Module Seven: Teaching Grammar

Introduction

This module is dedicated to the often thorny issue of teaching grammar. As discussed in module four, the teaching of grammar has divided opinion amongst EFL practitioners and students alike. The traditional grammar translation model is generally considered to be an outmoded approach but that is not to say it is completely extinct and still exists as a *bona fide* teaching method in some parts of the world and this is for one simple reason. In order for a language to function as a means of communication it requires two compatible elements: a grammatical structure and a vocabulary. Logic should therefore decree that for a non-native speaker to acquire proficiency in another language they first need to learn the grammatical structures of the target language. The problem is that there is a disparity between grasping the technicalities of grammar in the abstract and actually being able to produce grammatically correct sentences in authentic situations.

The communicative approaches that have developed since the late 1960s have tended to view grammar in the context of specific language functions and situations. In these approaches the grammar is *embedded* into a wider communicative setting or linked conceptually to a topic or issue. Similarly, the Dogme approach (also see module four) dictates that the grammar content of a lesson should 'emerge' from communicative practice and not be the driving force behind the planning and delivery of language learning lessons. However, problems can arise with students familiar with more traditional approaches if the grammar content of a lesson is not made explicit to them. The latter part of this module describes two possible approaches to presenting the difference between the present perfect and the past simple.

The assignment for this module is an online grammar test, designed to assess your knowledge of the essentials of English grammar. To this end, the first part of the module contains a crash course in grammar to help you prepare for the test. This grammar refresher is by no means comprehensive and it is strongly advised you invest in a decent grammar textbook (recommendations at the end of the module).

One of the major concerns for new teachers, particularly native English-speaking teachers embarking upon a career in EFL, is confidence in presenting grammar to a class. This is largely because for native English speakers, the grammatical structures they produce are done so intuitively and naturally without thinking. Technical grammar is rarely taught in UK secondary schools, other than in relation to written English (punctuation rules, complex sentence clauses, etc.). As a result, many fledgling teachers feel exposed, they know which structures are correct but are unable to explain exactly why one form is used at the expense of another. In truth, grasping the finer technicalities of English comes from the practice of teaching, particularly more complex structures. Nonetheless, there are certain essential grammar aspects that every prospective English teacher really needs to understand and recognise, the rest will all fall into place over time and through experience.

Essential Grammar For Teaching EFL

The two most essential aspects of English grammar needed to teach EFL are familiarity and understanding of the parts of speech and the twelve verb tenses.
Parts of speech (or word classes) refer to the lexical function each individual word performs in a sentence in order to convey and frame meaning. There are nine word classes in English (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, interjections and articles) and various sub-categories within the nine classes. It should be stressed however that the function of an individual word and the word class it belongs to depends on where it is positioned in a sentence and hence its relationship to other words.

For example, consider the following three sentences and the meaning of the word work.

1) I was late for work.
2) I will work hard to finish this course.
3) You will need a work permit to teach in China.

In the first sentence, work functions as a noun (the place, or thing ‘I’ am late for); in the second sentence work functions as a verb (the action needed to finish the course), and in the third sentence work functions as an adjunct noun, a noun that modifies or determines another noun (permit) and therefore performs the same role as an adjective.

In general, sentences in English follow a standard subject-verb-object word order. The subject of a sentence is the person, place, thing or idea that is doing or being something. The subject of a sentence can usually be found by identifying the verb and determining who or what it relates to.

For example, in sentence 1) above, was is the verb (past tense of to be), followed by the adverb of time late and the noun object work.

The object of a sentence therefore follows the verb and is the person, place or thing that the action or state is being directed towards.

One note of caution, however, is that some sentences do not follow the subject-verb-object order in quite such a straightforward structure. There are several situations where it is common practice for the subject to follow the verb. Question forms are a good example of an inverted word order (verb in bold/subject underlined) in sentences such as ‘have you seen my keys?’ Sentences that begin with an adverb or adverbial phrase are other common constructions that follow a different word order, principally to provide emphasis as in Winston Churchill’s famous speech ‘Never was so much owed by so many to so few’. Inverting word order is also common when used for literary or stylistic effect, as in Alfred Lord Tennyson’s poem The Charge of the Light Brigade (1854): ‘Into the valley of death rode the six hundred’. For the sake of exploring the parts of speech, however, we shall look at how the nine different word classifications combine, modify and determine each other and function as the building blocks of sentences.

The Nine Parts of Speech

Nouns
Nouns are naming words that describe people, places, objects or ideas. Within this broad lexis are sub-categories which describe more explicitly the type of naming word individual nouns represent.

