

Language awareness strategies

Solve the problem ... and discover the rule!

The Simple Present and the Present Continuous

1. Identify the verb forms in *italics* on the left as examples of the Simple Present (SP) or Present Continuous (PC). Then match each sentence with one of the meanings on the right.

1. A: Where's Peter?
B: He's in studio 3. He's *listening* to some new records.
2. Ken usually *comes* in at eight.
3. This month Ken *is interviewing* some pop stars.

- a) *permanent* situations, habits or routines
- b) actions *in progress* at the time of speaking
- c) *temporary* situations

3. Read and discuss the questions.

1. JOE: What are your favourite TV programmes?
ANN: I'm fed up with soap operas. I'm watching a lot of TV films.
Is Ann watching a TV film while she's talking to Joe?
2. JANE: Where do you live?
RICK: I live in Nottingham.
PAUL: I'm living in Nottingham too.
Who would you expect to leave Nottingham sooner, Rick or Paul?
3. The price of gold is increasing dramatically.
Would you make a long-term investment in gold after hearing this?

LANGUAGE POINT Defining relative clauses

1. Look at the following sentences. Circle the relative pronouns and underline the relative clause that they introduce. Then discuss the questions below.

A friend is somebody who/that shares your feelings and interests.

An accident is something which/that happens unexpectedly.

- a) *Are the above relative clauses essential in the sentence?*
- b) *Which relative pronouns are used to refer to*
– people?
– things?
- c) *Are the above pronouns the subjects or the objects of the relative clause?*

2. Read the following sentences and discuss the questions.

An acquaintance is somebody you know, but not a close friend.

Your belongings are the things you own.

A partner is a person you share an activity with.

Your hometown is the place you come from.

- a) *A relative pronoun has been omitted in the above sentences. Can you say where exactly? Underline the relative clause in each sentence.*
- b) *Compare the sentences in 1 and 2 above. Can you say when a relative pronoun can be omitted? (Consider whether the pronoun is the subject or the object of the defining relative clause.)*
- c) *Prepositions can accompany relative pronouns. If the pronoun is omitted, where does the preposition appear?*

Non-defining relative clauses

1. Read the following sentences. Circle the relative pronouns and underline the relative clauses. Then discuss the questions below.

Cicero, who was a Roman philosopher, reports on the «art of memory».
Short-term memory, which is influenced by time of day, seems to be better in the morning.
Witnesses, whose evidence is often crucial, can be very inaccurate.

- Are the above relative clauses essential in the sentences?
- What can you notice about punctuation?
- Which pronouns introduce non-defining relative clauses?

2. Read the following examples and compare them with the ones in 1 above.

A: Cicero – you know, the Roman philosopher ...

B: Yes.

A: Well, he reports on the «art of memory» ...

A: Witnesses can be very inaccurate ...

B: Mm ...

A: And yet their evidence is often crucial ...

Do you think non-defining clauses are particularly used in speaking or in writing?

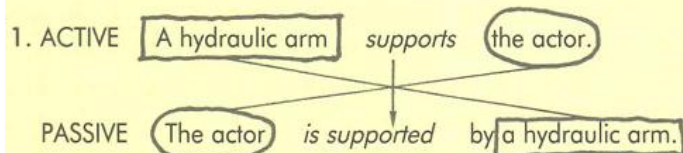
Defining and non-defining relative clauses

Look at the following sentences and answer the questions.

- The students, who failed the test, had to come back the next day.
 - The students who failed the test had to come back the next day.
In which case were there students who didn't fail the test?
- The man who was smoking started to talk.
 - The man, who was smoking, started to talk.
In which case was there only one man present?
- Children, who are lazy, must be encouraged to do things.
 - Children who are lazy must be encouraged to do things.
In which case does the writer think that all children are lazy?

The Passive

1. Look at the following examples and discuss the questions.



- Which auxiliary verb is used to make a passive verb form?
 - Which preposition introduces the agent?
2. The model scorpions *are photographed* frame by frame.
Fire extinguishers *are kept* ready nearby.
Many people *are killed* in road accidents every year.
- By + agent* is often omitted. Can you guess when and why?

3. Look at the following examples. In what contexts do you think passive forms are often used?

Parking *is not permitted* in front of the gates.

When heat *is applied* to a solid, its molecules begin to vibrate more rapidly.

