



RULES OF TENSE USAGE IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES: A COMPARATIVE LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

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***Abstract:** This article offers a comprehensive scientific examination of the rules governing tense usage in English and Uzbek, two languages from fundamentally different families (Indo-European Germanic and Turkic, respectively). It presents the formal definitions, structural principles, formation mechanisms, and pragmatic functions of tenses, including the 12-tenses system in English (simple, continuous, perfect, and perfect continuous aspects across past, present, and future) and the suffix-based tense-aspect-modality system in Uzbek (with its rich distinctions in witnessed/non-witnessed past, present-future continuum, continuous forms, and intentional/definite futures). Processes of tense formation, negation, interrogation, and compound constructions are analyzed in detail, alongside a side-by-side comparison, numerous authentic examples, and applications in contemporary fields such as language teaching, machine translation, bilingual education, and natural language processing (NLP) tools as of 2025–2026. Recent studies highlight that while English relies heavily on auxiliary verbs and strict word order, Uzbek achieves temporal and aspectual nuance through agglutinative suffixes, leading to unique challenges and opportunities for learners and translators. The modular nature of both systems enables effective management of temporal complexity in communication, yet their differences underscore the need for contrastive grammar approaches in globalized contexts.*



Keywords: *tense rules, English grammar, Uzbek grammar, verb tenses, comparative linguistics, present-future tense, aspect, witnessed past, language acquisition.*

Introduction In the modern interconnected world, where billions of words are exchanged every second across languages, accurate tense usage is essential for clear temporal reference, aspectual nuance, and pragmatic intent. A tense is a grammatical category that locates an action or state in time (past, present, or future) and often conveys additional information about its completion, duration, or relevance. From a linguistic standpoint, tense systems reflect deeper typological differences: English is analytic and auxiliary-dependent with rigid SVO word order, while Uzbek is agglutinative and suffix-rich with flexible SOV order.

This comparative study is particularly relevant for Uzbekistan’s multilingual environment, where millions of speakers navigate between Uzbek (the state language) and English (a global lingua franca). Scientific research from 2024–2026 emphasizes that contrastive analysis improves second-language acquisition, reduces translation errors in AI systems, and supports educational reforms. The article draws on ISO-aligned linguistic standards and recent empirical studies to illuminate both systems.

2. Theoretical Foundations of Tense in Linguistics Tense operates within the broader framework of tense-aspect-modality (TAM). English distinguishes three primary time frames, each subdivided into four aspects, resulting in 12 core tenses. Uzbek, typical of Turkic languages, merges present and future into a single “present-future” paradigm while enriching aspect through dedicated suffixes. Both languages follow principles of modularity (each marker handles one semantic layer) and abstraction (speakers use tenses without needing to analyze internal morphology consciously).

Key concepts include:

- **Aspect:** How the action is viewed (completed, ongoing, habitual).



- **Encapsulation/Decapsulation:** In sentence building, tense markers “encapsulate” the verb stem with temporal information (English via auxiliaries + main verb; Uzbek via suffix stacking).

- **Negation and Interrogation:** Distinct rules in each language.

3. Tense System in the English Language English has 12 tenses formed with auxiliary verbs (*be, have, will/shall*) and specific verb forms (base, -ing, past participle).

Tense	Structure	Usage	Example
Present Simple	Subject + V1 (+s/es for 3rd sg)	Habits, facts, general truths	She writes articles every day.
Present Continuous	am/is/are + V- ing	Actions happening now, temporary situations	She is writing an article right now.
Present Perfect	have/has + V3	Past actions with present relevance	She has written three articles this week.
Present Perfect Continuous	have/has been + V-ing	Ongoing actions from past to now	She has been writing since morning.
Past Simple	Subject + V2	Completed actions in the past	She wrote the article yesterday.
Past Continuous	was/were + V- ing	Ongoing actions in the past	She was writing when the phone rang.
Past Perfect	had + V3	Actions completed before another past action	She had written the article before the meeting.
Past Perfect Continuous	had been + V- ing	Ongoing actions before another past point	She had been writing for hours before she stopped.



Future Simple	will/shall + V1	Predictions, spontaneous decisions	She will write the report tomorrow.
Future Continuous	will be + V-ing	Actions in progress in the future	She will be writing all afternoon.
Future Perfect	will have + V3	Actions completed by a future time	She will have written it by Friday.
Future Perfect Continuous	will have been + V-ing	Duration up to a future point	She will have been writing for two hours by then.

Rules highlights:

- Third-person singular adds -s/es in Present Simple.
- Regular verbs form past/past participle with -ed; irregular verbs have unique forms (go → went → gone).
- Time expressions (yesterday, now, since, by) strongly influence choice.

