

Perception of Time in Different Cultures

**Tense and aspect in the English modality system
as a source of misinterpretation**

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ESP

- not only the vocabulary
- but also the grammar

Grammar

- technical texts
- social studies texts

Texts on CULTURAL HISTORY

- can be **technical texts** in terms of vocabulary frequently involved in and relating to e.g. architectural elements
- can be considered **social studies texts** in terms of recreating historical events

In the former case (technical texts):

- the **present tense forms** (and expressions of present time, e.g. the **present perfect**) are usually used

In the latter case (cult.-historical texts):

- the **past tense** and the **past perfect tense** are usually used in temporal function and **modal past perfect** and **past conditionals** for speculations of past events

Past conditional

Past conditional or hypothetical past as in: e.g.

*I **would have helped** you, but I was busy*

or

*If you had asked me, I **would have helped** you*

It consists of:

modal verb + *have* + past participle

Two reasons why hypothetical past causes problems to the Slovene speakers of ESL:

1. present perfect form of “have + participle”
(Slovene has no one-to-one equivalent for the English (present) perfect tense)
2. non-existence of a separate hypothetical past form in Slovene (the Slovene **pogojnik** is shared with hypothetical present)

Time – Tense - Aspect

Past English grammar texts considered:

aspect: simple (indef.) vs. continuous (progr.)

tense: perfect tenses

Contemporary English grammar texts:

aspect: simple (indef.) vs. continuous
(progr.)

aspect: perfect tenses

What is aspect when it comes to perfectives?

Aspect in perfectives is the semantic and pragmatic features these tenses express connecting the past time with the present time (e.g. result, consequence, experience, continuation, explanation) rendering the action to be conceived as incomplete, as going on, in progress or continuing,...

... which brings them closer to **aspect** in the traditional sense, namely “the grammatical category of the verb which expresses the manner in which the action or state is presented by the speaker...” (the *simple* (indefinite) and *continuous* (progressive) forms of the verb as we know them)

SIMPLE AND CONTINUOUS ASPECT:

Non-native speaker – instance vs. continuation.

Indefinite: the speaker feels the action as **unlimited** in its frequentative, permanent or durational character

E.g. “Celje **lies** in Slovenia”

Continuous: the speaker feels the action as limited in its frequentative, permanent or durational character.

E.g. “The dog **is lying** under the car”

Limiting the unlimited action would result in:

E.g. “Celje **is lying** in Slovenia”, but tomorrow it will lie in Austria.

Unlimiting a temporaly limited action would result in:

E.g. “The dog **lies** under the car.”

It is obviously dead.

Slovene learners usually associate aspect only with actions being or not being in progress at a certain point of time.

PRESENT PERFECT ASPECT:

PRES. PERF. “I **have opened** the window” –
RESULT = the window is open

PAST T. “I **opened** the window (yesterday)”.
= the opening of the window took place at a
certain time in the past

Both sentences are translated into Slovene as:
“**Odpri sem** okno”

The Present perfect and Slovenes

Perfect tenses – non-existent in Slovene

Slovene learners of English

- associate them with tense and time rather than aspect
- present perfect tense associated with present time
- as a result – the present perfect form in the past conditional is associated with the present time

Hypothetical past

e.g. *If you **had asked** me, I **would have helped** you* (hypothetical past)

e.g. *If you **asked** me, I **would help** you.*
(hypothetical present)

Both are translated into Slovene with the
“**pogojnik**”

e.g. *Če **bi** me **prosil**, **bi** ti **pomagal**.*

The past tense forms of the hypothetical present

e.g. If you *asked* me, I *would help* you.

encourages Slovene learners to apply this form to present/future and past time alike.

Association of present perfect to present time can result in hypercorrection of the type:

e.g. If you had asked me, I would *had* helped you.

Can phenomena such as perfect tenses and hypothetical past be learnt by Slovene ESL learners by means of acquisition without instruction?

Perfect tenses – possibly, not entirely to the targeted effect, but merely on the basis of contextual clues (good students do it)

Hypothetical past – NO, not without instruction (even good students fail)

6. Translate the following sentences into English.

1. Povabil me je na nadvse romantično večerjo. Pa mi ni bila všeč. Če bi bila hrana vsaj malo toplejša, bi bila tudi veliko bolj okusnejša. Jan je rekel, da bo opozoril natakarja, toda ko sva plačevala račun, sva videla, da ne bo ukrepal, čeprav je trdil, da jim ni vseeno.

He invited me on a ^{tr} ⁿ extraordinary romantic dinner. But I didn't like it. If the food would be at least a little warmer, it would be also much more tasteful. Jan said that he would warn the waiter, but when we ~~paid~~ were paying the bill, we saw that he wouldn't do something even though he claimed that they mind.