- **Common Nouns**: These are general/non-specific names for objects, people, places and things, e.g. *man, woman, book, mountain, city.*
- **Proper Nouns**: These are more specifically defined names for people, places, e.g. *New York, Mt Etna, Lady Gaga* and so on.
- **Concrete nouns**: These are phenomena that can be perceived via a combination of the human senses such as *rain, food, fruit, trees,* etc.
- **Abstract nouns**: These are the opposite of concrete nouns in that they relate to concepts that cannot be directly perceived through the senses such as *love, belief, fear, destiny, pride,* etc.

Nouns can also be divided into **countable nouns** (one dog, two cats, ten million Quentins) and objects that are **uncountable** such as *milk, water, music, snow, grass,* and nouns that are singular or plural.

**Pronouns**

Pronouns have a variety of different functions but at a base level they replace and/or moderate nouns. For example:

‘David Beckham has been voted Britain’s best-dressed man because *he* takes great pride in his appearance.’

The eight sub-categories of pronouns are as follows:

- **Personal pronouns** that replace common and proper nouns such as: *I, me, you, him, her, them, they,* etc. These can be used as the subject or object of a sentence.
- **Relative pronouns** that link subordinate clauses in sentences such as *that, which, who, whom,* etc.
- **Demonstrative pronouns** that relate to a specific thing or things such as *this book, that meal,* etc. Demonstrative pronouns also perform the same function as demonstrative adjectives and so are both pronoun and adjective simultaneously.
- **Indefinite pronouns** that refer to unspecified people or objects such as *anybody, anything, nobody, some, many, several,* etc.
- **Reflexive pronouns** which we use when speaking about *ourselves or yourself.*
- **Interrogative pronouns** which are used to ask questions and gather information such as *who, whose, which, what and whom?*
- **Reciprocal pronouns** that are used to describe relationships between two people or things such as *one another and each other.*
- **Possessive pronouns** that denote ownership in the first, second and third person such as *mine, yours, his, hers, ours and theirs.* Possessive pronouns
also perform the same function as possessive adjectives in that they describe who the noun belongs to.

**Adjectives**

In simple terms, adjectives are words that describe nouns and/or pronouns. It is common to view adjectives as describing words, words that add colour and texture to sentences. There are, however, five classes of adjective, each of which perform a specific function within a sentence:

- **Possessive adjectives** (see possessive pronouns) such as my/mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs and its.
- **Descriptive adjectives** such as beautiful, great, fantastic, big, tall, etc. This is the largest class of adjective and English is particularly rich in adjectives due to its habit of greedily adopting and absorbing words from other languages.
- **Numerical Adjectives** which are used to describe quantities and amounts of nouns. This class can be divided into three sub-types:
  a) the definite, which records the exact quantity of position such as first, second, third or one, two, three (in a sense I guess it could be argued that this class is the largest given that numbers are infinite).
  b) the indefinite, which records inexact or general quantities such as some, few, lots, much and many, etc.
  c) the distributive which is used to cache, collect or disperse nouns such as each, every, other and another.
- **Demonstrative adjectives** such as this, that, these and those (see demonstrative pronouns above).
- **Interrogative adjectives** are commonly referred to as question words such as which, what, where, etc.

**Comparative and Superlative Adjectives**

In addition to the five classes above, some adjectives also have related comparatives and superlative forms which are used to provide a sense of the degree to which the adjective is being ascribed.

**For example: nice, nicer, nicest**

I have a nice car but my brother's car is nicer than mine. Our father's car, however, is the nicest of all.

In the passage above, nice is the simple positive adjective, nicer the comparative and nicest the superlative (or ultimate). Not all comparative and superlative forms are regular however; there are a small number of irregular adjectives which have different forms (regular adjectives form their comparatives and superlatives by adding 'er' or 'est' or by prefixing with 'most') for example, bad, worse, worst or good, better, best. In contrast there are also some positive adjectives that it is impossible to
make comparatives or superlatives out of such as dead (something either is or isn’t dead, it can’t be deader than something else).

Verbs

Verbs are the most complex of all of the parts of speech and in many ways the most important. Put bluntly, sentences cannot function without verbs. For example ‘Jesus Saves’ displayed on a poster outside a church is a sentence, take away the verb ‘saves’ and ‘Jesus’ on his own is not a sentence.

A verb is a word that describes an action or state of being and in terms of sentence constructions, can be divided into two types, transitive verbs and intransitive verbs. However, most verb forms can be either transitive or intransitive, depending on the structure of the sentence they appear in. Transitive verbs appear in sentences that contain a subject noun and an object noun, for example:

Dave (subject noun) looked (verb) at the sea (object noun).

An intransitive verb is a verb in a sentence that either does not require an object or omits an object, for example:

Dave (subject) looked (verb).

Task 7a

Read the following sentences and determine if the verbs are transitive or intransitive:

1) Beckham kicked the ball straight at the wall.
2) He lived, he loved, he died.
3) She screamed.
4) I went swimming yesterday.
5) We ate our lunch in a lovely restaurant.

