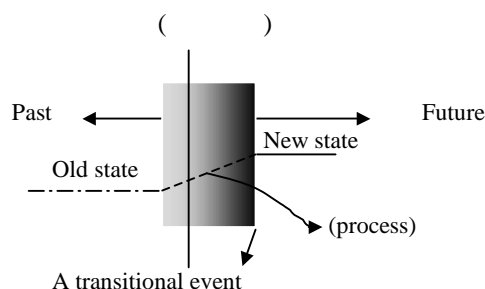
- 1.3 The suspect *was taking* a shower when the policemen broke into the house.  
 1.4 While we were having a good time, the children were doing their homework.  
 1.5 When you get here tomorrow, we will be working in the lab.  
 1.6 Everyone will be dancing, drinking, or singing if you get here at seven p.m.

(2)



- Examples:** 2.1 Who is knocking?  
 2.2 The monster is shaking the bridge.  
 2.3 The lamp was still waving when I walked into the office.  
 2.4  
 2.5 If you get here at sunset, the frogs will be jumping around our backyard.  
 2.6

(3)



- Examples:** 3.1 The old man is dying.  
 3.2 John is leaving for New York (soon/tomorrow).  
 3.3 When the doctor got there, the patient was dying.  
 3.4  
 (?) 3.5 When you finish this project, I will be retiring.  
 Cf. When you finish this project, I will have retired.

(4) Extended meanings based on the basic feature of the progressive aspect

- Examples:** 4.1 Mary is wearing shorts today; this doesn't happen very often.  
 4.2 I'm teaching English right now, but I don't like this job very much.  
 4.3 He was staying with his uncle at that moment.

(5) When passion or strong interest is involved

- Examples:** 5.1 The baby is always crying.  
 5.2 My boss is always complaining.

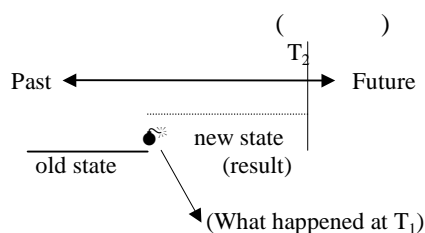
## B. The perfect

The perfect form entails the following features:

- (1) The perfect form must indicate an action, an event, or a state that starts at time 1 ( $T_1$ ) and ends at time 2 ( $T_2$ ).
- (2) The information focus (of the action, the event, or the state) must be at  $T_2$ .
- (3)  $T_2$  determines the tense of the verb phrase.
- (4) Anything out of the domain between  $T_1$  and  $T_2$  is not represented in the form of the perfect.

There are four fundamental meanings related to the perfect aspect

### (6) Resultative (conclusive verbs are required)

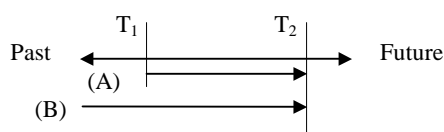


- Examples:**
- 6.1 John *has left*; I'm afraid you'll have to come back tomorrow.
  - 6.2 He *has forgotten* his glasses today (so he can't read the contract).
  - 6.3 The train *had left* when John got to the station. (John missed the train.)
  - 6.4
  - 6.5 By the time you graduate from college, I *will have retired*.
  - 6.6

#### Consider:

- (?) 6.7 John has left two hours ago, but he is in the office now.
- (?) 6.8 When have you done this?
- (?) 6.9 This person has died.
- (?) 6.10 I have learned English for almost ten years.

### (7) Continuative (nonconclusive verbs are required)

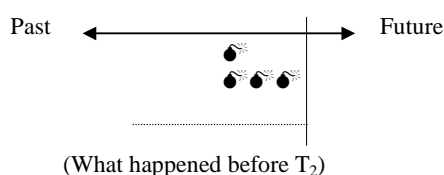


- (A) Referring to an action or an event or a state that starts at a specific  $T_1$
- (B) Referring to an action, an event, or a state that starts at a vague  $T_1$

- Examples:** 7.1 I *have worked* in this company for about ten years.  
 7.2 We've *lived* in this town since we were born.  
 7.3 The weather *has changed a lot* in the past two decades.  
 7.4 We *had lived* in that house for 30 years before/when he *tore* it down.  
 7.5 She *had not waited* long before she *was pushed* into the surgery.  
 7.6 By the end of this month, I *will have stayed* here for ten solid years.

- Consider (?)** 7.7 I have repaired this car for ten hours.  
 (?) 7.8 I have walked on the beach.