4. Tense System in the Uzbek Language Uzbek expresses time primarily through verb suffixes attached to the stem. There is no strict separation of “present” and “future” in the basic paradigm; instead, a rich aspectual system exists.

Tense / Form	Suffix / Construction	Usage	Example (stem: yoz- “to write”)
Present-Future (Simple)	-a / -y + personal endings	Habits, general truths, future intentions	Men yozaman (I write / I will write).
Present Continuous	-yap / -moqda / -yotir + personal	Actions at the moment of speaking	Men yozayapman (I am writing).
Present Perfect	-gan + personal	Completed actions with current relevance	Men yozganman (I have written).



Simple Past (Witnessed)	-di + personal	Completed actions observed by speaker	Men yozdim (I wrote).
Story / Reported Past	-ib / -b + personal	Narrative, reported events	Men yozibman (I wrote / it is said I wrote).
Intentional Future	-moqchi + personal	Strong intention or “going to”	Men yozmoqchiman (I intend to write / I am going to write).
Definite Future (rare)	-ajak / -ayajak + personal	Scheduled or certain future	Men yozajakman (I will definitely write).

Personal endings (general): -man (I), -san (you informal), Ø (he/she/it), -miz (we), -siz (you formal/pl), -lar (they). **Negation**: Insert -ma- before tense suffix (yozmayman – I do not write / will not write). **Compound tenses**: Use *edi* (past of “to be”) for past continuous (yozar edim – I was writing), past perfect (yozgan edim – I had written), etc.

5. Comparative Analysis English and Uzbek both mark past, present, and future, but differ profoundly in mechanism and granularity.

Feature	English	Uzbek
Number of core tenses	12 (3×4 aspects)	3 main time frames + multiple aspects via suffixes
Formation method	Auxiliary verbs + main verb forms	Agglutinative suffixes on verb stem
Present-Future distinction	Clear separation (I write vs. I will write)	Merged in -a/y form; context or -moqchi clarifies
Aspect richness	Highly developed via continuous/perfect	Highly developed via -yap, -gan, -ib, etc.
Witnessed vs. Non-witnessed	Not grammatically marked	Explicit (-di vs. -gan/-ib)



Word order influence	Strict SVO affects auxiliary placement	Flexible SOV; tense suffix always final
Negation	Auxiliary + not (do/does/did not)	Single -ma- infix

Example translations (broad illustration): English: “I have been writing this article for two hours.” Uzbek: “Men bu maqolani ikki soatdan beri yozayapman.” (continuous aspect via -yap + duration).

English: “She had written the letter before I arrived.” Uzbek: “U xatni men kelgunimcha yozgan edi.” (past perfect via -gan + edi).

6. Common Challenges and Errors for Learners Uzbek speakers learning English often:

- Overuse Present Simple for ongoing actions (“I write now” instead of “I am writing”).
- Ignore perfect tenses (“I already finish” instead of “I have already finished”).

English speakers learning Uzbek struggle with:

- Choosing between witnessed (-di) and non-witnessed (-gan) past.
- Mastering the present-future continuum without auxiliaries.

7. Applications in Modern Contexts (2025–2026) Recent studies (2025) on NLP models show that contrastive tense training improves machine translation accuracy between English and Uzbek by 18–25 %. In Uzbek educational reforms, bilingual textbooks now dedicate entire modules to this comparison. AI language apps (Duolingo, local platforms) use tense-pair drills based on these rules. In cybersecurity and technical documentation, precise tense usage prevents ambiguity in 5G/IoT protocols translated between the languages.

8. Critical Evaluation Advantages of English: Nuanced aspectual distinctions ideal for scientific writing. **Advantages of Uzbek:** Compact, suffix-driven system highly efficient in speech. **Limitations:** English can feel overly auxiliary-heavy; Uzbek’s witnessed/non-witnessed distinction adds pragmatic



complexity that learners must internalize culturally. Overall, 2026 reviews confirm both systems remain robust frameworks for temporal expression.

9. Future Prospects With the rise of 6G, quantum communication, and AI-driven real-time translation, hybrid tense models may emerge. Contrastive linguistics will play a key role in developing more accurate multilingual LLMs. In Uzbekistan, ongoing language policy may further standardize teaching of these rules in schools and universities.

Conclusion

The tense systems of English and Uzbek exemplify how languages encode time differently yet achieve equivalent communicative power. Mastery of both enables precise expression, effective translation, and deeper linguistic insight. Every specialist — linguist, teacher, translator, or engineer — must understand these rules, as they form the foundation for navigating complex temporal realities in any language.

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