1. Povabil me je na nadvse romantično večerjo. Pa mi ni bila všeč. Če bi bila hrana vsaj malo toplejša, bi bila tudi veliko bolj okusnejša. Jan je rekel, da bo opozoril natakarja, toda ko sva plačevala račun, sva videla, da ne bo ukrepal, čeprav je trdil, da jim ni vseeno.

HE INVITED ME TO AN OUTMOST ROMANTIC DINNER. I DID NOT LIKE IT
THOUGH. IF THE FOOD WOULD BE JUST A BIT WARMER, IT
WOULD ALSO TASTE MUCH BETTER. JAN SAID HE WILL WARN
THE WAITER, ~~HOWEVER~~ ^{HOWEVER} WHEN WE WERE PAYING THE BILLY, WE
SAW THAT HE WILL DO NOTHING ABOUT IT, EVEN
THOUGH HE CLAIMED THAT THEY CARE.

1. Povabil me je na nadvse romantično večerjo. Pa mi ni bila všeč. Če bi bila hrana vsaj malo toplejša, bi bila tudi veliko bolj okusnejša. Jan je rekel, da bo opozoril natakarja, toda ko sva plačevala račun, sva videla, da ne bo ukrepal, čeprav je trdil, da jim ni vseeno.

He invited me on a extremely romantic dinner, but I didn't like it. If the food was at least warmer, it would be also tastier. Jan said he will warn the waiter, but as we were paying the bill, we saw that he won't take an action, although he claimed that they care.

. Povabil me je na nadvse romantično večerjo. Pa mi ni bila všeč. Če bi bila hrana saj malo toplejša, bi bila tudi veliko bolj okusnejša. Jan je rekel, da bo opozoril atakarja, toda ko sva plačevala račun, sva videla, da ne bo ukrepal, čeprav je trdil, da m ni vseeno.

He invited me to a romantic dinner. But I didn't like it. If the food was at least a little warmer, it would be also much tastier. Jan said that he will tell that to the waiter, but when we were paying the bill, we saw that he won't do anything about it, although he claimed they cared about it.

6. Translate the following sentences into English.

1. Povabil me je na nadvse romantično večerjo. Pa mi ni bila všeč. Če bi bila hrana vsaj malo toplejša, bi bila tudi veliko bolj okusnejša. Jan je rekel, da bo opozoril natakarja, toda ko sva plačevala račun, sva videla, da ne bo ukrepal, čeprav je trdil, da jim ni vseeno.

He invited me ^{to} on a romantic dinner. But I didn't like it. If the ~~food~~ food was a bit warmer, ~~it~~ would it be more delicious. Jan said he would talk about it to the waiter, but as soon as we were paying the bill we knew he won't do anything, despite saying he cares.

6. Translate the following sentences into English.

1. Povabil me je na nadvse romantično večerjo. Pa mi ni bila všeč. Če bi bila hrana vsaj malo toplejša, bi bila tudi veliko bolj okusnejša. Jan je rekel, da bo opozoril natakarja, toda ko sva plačevala račun, sva videla, da ne bo ukrepal, čeprav je trdil, da jim ni vseeno.

He ~~had~~ invited me ^{to a} on a romantic dinner. But I didn't like it. If the food were a bit warmer, it would be more delicious.

Jan said he will warn the waiter but when we were paying the bill, we both saw he won't (ukrepati), although he said that they care about it.

mi
vseeno

1. Povabil me je na nadvse romantično večerjo. Pa mi ni bila všeč. Če bi bila hrana vsaj malo toplejša, bi bila tudi veliko bolj okusnejša. Jan je rekel, da bo opozoril natakarja, toda ko sva plačevala račun, sva videla, da ne bo ukrepal, čeprav je trdil, da jim ni vseeno.

He ~~was~~ invited me ~~to~~ a very romantic dinner. But yet I didn't like ~~it~~ it. If the food ~~was~~ a little bit warmer, it would ~~have~~ ~~been~~ be much more tastier. Jan said that he will warn the waiter, but when we were paying the bill, we ~~saw~~ ^{saw} that he ~~wasn't~~ ^{won't} take actions, even- ~~though~~ thought he claimed that they do care.

6. Translate the following sentences into English.

1. Povabil me je na nadvse romantično večerjo. Pa mi ni bila všeč. Če bi bila hrana vsaj malo toplejša, bi bila tudi veliko bolj okusnejša. Jan je rekel, da bo opozoril natakarja, toda ko sva plačevala račun, sva videla, da ne bo ukrepal, čeprav je trdil, da jim ni vseeno.

He invited me to a very romantic dinner. But I did not like it. If the food had been at least little warmer it would have been tastier. Jan said that he ~~would~~^{will} warn the waiter, but when we were paying the bill we saw that he won't do anything, even though he said that they care.

Thank you!