(answers at the end of the module)

Verb Forms

Verbs come in a variety of different classes, regular and irregular, principal and auxiliary. All verbs have three basic forms, infinitive, simple past and past participle. Regular verbs are verbs where the past forms (simple and participle) are formed by adding ‘ed’ or ‘d’ if the verb ends in an ‘e’.

Examples of Regular Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive / Base Form</th>
<th>Past Simple</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To work</td>
<td>worked</td>
<td>worked</td>
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<tr>
<td>To study</td>
<td>studied*</td>
<td>studied*</td>
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<tr>
<td>To believe</td>
<td>believed</td>
<td>believed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
To change | changed | changed
To discuss | discussed | discussed
To debate | debated | debated
To enjoy | enjoyed | enjoyed

*verbs that end in ‘y’ in the base form replace the ‘y’ with ‘ied’ in the past forms.

Irregular verbs are therefore verbs that do not end in ‘ed’ or verbs where the infinitive/base form doesn’t change in the past forms (such as ‘hit’ or ‘put’).

Examples of Irregular Verbs

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive/ Base Form</th>
<th>Past Simple</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
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<td>To begin</td>
<td>began</td>
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<td>To wake</td>
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<td>To cut</td>
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<td>To read</td>
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This all seems very simple and straightforward – what ends in ‘ed’ or ‘d’ in past form = regular, everything else = irregular. But as ever with English there are exceptions and pitfalls:

1. Some verbs can be both regular and irregular, for example:

learn, learned, learned
learn, learnt, learnt

2. Some verbs change their meaning depending on whether they are regular or irregular, for example ‘to hang’:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>regular</th>
<th>hang, hanged, hanged</th>
<th>to kill or die, by dropping with a rope around the neck</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>irregular</td>
<td>hang, hung, hung</td>
<td>to fix something (for example, a picture) at the top so that the lower part is free</td>
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</table>

3. The present tense (see tenses) of some regular verbs is the same as the past tense of some irregular verbs:
regular  found, founded, founded  to create an organisation or institution

irregular  find, found, found  To discover something or someone that has been lost, hidden or undiscovered.

**Task 7b**

Read the following list of verbs and place them in the correct table according to whether you think they are regular or irregular verbs and add the correct past forms, some verbs can be both regular and irregular:

Verbs: agree, grow, treat, prove, make, paint, examine, forbid, dress, burn, go.

**Regular Verbs:**

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<th>Infinitive/Base Form</th>
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**Irregular Verbs:**

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**Principal, Auxiliary and Compound Verbs**

In addition to regular and irregular verbs, verbs can also be classed as *principal verbs* and *auxiliary verbs* that combine to produce *compound verb forms*. Principal verbs are the main active verb and auxiliary verbs modify the main verb,
often to form tenses to determine when the action or state happened, happens or will happen or to predict, speculate or hypothesise on or about an action.

For example:
I have been working hard lately.
The tense *have been working* is formed by the auxiliary verbs *have* and *been* and the principal verb *working* because the present participle of *to work* is the main action of the sentence.

**Task 7c**

Read the following sentences and fill in the brackets to specify which of the verbs are principal and which are auxiliary. The verbs are marked in *italics*.
E.g. I *have eaten* too much (...auxiliary=have...../...principal=eaten.....)
1) *Will you* come to the party? (................./.............)
2) The bomb *could have been triggered* by remote control (......../...../...../......)
3) There *could be* a terrible accident (......../........)
4) Roy *had been sick* on the floor (......../........./........)
5) He *had seen* her before (........./.........)

**Verb Tenses**

There are twelve tenses commonly used in English. Tenses determine when an action or state occurred (or will occur) and are arguably the most important verb structures. Below is a list of the twelve tenses with their form and usage.

**Present Simple**
The present simple tense for the most part (see exception below) remains the same as the base form of the verb (infinitive) and is used to determine the here and now, regular repeated actions and things which are always true.

For example:
I swim.
I swim on Sundays.
Fish swim in the sea.
The principal exception is the verb ‘to be’ which takes the following irregular forms:
I *am* / you *are* / he or she *is* / they *are* / was / were

**Present Continuous**
When we describe actions in the present we rarely mean a specific point in time, but an ongoing or series of actions occurring at the time of speaking and this is expressed with the present continuous tense:
I am reading the newspaper.

The present continuous sentence above (sometimes called present progressive) is formed with the auxiliary verb ‘to be’ and the present participle or ing form of the verb. The present continuous is used informally in speech to describe soon to be occurring actions or future plans as in ‘I am playing football on Sunday’.

