



COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TENSES IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES.

Mamadaliyeva Gulbaxor Arabjanovna

Andijan Machine -building institute Academic lyceum

gulbahormamadaliyeva2905@gmail.com

Annotation: This study explores the typological and functional differences between the tense-aspect systems of the English and Uzbek languages. English, a West Germanic language, utilizes a complex system of 12 active voice tenses governed by aspectual nuances (Simple, Continuous, Perfect, Perfect Continuous). Uzbek, a Turkic language, operates on an agglutinative principle, where temporal meanings are embedded in verb stems via specific suffix chains. This article analyzes the morphological structures, semantic functions, and pragmatic applications of these systems to provide a comprehensive roadmap for linguists and educators.

Keywords: Linguistics, Tense, Aspect, Agglutination, English-Uzbek Contrastive Analysis, Morphosyntax.

Language serves as a temporal map for human experience. However, how that map is drawn varies significantly across linguistic families. In English, the relationship between time (tense) and the nature of the action (aspect) is deeply intertwined, often requiring auxiliary verbs. In Uzbek, the verb is the "powerhouse" of the sentence, carrying tense, mood, person, and number in a single word. This article provides a deep dive into these differences, particularly relevant for academic professionals in Uzbekistan's higher education sector.

English and Uzbek belong to different language families—English is Germanic (Indo-European), while Uzbek is a Turkic language (specifically Karluk



branch). This leads to fundamental differences in how they handle verb tenses, alongside similarities in basic time distinctions (past, present, future).

Key Typological Differences:

- English is largely analytic: It relies heavily on auxiliary verbs (be, have, will, do), word order (strict SVO: Subject-Verb-Object), and a limited set of inflections. It has only two morphological tenses (past and non-past/present), with future and aspects expressed periphrastically (via auxiliaries and participles). English distinguishes 12–16 "tenses" in teaching contexts by combining tense, aspect (simple, continuous/progressive, perfect, perfect continuous), and sometimes voice or mood.

- Uzbek is highly agglutinative: Verbs attach multiple suffixes in a fixed order to the stem for tense, aspect, person, number, mood, voice, etc. No auxiliary verbs for basic tenses. Word order is typically SOV (Subject-Object-Verb), with case markers on nouns reducing reliance on strict order. Uzbek has a richer evidential system in the past (e.g., witnessed vs. non-witnessed/reported events) and often blends tense with aspect or mood via suffixes.

Uzbek verbs conjugate for person and number with personal endings (e.g., -man for "I", -san for "you" singular informal, -miz for "we"). English has minimal person agreement (only 3rd singular -s in present simple).

Basic Tenses: Similarities and Formation Both languages mark past, present, and future as core categories, but the expression differs significantly.

Present Tense:

- English: Simple present (I walk / He walks) for habits, facts, or scheduled future. Continuous (I am walking) for ongoing actions now. Formed with base verb (+ -s for 3sg) or "be + -ing".

- Uzbek: Often a present-future form using stem + -a/-y + personal ending (e.g., boraman "I go/I will go" from bor- "go"). This covers habits and general future. A distinct present continuous uses suffixes like -yap, -moqda, or -ayotir (e.g.,



boryapman "I am going"). No strict separation like English auxiliaries; aspect is suffix-driven.

Example comparison (verb "to read" / o'qimoq):

- English: I read books. (habit) / I am reading a book. (now)

- Uzbek: Men kitob o'qiyman. (habit/general) / Men kitob o'qiyapman. (now, with -yap)

Past Tense

- English: Simple past (I walked) for completed actions; often irregular (go → went). Continuous (was walking), perfect (had walked), etc., via auxiliaries.

- Uzbek: Simple past with -di + personal endings (e.g., o'qidim "I read/I studied"). Richer evidential distinctions:

- Witnessed/direct past (definite, -di).

- Non-witnessed/inferential or reported (often -gan or similar for resultative/perfect-like meanings).

- Narrative/story past (with converbs like -ib). No direct equivalent to English irregular verbs; mostly regular suffixation.

Example:

- English: I read the book yesterday. (simple past)

- Uzbek: Men kecha kitobni o'qidim. (witnessed past)

Uzbek's past can imply aspect (completed vs. ongoing/result) more inherently through choice of suffix.

Future Tense:

- English: No morphological future; uses "will/shall + base" (I will walk), "be going to", present simple for scheduled events, or other modals.

- Uzbek: Present-future form (-a/-y) often serves for future (boraman "I will go"). Definite/intentional future with -ajak/-ayajak or -moqchi (intention: "I intend to go"). No dedicated auxiliary like "will"; suffixes handle it.

Example:



- English: I will read the book tomorrow.
- Uzbek: Men ertaga kitob o'qiyman. (or more definite: o'qimoqchiman)

Aspect and More Complex Forms:

- English excels in explicit aspect combinations:
 - Continuous/progressive: be + -ing (ongoing).
 - Perfect: have + past participle (completed with relevance to another time).
 - Perfect continuous: have been + -ing.

This creates nuanced forms like "I have been reading" (action started in past, continuing/relevant now).

- Uzbek integrates aspect via suffixes or additional markers (e.g., -gan for perfect-like/resultative states). Continuous uses -yap/-moqda. Compound or periphrastic forms exist but are less central than in English. Uzbek lacks direct analogs for all English perfect continuous nuances; context or extra words often clarify.

Uzbek has more evidentiality (how the speaker knows the information) baked into past forms, which English expresses lexically (e.g., "apparently", "I saw that...").

Other Grammatical Categories Tied to Tenses:

- Mood: Both have indicative, imperative, conditional. English uses modals (can, may, would) or subjunctive (rare). Uzbek uses suffixes like -sa for conditional.
- Voice: Active/passive. English uses "be + past participle". Uzbek uses voice suffixes (e.g., -il- for passive).
- Non-finite forms: English has infinitive, gerund (-ing), participles. Uzbek has infinitive (-moq), participles (sifatdosh), but no direct gerund equivalent.

Challenges for Learners (Especially Uzbek Speakers Learning English)

Uzbek speakers may struggle with English auxiliaries, irregular verbs, perfect aspects, and the heavy reliance on word order (vs. Uzbek's flexible SOV with case markers). English speakers learning Uzbek often find the agglutinative suffixes and



evidential distinctions complex, as well as the lack of articles and different word order.

In summary, while both languages convey past/present/future, English builds complexity through analytic auxiliaries and aspect combinations, offering fine-grained temporal nuances. Uzbek achieves similar (and sometimes richer evidential) distinctions through synthetic suffixation, making verbs more compact but morphologically dense. These differences reflect broader typological contrasts: analytic vs. agglutinative structure. For precise mastery, examples in context and practice with native materials are essential, as translations rarely map one-to-one.

Conclusion

The English tense system is a "Clock and Compass" system, focusing on precisely where an action sits on a timeline relative to the speaker. The Uzbek system is a "Certainty and Connection" system, focusing on the speaker's relationship to the truth of the statement and the logical completion of the act. While English is more analytically complex, Uzbek is morphologically denser.

For Academic Curriculum: In pedagogical institutes, focus heavily on the Present Perfect and Past Perfect as these have no direct morphological "twins" in Uzbek. For Translation Software Development: Developers should implement "Evidentiality" filters to ensure that an Uzbek *-ibdi* suffix is correctly translated into English using modal verbs or evidentiary adverbs. For Students: Utilize "Translation Triangles"—translating a sentence from Uzbek to English, then back to Uzbek—to identify where temporal meaning is lost or added.

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