CITY BANK *ROBBED*

TEN PEOPLE *ARRESTED*

The Past Perfect Simple and the Simple Past

Study the following examples carefully and consider the *sequence* of events. Discuss the questions below.

1. a) Before I *went* home I *had done/did* some shopping.
- b) They *started* to clean up after the party *had finished/finished*.
- c) When I *switched* on the TV, the film *started*.
- d) When I *switched* on the TV, the film *had started*.

In examples a) and b) you don't need to use the Past Perfect to show which event happened first – you can use the Simple Past. Can you guess why?

In examples c) and d), however, the Past Perfect (had started) and the Simple Past (started) are not interchangeable. Why?

2. When we turned on the radio, the news programme had finished.
Did we hear any of the news?
3. a) Clare had left when I arrived.
b) Clare left when I arrived.
In which case did I actually see Clare?
4. a) When I went into the room, she put on a record.
b) When I went into the room, she had put on a record.
In which case was the music already playing when I opened the door of that room?

The Past Continuous and the Simple Past

1. Read the following text, underline the examples of the Past Continuous and circle the examples of the Simple Past.

It was eleven o'clock. I was watching an old film. Liz was talking on the phone. Suddenly, somebody knocked on our door. I went to open it.

- a) *How is the Past Continuous formed?*
- b) *What kind of past events and situations does it describe?*

Which tense describes a «short» action which seems to «interrupt» a longer action in the past? Circle the conjunctions that introduce the two actions.

2. While Rick *was studying*, Vicky *was working* in the garden.
What's the sequence of events in this case?
3. a) When the lights went out, she went into the kitchen.
b) When the lights went out, she was going into the kitchen.

a) The students were shouting when the teacher came in.
b) The students shouted when the teacher came in.

What's the difference in meaning between a and b? Which sentence seems to suggest that one action was caused by the other?

3. Study the following examples and discuss the questions below.

1. a) While we *were having* a picnic, a storm *broke out* = We *were having* a picnic when a storm *broke out*.
- b) Just as she *was closing* the door, she *noticed* the letter on the floor = She *was closing* the door when she *noticed* the letter on the floor.

4. a) When she saw me, she was closing the door.
b) When she saw me, she closed the door.

In which case was she probably angry with me?

The causative: *have something done*

Read the following sentences. In which case did I do the job myself?

- I had washed the car.
 - I had the car washed.
- When she offered to iron my shirts, I said that I had already had them ironed.
 - When she offered to iron my shirts, I said that I had already ironed them.

The Present Perfect Simple and the Simple Past

Read the following sentences and discuss the questions.

- I *haven't used* the computer this afternoon.
 - I *didn't use* the computer this afternoon.

In which case does the conversation take place in the evening?
- Did you take* the ferry to Dover?
 - Have you ever taken* the ferry to Dover?

In which case am I asking about a specific trip to England?
- We *haven't been* to Oxford Street yet.
 - We *didn't go* to Oxford Street.

In which case is our holiday in London definitely over?
- Miller *has written* a television series, *The Body in Question*.
 - Miller *wrote* a fine travel book, *The Colossus of Maroussi*.

In which case are we referring to the American author Henry Miller (1891-1980) and in which case to the English writer Jonathan Miller (born in 1934)?
- John Lennon was a famous English singer-songwriter.
 - Muhammad Ali was a famous American boxer.

Is the meaning of was exactly the same in both cases?

The Present Perfect Simple and Continuous (1)

2. Read the following sentences and discuss the questions.

- She *'s written* her English essay.
 - She *'s been writing* her English essay.

In which case has she finished her essay?
- Who *'s been drinking* my coffee?
 - Who *'s drunk* my coffee?

In which case is there still some coffee in my cup?

- SOPHIA: I *'ve learnt* how to drive.
 CYNTHIA: I *'ve been learning* how to drive.
Would you feel safer with Sophia or Cynthia driving?
- You look tired! *Have you been studying?*
 - Yes, I *'ve been doing* my homework.
 - I *'ve done* the maths exercises and I *'ve translated* the French poem.

In which case am I stressing

 - the *results* of a recent past activity?
 - the *duration* of the activity?
 - the *conclusion* I am drawing from what I see?

The Present Perfect Simple and Continuous (2)

Read the following sentences and discuss the questions.