#### (8) Cumulative/experiential



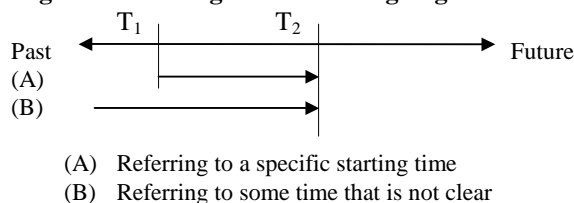
- Examples:** 8.1 I have never been to Japan.  
 8.2 Have you ever seen that sign before?  
 8.3 How much have you done?  
 8.4 How many projects have you completed so far?  
 8.5 I had never seen this person before last night.  
 8.6  
 8.7 You will have visited there ten times if you come with us next week.  
 8.8

#### (9) Perfect of the recent past (Comrie, 1976)

- Examples:** 9.1 We **have recently learned** that the match is to be postponed.  
 9.2 John **has just arrived**.  
 9.3 They **had just left** when we got there.

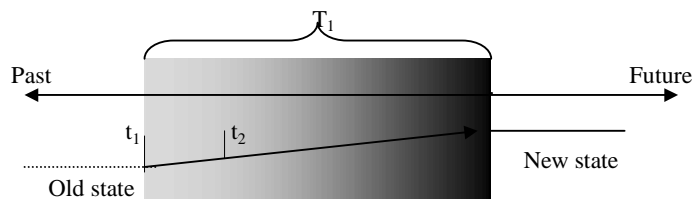
### C. The perfect progressive

#### (10) Emphasizing the continuing actions or on-going events



- Examples:** 10.1 We have been walking for about ten miles.  
 10.2 We had been corresponding quite constantly before *we met*.  
 Cf. We had been corresponding quite constantly before *he died*.  
 10.3  
 10.4 By the time you have money to buy me a house, I will have been staying in this lousy apartment for half of my life.  
 10.5

If the verbs that suggest potential conclusions have to be treated as “process” rather than as an “accomplishment,” the progressive form can be considered. Then the elements of  $T_1$  &  $T_2$  can be involved, and the perfect can be applied.

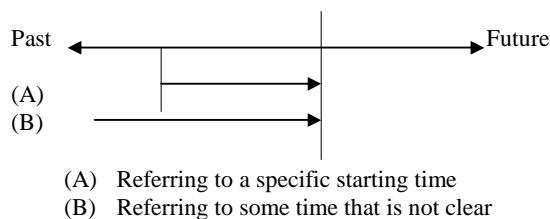


- Examples:** 10.6 We have been writing this letter for several hours.  
 10.7 She has been preparing for the feast all day today.  
 10.8 She had been trying to open the door when/before we brought her the key.  
 10.9

**Consider:** ?10.10 These students **have learned English** for about ten years, but they still have a hard time apply this language to the real situation.

**Compare:** ?10.11 The old guy has died for about two hours.  
 ?10.12 The boy has written these words for almost two hours.

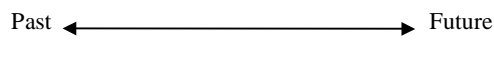
(11) **Emphasizing that the actions have been continuing right before the “result” is produced**



- Examples:** 11.1 We have been walking all the way up here; that’s why we are so tired now.  
 11.2 We had been corresponding quite constantly; that’s why I knew where she was.  
 11.3

D: The simple form

(12)



- Examples:** 12.1 The earth revolves around the sun.  
 12.2 Two times two is four.  
 12.3  
 12.4  
 12.5  
 12.6

(13)

Past ←————→ Future

- Examples:**
- 13.1 The earth was believed to be flat before the scientist found the truth.
  - 13.2 My brother played the piano when he was a child.
  - 13.3
  - 13.4 I think I will walk to my office if I can rent a house near the office.
  - 13.5
  - 13.6 I go to work by bus because I don't have a car and I don't feel safe to ride a motorbike.
  - 13.7

(14) **Demonstrating or others such as historical facts.**

- Examples:**
- 14.1 The suspect is pointing a gun to the hostage calmly when the director crawls into the house.
  - 14.2 I **sift** the flour, salt, and baking powder into a bowl. I **mix** them well. Then I **break** the eggs into a cup . . .
  - 14.3 John **is** an English boy. He **lives** in London. He **gets** up at seven o'clock every morning, **has** breakfast at half past seven . . .
  - 14.4 Green **passes** the ball to Brown. Brown **passes** it to Black who **heads** it past the goalkeeper and **scores**!