**Present Perfect**

One of the most complicated tenses to teach to non-native speakers, the present perfect has several different functions and uses in different contexts. On a base level, the present perfect relates to the unfinished time of an action either leading up to the present or recently completed prior to the present point of speaking. The emphasis on point of speaking is key as one of the uses of the present perfect is to talk about completed actions in the past that have some import or impact upon the present. Imagine the scenario of a job interview for work in a restaurant - the interviewer asks the applicant the question ‘What experience do you have?’ and the applicant replies ‘I have worked in several restaurants as a sous chef’. Is the applicant working as a sous chef now at the point of speaking – obviously not. Is the applicant still working as a sous chef at another restaurant? Possibly, possibly not. However, the present perfect is used because the past experience or action has direct relevance to the present at the point of speaking.

Another usage of the present perfect is to describe an action in the past which is not time-specific. For example:

‘Have you ever been to Paris?’

‘Yes, I have been to Paris.’

The suggestion here is that time is unfinished because the person speaking is still alive and the action in the past is unspecified.

The present perfect is formed with the present auxiliary verb to have (or has) and the past participle of the principal verb (in this case the verb to be = been)

I have been to Paris.

**Present Perfect Continuous**

As if the present perfect wasn’t confusing enough, the second perfect tense in present form is the present perfect continuous and this is used to express a continuous action from the recent past which has just been completed prior to the point of speaking or has continued up to this point and may continue into the future.

For example:

I have been teaching for twenty years.

The present perfect continuous is formed with have/has + the past participle of the verb to be (been) + the present participle (ing) of the principle verb (in this case teaching).
Past Simple
The past simple tense is used to describe an action which has occurred in the past and has finished, or a repeated completed action in the past.

I played cricket every day for a month.
I lived in Paris for five years.

The simple past is formed with the past tense which is formed by adding ‘ed’ or ‘d’ with regular verbs but takes on different forms with irregular verbs (see irregular verbs section above).

Stop Reading and Reflect
Consider the following sentences, one in present perfect, one in past simple. What is the difference in the meaning conveyed?

I lived in Paris for five years.
I have lived in Paris for five years.

Past Continuous
The past continuous tense is used to describe an action in the past that took a period of time to complete and or an action that was ongoing at a fixed point in the past.

For example:
Miss Marple: ‘What were you doing on the night Professor Plum was murdered?’
Miss Scarlet: ‘I was having dinner with the Reverend Green.’

The past continuous is formed with the past tense of the auxiliary verb ‘to be’ and the present participle of the principle verb. In the example above, the verb ‘to have’ is the principal verb and not an auxiliary in this instance.

Past Perfect
Sometimes referred to as the pluperfect tense by fusty grammarians with a taste for Latin (pluperfect meaning ‘beyond perfect’), the past perfect tense describes a past event that took place prior to another event or point in the past and is one of the principal tenses used in constructing narratives and ordering past events.

For example:
I had started the lesson when the fire alarm went off.

The past perfect is formed by the past tense auxiliary verbs ‘had’ and the past participle of the principal verb (in this case the regular verb ‘to start’).

Past Perfect Continuous
The past perfect continuous performs similar functions as the past continuous in that it expresses actions in the past taking place over a period of time but is also commonly used to express a continuous action leading up to another past event.

**For example:**

I had been teaching for twenty minutes when the fire alarm went off.

The past perfect continuous has a similar structure as the present perfect continuous but substitutes the past tense of the auxiliary verbs ‘to have’ (‘had’) and ‘to be’ (‘been’) before adding the present participle ‘ing’ form of the principal verb (in this case ‘teaching’).

**Future Simple**

Future tenses are used to describe or predict something that will, may or might occur at a point in time henceforth. Future tenses use specific verb forms known as modal auxiliary verbs and these determine the extent to which something may or may not occur. Verbs such as can, could, may, might, shall, should, will and would are all classified as modal auxiliary verbs but will and shall are used to form future tenses with other modals describing a variety of different structures and functions from making predictions to hypothesising. The simple future is used to make predictions of future events or to express future plans and is formed with the auxiliary verb will or shall and the base form of the principal verb.

**For example:**

‘Cinderella, you shall go to the ball.’

**Future Continuous**

The future continuous tense is used to express an action that will be continuing for a period of time in the future, and is formed with the modal will or shall and (in keeping with other continuous tenses) the auxiliary verb ‘to be’ with the present participle ‘ing’ form.

**For example:**

I will be teaching in Thailand this time next year.

**Future Perfect**

The future perfect tense is used to predict or estimate future actions to be completed at some pre-determined point in the future, and in common with all perfect tenses it is formed with the auxiliary verb to have and the past participle of the principal verb following the modal will/shall.

**For example:**

I will have read this book by Friday.
Future Perfect Continuous

Probably the most obscure of the twelve tenses and hence, used in a rather specialised abstraction, the future perfect continuous relates to ongoing actions in the future over a period of time, often leading up to another action or point in the future.

For example

I will have been waiting for five hours.

I will have been waiting for five hours by the time you arrive.

The form for the future perfect continuous is the same as for the present perfect continuous but prefixed by the modal will/shall.

