

Article

The Past Perfect Continuous Construction in English and Its Uzbek Rendering: An Aspectual-Comparative Analysis

Kayumova Nilufar Kuchkorovna¹

1. Independent Researcher, Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages
Correspondence: kayumova.nilufar2881@mail.ru, <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-0740-1923>

Abstract: This study comparatively analyzes the aspectual characteristics of the Past Perfect Continuous construction in English and the ways of its expression in Uzbek. The research examines the relationship between this construction and such aspectual categories as durativity, resultativity, and telicity, as well as its discourse-aspectual functions including background narration, prior continuity, and temporal layering. The research material consists of Past Perfect Continuous constructions selected from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by J. K. Rowling and their Uzbek translation equivalents. The results reveal the predominance of durativity, the weakening of resultativity, and the active role of atelic interpretation within the construction. Furthermore, the study identifies the role of the Past Perfect Continuous in creating background narration, organizing temporal layers, and expressing mental processes in narrative discourse. The comparative analysis demonstrates the structural differences between the aspectual systems of English and Uzbek and shows that these meanings in Uzbek are mainly conveyed through functional-aspectual compensation.

Keywords: Past Perfect Continuous, aspect, durativity, telicity, comparative linguistics, English-Uzbek comparison, discourse analysis, functional-aspectual equivalence.

1. Introduction

In modern linguistics, the categories of tense and aspect constitute one of the major objects of grammatical-semantic research[1]. While tense expresses the temporal location of an event, aspect encompasses phenomena related to the internal temporal organization of an action. Bernard Comrie defines aspect as the "internal temporal structure" of an event and distinguishes it from the category of tense, which expresses temporal location[2].

In English, constructions formed through the combination of Perfect and Continuous components make it possible to express complex relationships between durativity, completion, and discourse functions. Although the Past Perfect Continuous construction is generally described as a means of expressing an action that continued before another event in the past, its semantic potential in actual speech and literary discourse is considerably broader. The construction may reveal complex aspectual phenomena such as durativity, iterativity, weakened resultativity, mental processuality, and the creation of a temporal background.

The issue of lexical aspect also plays an important role in understanding the aspectual interpretation of the Past Perfect Continuous. The typology of states, activities, accomplishments, and achievements proposed by Zeno Vendler provides an important theoretical framework for analyzing the relationship between grammatical aspect and lexical verb semantics [3]. In certain cases, under the influence of the Continuous component, even verbs with a telic character may be interpreted as processes.

Another important feature of this construction is related to its functional role in narrative discourse [4]. In literary texts, the Past Perfect Continuous frequently serves to create a temporal background, indicate a prior ongoing process, and organize parallel temporal layers.

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According to the theory of temporal organization proposed by Wolfgang Klein, grammatical forms play a crucial role in modeling temporal relations between events within discourse [5].

This issue acquires particular relevance from the perspective of comparative linguistics. Whereas the Perfect Continuous is a grammatically encoded category in English, Uzbek lacks a direct morphological equivalent [6]. Therefore, meanings expressed through the English Past Perfect Continuous are rendered in Uzbek by means of auxiliary verb constructions, temporal markers, participial forms, or contextual interpretation[7]. This situation highlights the necessity of investigating functional-aspectual equivalence and the cross-linguistic transformation of aspectual meaning[8].

The aim of the present study is to comparatively analyze the aspectual characteristics of the Past Perfect Continuous construction in English and the mechanisms of its expression in Uzbek. The main objectives of the study are to determine the relationship of the construction with durativity, resultativity, and telicity, to examine its discourse functions, and to describe its functional-aspectual equivalents in Uzbek. The research material consists of selected Past Perfect Continuous constructions from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by J. K. Rowling and their Uzbek translation variants.

2. Methodology

The present study was conducted on the basis of a qualitative-semantic and comparative-aspectual approach. Since the primary objective of the research was to identify the aspectual characteristics of the Past Perfect Continuous construction in English and the mechanisms of their expression in Uzbek, semantic, contextual, discourse, and comparative methods were employed in the analysis[9].

The research material consisted of selected Past Perfect Continuous constructions from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by J. K. Rowling and their Uzbek translation equivalents. [16] In selecting the examples, priority was given to the diverse functional uses of the construction, including units expressing durativity, narrative backgrounding, prior continuity, psychological and mental processes, as well as iterativity [10].

The examples were analyzed not only as grammatical forms but also within their broader narrative context. This approach made it possible to identify not only the sentence-level meanings of the construction but also its discourse functions. Particular attention was paid to the phenomena of background narration, prior continuity, temporal layering, and iterative interpretation.

The theoretical framework of the study was based on the aspect theories of Bernard Comrie, Zeno Vendler, Wolfgang Klein, and Carlota S. Smith. Comrie's temporal approach to aspect, Vendler's lexical-aspectual classification, Klein's model of temporal organization, and Smith's concept of aspectual reinterpretation served as the methodological foundation of the research[11].

The examples were analyzed according to the criteria of durativity, resultativity, telicity, and discourse function. At the comparative stage, the Uzbek renderings of the English constructions were classified, revealing that aspectual meanings are predominantly expressed through auxiliary verb constructions, temporal markers, participial forms, and contextual interpretation[12].