Try to fill in the blanks with the verb forms that make the best meaning of the paragraph:

By the time this course ends, I \_\_\_\_\_ (be) here for nine months. The last month left \_\_\_\_\_ (pass) swiftly. If I \_\_\_\_\_ (do) well in the final examination, I \_\_\_\_\_ (graduate) in June. Then I \_\_\_\_\_ (try) to stay a little longer to see if I \_\_\_\_\_ (find) a job because I really like the place.

E. Some verbs that do not appear in progressive form..

(a)

be	belong	consist of	want
contain	depend on	exist	have
hold	lie	live	need
own	possess	remain	represent

	result	seem	stand	signify	
(b)	adore hate recognize dare like understand differ need	forgive please care know think despise mind fear	prefer believe intend remember dislike mean wish	agree notice respect desire love want forget	
(c)	accept determine refuse consent	deny receive) complete promise	put on admit give decide	allow end resolve permit	
(d)	feel see	perceive taste	sound notice	hear smell	look
(e)	cost value	number	weigh	measure	

### 3. Exercise

#### 1. Compare the following expressions:

- 1.1 John is leaving for New York tomorrow.
- 1.2 John leaves for New York at noon tomorrow.
- 1.3 John will leave here sooner or later.

#### 2. My sister has written the letter for hours.

#### 3. Fill in the blanks with verb phrases that make the whole passage meaningful and grammatical.

##### Part A.

My community \_\_\_\_\_ (have) a trash recycling program for nearly a decade; consequently, I always \_\_\_\_\_ (separate) my trash into recyclable categories. Because glass and metal do not decompose rapidly, recycling these materials \_\_\_\_\_ (reduce) the amount of solid waste at our trash dumps. At 7 p.m. last night, when I took a walk around my neighborhood, I \_\_\_\_\_ (see) a large number of people \_\_\_\_\_ (throw) away trash that could easily be recycled. However, I \_\_\_\_\_ (learn) that some people think that recycling trash \_\_\_\_\_ (be) too much

work. For instance, when I \_\_\_\_\_ (talk) to my neighbor, she \_\_\_\_\_ (tell) me that sorting her trash \_\_\_\_\_ (be) too much trouble.

#### Part B.

Historically, although the children of immigrants may have grown up bilingual and bicultural, many \_\_\_\_\_ (not pass) on much of their parents' language or culture to their own children. Thus, many grandchildren of immigrants do not speak the language of the old country and \_\_\_\_\_ (be) "American" by culture. However, in some parts of the country with established communities that \_\_\_\_\_ (share) a common language of culture, bilingualism and biculturalism \_\_\_\_\_ (continue). This is particularly true in communities where new immigrants \_\_\_\_\_ (still arrive). In general, cultural pluralism is more accepted in the United States today than it \_\_\_\_\_ (be) in the first half of the 20th century, and many of the school systems \_\_\_\_\_ (develop) bilingual programs. and multicultural curricula....

At the close of the 20th century, there seems to be a rise in the consciousness of ethnic groups around the world, and a sense of pride in what makes them unique. This \_\_\_\_\_ (occur) in the United States among many different groups, and in some cases it \_\_\_\_\_ (result) in new names to symbolize each group's identity. In the United States, people \_\_\_\_\_ (become) very sensitive to the language used to describe these groups, and they try to be "politically correct." For example, many black Americans, particularly young people, prefer the term African-American instead of black, to identify with their African heritage.

#### Part C.

While walking through a graveyard in Vienna, a tourist \_\_\_\_\_ (hear) music coming from a gravesite. The headstone \_\_\_\_\_ (read): "Ludwig



van Beethoven, 1770-1827.” The man \_\_\_\_\_ (listen) for a few moments before recognizing the music as the Ninth Symphony being played backward. Puzzled, the man \_\_\_\_\_ (leave) the graveyard and persuaded a friend to return with him. By the time they arrived at the grave, the music \_\_\_\_\_ (change). This time it was the Seventh Symphony, but like the previous piece, it \_\_\_\_\_ (be played) backward. Curious, the men agreed to consult a music scholar. When the two men returned to the grave with the expert, the Fifth Symphony \_\_\_\_\_ (play). Again it was backward.

Naturally, word got around about the strange happenings at Beethoven’s grave, and the next day a large crowd \_\_\_\_\_ (gather) and was listening to the Second Symphony being played backward.

Just then, the graveyard’s caretaker ambled up to the group. Someone in the crowd \_\_\_\_\_ (ask) him if he had an explanation for the music.

“Don’t you get it!” the caretaker said incredulously. “He \_\_\_\_\_ (decompose)!”