Will or Shall In Perfect Tenses?

There is some debate amongst grammarians as to which modal, will or shall, should be used in certain contexts. In modern speech ‘shall’ seems to be considered the more formal or polite form and is rarely used in American English but the two verbs are more or less interchangeable. Traditionally, will was considered to collocate with ‘he/she’, ‘you’ and ‘they’ and shall to collocate with ‘I’, ‘we’ and ‘they’, but this distinction is seldom adhered to in modern English.

Stop Reading and Reflect

Read the following sentences uttered by a man who has fallen overboard from a boat:

1) ‘I shall drown and no one will save me!’
2) ‘I will drown and no one shall save me!’

Traditional grammar decrees that in sentence 1) the man is bewailing his lot and believes he is doomed, and in sentence 2) the man is stating his determination to drown and not allow anyone to save him. The distinction between the two sentences is so slight however that interpretation would depend largely on the intonation of the utterance. As a rule of thumb ‘will’ is the more common form and implies deliberate intention, shall, alas, is something of a dying form which is most common in polite requests.

Task 7D

Choose an irregular verb from the list below and draw up a grid (see example below) of sentences containing the twelve tenses in the first person singular.

think, feel, make, shut, buy, drink, swim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Shut</th>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple</td>
<td>I shut the window</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adverbs

Adverbs are divided into four categories, each determined by a specific function within a sentence.

Adverbs of Manner

Adverbs of manner communicate how something happened. They are generally used to modify verbs. In the sentence, they appear after the verb or after the object. They should not be placed between the verb and its object.

- The boy laughed loudly.
- Elena did a pirouette gracefully.

Not: Elena did gracefully a pirouette.

An adverb of manner can be placed at the beginning of a sentence or before a verb + object to make the statement stronger.

- Gracefully, Elena did a pirouette.
- Elena gracefully did a pirouette.

Adverbs of manner are used with active verbs, those that show action. They are not used with stative verbs, verbs that show a state of being.

Not: Elena seemed gracefully. (Seem is a stative verb and does not show action. It does not, therefore, take an adverb of manner.)

To determine or concept-check if an adverb is one of manner, ask a ‘how’ question.

How did the boy laugh?

How did Elena do a pirouette?

Adverbs of Time
Adverbs of time tell about when something happened. They can also tell us for how long or how frequently something happened. They are generally used to modify verbs. ‘When’ adverbs usually come at the end of a sentence. Once exception is ‘still’ which appears before the main verb in a sentence.

- Let’s meet then.
- The package arrived yesterday.
- Mike and Dave have swimming lessons weekly.
- They are still learning the basics.

To determine if an adverb is one of time, ask a ‘when’ question or a ‘how long/how often’ question.

- When shall we meet?
- When did the package arrive?
- How often do Mike and Dave have swimming lessons?

Point out to students that that they must be careful when using ‘yet’. This adverb of time is only used in questions and negative statements.

- Have you finished your homework yet?
- I have not finished it yet.

Not: I have finished it yet.

Adverbs of Degree

Adverbs of degree tell us the degree or intensity to which something happened. They can modify verbs, adjectives or other adverbs. Adverbs of degree are generally placed before the main verb or the adjective or adverb they modify. For example:

- She was entirely wrong in her judgment.
- He drove very quickly.
- Clarisse thoroughly believes he is innocent.
- She is too stubborn to change her mind.

To determine if an adverb is one of degree, ask a ‘to what degree’ or ‘how much’ question. For example:

- To what degree was she wrong in her judgment?
- To what degree did he drive?
How much does Clarisse believe he is innocent?

One exception to adverb placement is ‘enough’ which appears after an adjective or adverb it modifies. For example:

- Are you warm enough?
- Am I working quickly enough?

Adverbs of Place

Adverbs of place tell us where something happened. They are generally used to modify verbs and appear after the main verb or after the object in a sentence.

- I’ll meet you there after class.
- She would go anywhere with him.
- Victor put the book away.

To determine if an adverb is one of place, ask a ‘where’ question.

- Where will I meet you after class?
- Where would she go with him?
- Where did Victor put the book?

Task 7E

Read through the following sentences, identify the adverb in each and decide if it is an adverb of place (p), degree (d), manner (m) or time (t).

1. My grandpa snored loudly.
2. Chloe played on the beach yesterday.
3. I will visit my friend tomorrow.
4. She was completely baffled by the question.
5. George, will you come here?
7. Neil slowly placed a card on the card tower.
8. He was slightly concerned by recent developments.
9. I put my keys somewhere safe.
10. The answer dawned on her gradually.

Prepositions
A **preposition** links nouns, pronouns and phrases to other words in a sentence. The word or phrase that the preposition introduces is called the object of the preposition.