- Arnold *has played* for Arsenal for ten years – and Matthew *did* too.
Who's still playing for Arsenal, Arnold or Matthew?
- I've been living* in Rome for ten years.
 - I've lived* in Rome for ten years.
 - I lived* in Rome for ten years.

In which case am I definitely no longer living in Rome? Is there a difference between the other two sentences?
- He's *worked* for Ford since 1965.
 - I've known* Fred for years.
 - It's *rained* for days.
 - I've had* this car since last June.

In which two cases would the continuous form not be possible?

Wishes and regrets

<i>I wish</i>	he <i>was</i> here with me now.	<i>wishes and regrets about the present</i>
<i>If only</i>	he <i>didn't leave</i> so early.	
	he <i>could stay</i> here with us tonight.	
<i>If only</i>	he <i>had been</i> here with me then.	<i>wishes and regrets about the past</i>
<i>I wish</i>	he <i>hadn't left</i> so early yesterday.	
	he <i>could have stayed</i> here with us last night.	

- Which tenses are used after *I wish*/*If only* to refer to
 - present* situations?
 - past* situations?
- Read the following sentences and discuss the questions.
 - I wish they *had sold* their house.
 - I wish they *hadn't sold* their house.

In which case did they actually sell the house?
 - If only Tom *hadn't married* her!
 - If only Tom *had married* her!

In which case did Tom actually marry her?
 - I wish you *would* help me.
 - I wish you *could* help me.

In which case aren't you able to help me? In which case aren't you willing to do it?

Prohibition and lack of necessity

You | *can't* | go = it is not permitted
 You | *mustn't* | go = it is prohibited

You | *don't have to* | go = it is not necessary
 You | *needn't* | go = it is not necessary

Read the following sentences and discuss the questions.

- Max *needn't* use the word-processor.
 - Max *mustn't* use the word-processor.

In which case can Max choose what to use?
- You *mustn't* watch this programme.
 - You *needn't* watch this programme.

Which sentence would you complete with

 - Try one of the other channels.
 - There's too much violence.
- You *needn't* stand barefoot while using a hairdryer.
 - You *mustn't* stand barefoot while using a hairdryer.

In which case am I talking about

 - a safety precaution?
 - comfort in the bathroom?

Logical deduction

You didn't have breakfast this morning. You *must be* hungry.

She looks so young. She

<i>can't</i>
<i>couldn't</i>

 | *be* forty yet. *Present reference*

This letter has been opened. Someone *must have read* it.

That film is very long. It

<i>can't have</i>
<i>couldn't have</i>

 | *finished* yet. *Past reference*

NB *Must not* expresses *prohibition*, not logical deduction
You *mustn't* talk in the library.

2. Read the following examples and discuss the questions.

1. a) He *can't be* sixty yet. He's still working.
- b) He *isn't* sixty yet. He once showed me his passport.

In which case am I absolutely certain of what I say? In which case am I nearly certain?

2. a) *News at Ten* had already finished.
- b) The time signal on the radio said 'half past ten'.

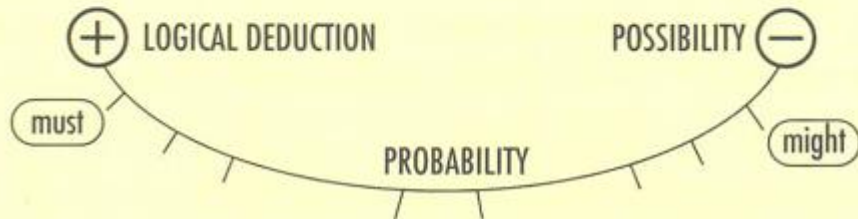
In which case can I say for sure it was half past ten? In which case can I only say it must have been half past ten?

3. a) Jane's still got Tom's Berlin address.
- b) Tom can speak German very well.

In which case can I say that Tom lived in Germany? In which case can I only guess that Tom must have lived in Germany?

Degrees of certainty: a review

1. Look at the *Language Point* sections in this Unit and write the *modal verbs* you have been studying in the appropriate place on the scale below.



2. Match each sentence (1-4) with its appropriate completion (a-d). Discuss your answers with your partners.

1. She must have arrived.
 2. She should have arrived.
 3. She might have arrived.
 4. She can't have arrived.
- a) I've just phoned her and nobody answers.
 - b) She was hoping to catch the two o'clock bus.
 - c) I can see her car in front of her house.
 - d) It doesn't usually take her more than an hour.