A preposition usually indicates the temporal, spatial or logical relationship of its object to the rest of the sentence as in the following examples:

- The book is on the table.
- The book is beneath the table.
- The book is leaning against the table.
- The book is beside the table.
- She held the book over the table.
- She read the book during class.

In each of the preceding sentences, a preposition locates the noun ‘book’ in space or in time. Put simply, the (pre) position of the object/noun.

A prepositional phrase is made up of the preposition, its object and any associated adjectives or adverbs. A prepositional phrase can function as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb. The most common prepositions are: about, above, across, after, against, along, among, around, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, between, beyond, but, by, despite, down, during, except, for, from, in, inside, into, like, near, of, off, on, onto, out, outside, over, past, since, through, throughout, till, to, toward, under, underneath, until, up, upon, with, within, and without.

**Conjunctions**

A conjunction is a word that ‘joins’. A conjunction joins two parts of a sentence or separate phrases within a sentence together.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordinating Conjunctions</th>
<th>Subordinating Conjunctions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so</td>
<td>although, because, since, unless</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can consider conjunctions from three aspects.

**Form**

Conjunctions have three basic forms:
• Single Word
  for example: and, but, because, although

• Compound (often ending with as or that)
  for example: provided that, as long as, in order that

• Correlative (surrounding an adverb or adjective)
  for example: so...that

Function
Conjunctions have two basic functions or ‘jobs’:

• Coordinating conjunctions are used to join two parts of a sentence that are grammatically equal. The two parts may be single words or clauses, for example:
  - Jack and Jill went up the hill.
  - The water was warm, but I didn’t go swimming.

• Subordinating conjunctions are used to join a subordinate dependent clause to a main clause, for example:
  - I went swimming although it was cold.

Position

• Coordinating conjunctions always come between the words or clauses that they join.

• Subordinating conjunctions usually come at the beginning of the subordinate clause.

Interjections
Interjections are words that stand alone in a sentence (they do not relate grammatically to any other part of the sentence) and are used as sudden expressions of thought or emotion such as pain, joy, surprise or realisation.

For example:
Aha, ouch, well, hooray, phew, blimey, hey, eh?

Some interjections are compounds such as the horribly ubiquitous ‘oh my god’, ‘oh dear’, ‘uh oh’ or ‘good grief’ although many compound interjections are informal, idiomatic or slang expressions.

Articles
In traditional grammar, an article is considered to be a specific type of adjective in that it describes a noun. However, in some languages articles have different functions relating to gender or case and so to avoid confusion it is easier to consider articles as a separate part of speech.

There are two types of article in English: the definite (’the’) and the indefinite (’a’ or ’an’). The definite article is used when the subject is known or specific or attached to a proper noun as in ‘the cat sat on the mat’. The indefinite article is used for situations where the subject noun is non-specific or general as in ‘an apple a day keeps the doctor away’.

As a general rule ‘an’ is attached to any noun beginning with a vowel and ‘a’ is attached to any noun beginning with a consonant. The only exception, strictly speaking, are nouns beginning with ‘h’ which traditionally also took ‘an’, although this somewhat archaic form is the cause of some contention. As a general guideline, the use of ‘a’ or ‘an’ with nouns beginning with ‘h’ is dependent upon if the ‘h’ is pronounced or is silent.

For example: ‘a’ hotel / ‘an’ hour

The problem, of course, in general speech is that common modern English dialects drop ‘h’ sounds from many words, although Shakespeare’s Richard III most certainly cried ‘A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse’ at the climax of the battle of Bosworth.

Case Study: Present Perfect versus Past Simple

The following case study outlines a series of activities and steps for teaching the different uses of the present perfect and the past simple. In practice, the present perfect is a notoriously difficult tense to teach and would need to be revised and revisited over a series of lessons. The case study below outlines one of the principal functions of the present perfect to describe events and experiences in the past at an unspecified time.

The following sample lesson is aimed at intermediate adults / business students and follows the present/practice/produce lesson structure.

Introducing the Topic

Explain that English has many tenses and that we cannot always use the past simple to talk about something that occurred in the past. Give students a copy of the chart below. In the first column are sentences in the simple past tense. In the second column are sentences in the present perfect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Present Perfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I attended the seminar yesterday.</td>
<td>I’ve attended many different professional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I didn’t visit the new branch with Jim last week. I haven’t visited our new branch yet.

I travelled internationally on a business trip in March. I’ve travelled internationally before.

I tried that dish the last time I was there. I’ve tried that dish before.

I took classes there in 2005 and 2006. I’ve taken classes there.

I gave a speech in English last Friday. I’ve given a speech in English.

I met her when she came to the plant for the inspection. I’ve met her.

Ask students what tense is used in the first column. *(Answer: past simple)*

Ask students if they know the name of the tense in the second column. *(Answer: present perfect)*

Ask, ‘Do both columns refer to the speaker’s past experiences?’ *(Answer: yes)*

Ask, ‘What is the difference between the two columns of sentences (besides the tense)’? Give them a few minutes to think about it. They should correctly identify that column one mentions when the activities were completed and that column two does not.

Teaching the Affirmative Form

Put the following explanation and graphic on the board:

We use the present perfect to talk about past experiences that happened at an UNSPECIFIED time.

Sample Timeline:
Explain that using the present perfect is similar to saying ‘I have the experience of….’

Now, put the form on the board.

Subject + to have + past participle.....

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LONG FORM (WRITTEN AND FORMAL COMMUNICATION)</th>
<th>SHORT FORM (MORE COMMON, INFORMAL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have travelled to New York.</td>
<td>I’ve travelled to New York.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have taken English classes.</td>
<td>You’ve taken English classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He has participated in a team building activity.</td>
<td>He’s participated in a team building activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She has run a marathon.</td>
<td>She’s run a marathon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It has malfunctioned during important conference calls.</td>
<td>It’s malfunctioned during important conference calls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have studied the present perfect.</td>
<td>We’ve studied the present perfect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have introduced themselves to everyone in the office.</td>
<td>They’ve introduced themselves to everyone in the office.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explain that we can use contractions after the names of people in the third person singular. For example, ‘Brad’s taken Spanish classes’, or ‘Kate’s gone to the conference before’. Explain that we CANNOT use contractions with people’s names in the third person plural. Also, mention when we use the long form (mostly written communication) and when we use the short form (most oral communication, informal writing).
Teaching Past Participles

If this is a student’s first time seeing the present perfect, he or she may be unfamiliar with past participles. Point out that for regular verbs, the past participle is the same as the simple past tense.

For example:

I talked to John yesterday.
I have talked to John many times.

Explain that there are many irregular verbs in the present perfect. Go over some of the main irregular past participles with your class and drill for correct pronunciation.

Affirmative Form Practice

Now that you have introduced your students to the affirmative form of the present perfect and some common irregular past participles, have them complete the fill-in activity below. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the present perfect. Write the long form AND the short form.

1) John __________ (contributed) his time to various charities.
2) I __________ (see) that documentary.
3) We __________ (sell) their products before.
4) Tracy and Todd __________ (hear) the joke before.
5) She __________ (call) everyone on the list of sales leads.
6) They __________ (interview) the 5 candidates on the list.
7) You __________ (buy) their products in the past.
8) I __________ (write) about this topic in the past.
9) We __________ (purchase) a similar product in the past.
10) He __________ (make) many professional contacts.
11) Christine __________ (be) a valuable resource for us.

Have students check their answers with a partner and then review the answers quickly as a class.

Teaching the Negative Form

Put the negative form on the board.

Subject + to have + not + past participle….

Examples:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LONG FORM (WRITTEN AND FORMAL COMMUNICATION)</th>
<th>SHORT FORM (MORE COMMON, INFORMAL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have not travelled to New York.</td>
<td>I haven’t travelled to New York.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have not taken English classes.</td>
<td>You haven’t taken English classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He has not participated in a team building activity.</td>
<td>He hasn’t participated in a team building activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She has not run a marathon.</td>
<td>She hasn’t run a marathon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It has not malfunctioned during important conference calls.</td>
<td>It hasn’t malfunctioned during important conference calls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have not studied the present perfect.</td>
<td>We haven’t studied the present perfect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have not introduced themselves to everyone in the office.</td>
<td>They haven’t introduced themselves to everyone in the office.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Negative Form Practice**

Tell students to look at the fill-in activity they completed in the present perfect affirmative form. Tell them to change the sentences to the negative form in both the long form and short form.

When they finish, have students check their answers with a partner and then review briefly as a class.

**Less Structured Practice of the Affirmative and Negative Form**

Tell students to write five sentences about themselves using the present perfect — three sentences in the affirmative and two sentences in the negative. Tell them to write things that they think will be surprising to their classmates. Provide a model of what you’re looking for.

For example:

1) I’ve eaten ostrich.
2) I’ve worked as an elementary school teacher.
3) I’ve taught English in South America.
4) I haven’t seen Star Wars.
5) I haven’t applied for a credit card.
Give students time to write their five sentences. When they are finished, have them read their five sentences aloud. The rest of the class will listen to the sentences and guess which ones are true and which ones are false. If you have a large class, do this in small groups.

**Teaching the Question Form**

Tell your class that the question form of the present perfect is very similar to other question forms. We use inverted word order to make questions. Write the form on the board.

To have + subject + past participle….. ?

or

To have + subject + ever + past participle…..?

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>QUESTION WITH ‘EVER’</th>
<th>SHORT ANSWER, AFFIRMATIVE</th>
<th>SHORT ANSWER, NEGATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Have I been to Texas?</td>
<td>Have I ever been to Texas?</td>
<td>Yes, I have.</td>
<td>No, I haven’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Have you eaten snails?</td>
<td>Have you ever eaten snails?</td>
<td>Yes, you have.</td>
<td>No, you haven’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He Has he written a formal business letter in English?</td>
<td>Has he ever written a formal business letter in English?</td>
<td>Yes, he has.</td>
<td>No, he hasn’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She Has she worked in customer service?</td>
<td>Has she ever worked in customer service?</td>
<td>Yes, she has.</td>
<td>No, she hasn’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It Has it stopped working before?</td>
<td>Has it ever stopped working before?</td>
<td>Yes, it has.</td>
<td>No, it hasn’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Have we met before?</td>
<td>Have we ever met before?</td>
<td>Yes, we have.</td>
<td>No, we haven’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They Have they managed a team of people?</td>
<td>Have they ever managed a team of</td>
<td>Yes, they have.</td>
<td>No, they haven’t.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTION

Explain that we sometimes use the word ‘ever’ when we ask questions about past experiences in the present perfect. Explain that there really isn’t any change in meaning.

Question Form Practice

Put students in pairs. Tell each student to write five questions for their partner using the present perfect question form. Students switch papers and answer their partner’s questions.

Putting it All Together

Students will complete a scavenger hunt. Give students a copy of the chart below. Each square has an experience written in it. Students move around the room asking each other questions in the present perfect. For each square, they must find someone in class who can answer ‘Yes, I have’ to the question. The chart lists experiences in the infinitive – your students will have formed the sentences themselves. Warn your students that many of the verbs are irregular. Give them a few minutes to look over the sheet so they can identify which words are irregular and plan accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study a language besides English</th>
<th>Travel internationally</th>
<th>Be outside your comfort zone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forget an important appointment</td>
<td>Eat something very unusual</td>
<td>Be very nervous during a presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive a present you didn’t like</td>
<td>Cook for a large group of people</td>
<td>Meet someone famous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
[Note: They might not be able to find someone for all of these questions. This is good – they’ll have more practice asking questions. This activity can, of course, be personalized for different nationalities and contexts.]

Finish class by asking them questions like, ‘Who has ever given a presentation in English?’ When they mention who in the class has, encourage the class to ask that person follow-up questions. For example, ‘Who did you give the presentation to?’, ‘Were you nervous?’ Point out to the class that we switch tenses and use the present simple to ask follow-up questions.

Examples:

Question in present perfect: Have you ever travelled internationally? Follow up questions in past simple: Where did you go? Who did you go with? What language did you speak on your trip? How long ago was the trip?

Finish class by allowing students to practice asking follow-up questions. Turn this into a brief, whole-group discussion to finish class.

Task Answers
Task 7A:
1) Transitive
2) Intransitive
3) Intransitive
4) Transitive
5) Transitive

Task 7B:
Regular Verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>agree</th>
<th>agreed</th>
<th>agreed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>treat</td>
<td>treated</td>
<td>treated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paint</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>examine</td>
<td>examined</td>
<td>examined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dress</td>
<td>dressed</td>
<td>dressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burn</td>
<td>burned</td>
<td>burned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Irregular Verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Past Simple</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>grow</td>
<td>grew</td>
<td>grown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prove</td>
<td>proved</td>
<td>proven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make</td>
<td>made</td>
<td>made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forbid</td>
<td>forbade</td>
<td>forbidden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burn</td>
<td>burnt</td>
<td>burnt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>went</td>
<td>gone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Task 7C:**

1) Auxiliary = will / Principal = come
2) Auxiliaries = could, have, been / Principal = triggered
3) Auxiliary = could / Principal = be
4) Auxiliaries = had, been / Principal = sick
5) Auxiliary = had / Principal = seen

**Task 7D:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Shut</th>
<th>Past Simple</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple</td>
<td>I shut the window</td>
<td>I shut the window</td>
<td>I will shut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect</td>
<td>I had shut the window</td>
<td>I have shut the window</td>
<td>I will have shut the window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>I was shutting the window</td>
<td>I am shutting the window</td>
<td>I will be shutting the window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect Continuous</td>
<td>I had been shutting the window</td>
<td>I have been shutting the window</td>
<td>I will have been shutting the window</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Base (Infinitive)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Past Simple</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>think</td>
<td>thought</td>
<td>thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feel</td>
<td>felt</td>
<td>felt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make</td>
<td>made</td>
<td>made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buy</td>
<td>bought</td>
<td>bought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drink</td>
<td>drank</td>
<td>drunk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swim</td>
<td>swam</td>
<td>swum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Task 7E

1) Manner
2) Time
3) Time
4) Degree
5) Place
6) Manner
7) Manner
8) Degree
9) Place
10) Degree

Resources
The following websites provide quick online grammar tests and other useful resources to prepare for the online test:

http://www.grammar-monster.com/
http://englishteststore.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11387&Itemid=427