3. Results

A. Narrative Backgrounding and Temporal Layering

The results of the analysis demonstrated that one of the major discourse functions of the Past Perfect Continuous construction is the creation of narrative backgrounding and the organization of temporal layers.

"...the real reason she had been waiting on a cold, hard wall all day..."

Translation: "...куни билан тош тўсиқ устида ўтиришга мажбур қилган мавзуну ниҳоят очди..."

In this example, *had been waiting* does not express the main event itself but rather a continuous process that provides a temporal background for it. The indicator *all day* reinforces the meaning of durativity, while resultativity becomes weakened, resulting in an atelic interpretation. Although the grammatical Perfect Continuous form is not preserved in the translation, the marker *куни билан* compensates for the semantics of duration[13].

Temporal layering can also be observed in the following example:

"While they had been talking, the train had carried them out of London."

Translation: "Икковлон суҳбат қуриб кетишаётган поезд Лондондан анча узоқлашди."

In this example, two temporal layers are established: an ongoing background process and the main narrative event [14]. As a result, the functions of background narration and temporal layering are manifested simultaneously. In the Uzbek translation, the participial form *–ётган* functionally recreates the progressive meaning.

B. Prior Continuity and Habitual Interpretation

One of the important characteristics of the Past Perfect Continuous construction is its ability to express a process that had been continuing prior to another event, as well as actions of a repetitive or habitual nature[15].

"He rolled onto his back and tried to remember the dream he had been having."

Translation: "Бола белига аганаб, ҳозиргина қўрган тушини эслашга уринди."

In this example, two temporal layers — *had been having* and *tried to remember* — are interconnected. The construction foregrounds not the result of the action but rather a prior ongoing mental process.

"Dudley's gang had been chasing him as usual..."

Translation: "...Гаррини қувиш билан кун ўтказди."

In this example, the indicator *as usual* reinforces the habitual character of the action. Within the construction, durativity and iterativity are dominant, whereas resultativity is weakened. In the translation, this meaning is conveyed through an Uzbek construction with habitual semantics, demonstrating functional-aspectual equivalence.

C. Aspectual Interpretation of Psychological and Mental Processes

The Past Perfect Continuous is also actively employed in expressing psychological, emotional, and cognitive processes.

"...something that had been worrying him a lot lately."

Translation: "...шунча вақтдан буён қийнаб келган масала..."

In this example, what is expressed is not an external activity but rather a state of prolonged internal psychological pressure. Here, durativity is dominant, while resultativity assumes a secondary role. The Uzbek construction *қийнаб келган* preserves the meaning of continuity through the use of an auxiliary verb construction.

"...this was what Harry had been really looking forward to."

Translation: "...Гаррининг орзусига айланган нарса."

In the original text, a state of prolonged anticipation and emotional preparation is expressed, whereas in the translation the temporal sense of continuity is partially reduced, and the semantic emphasis shifts toward emotional value[16].

D. Strategies for Expressing Aspectual Meaning in Uzbek

The results of the comparative analysis demonstrated that Past Perfect Continuous constructions in English are predominantly rendered in Uzbek through the following means: auxiliary verb constructions (*қийнаб келган*, *кутиб турган*, *қувиб юрган*); temporal markers (*куни билан*, *шунча вақтдан буён*, *одатдагидек*); participial forms (*–ётган*, *–иб турган*, *–иб юрган*); and contextual interpretation[17].

The findings indicate that the grammatical meaning of the English Perfect Continuous is expressed in Uzbek primarily through functional-aspectual compensation.

4. Discussion

The findings of the study demonstrate that the Past Perfect Continuous construction possesses broader aspectual and discourse-related functions than those reflected in traditional grammatical descriptions. The construction is not limited to expressing temporal anteriority; rather, it gives rise to complex phenomena associated with durativity, aspectual reinterpretation, and discourse organization.

The results are consistent with the aspect theory proposed by Bernard Comrie. According to Comrie, aspect expresses not the external temporal location of an event but its internal temporal organization. In the constructions analyzed in this study, such as *had been waiting all*

day, had been worrying him, and had been talking, it was observed that the semantic focus is directed precisely toward the continuity of the action.

The results further demonstrate the consistent dominance of durativity and the weakening of resultativity in the Past Perfect Continuous construction. This phenomenon can be explained through the concept of aspectual reinterpretation proposed by Carlota S. Smith, according to which grammatical aspect may, in certain cases, modify the usual lexical-aspectual profile of a verb. This tendency is particularly evident in constructions such as *had been trying* or *had been looking forward to*, in which it is not the outcome but rather the prolonged process that occupies the communicative center.

These observations are also consistent with the lexical aspect theory developed by Zeno Vendler. The research material demonstrates that the Past Perfect Continuous frequently reinforces an activities-type interpretation and, in some cases, reinterprets even telic verbs as processes. Thus, the relationship between grammatical aspect and lexical aspect appears to be dynamic in nature.

The study also confirms the functional role of the Past Perfect Continuous in narrative discourse. Examples such as *Professor McGonagall had been waiting...* and *While they had been talking...* illustrate the active realization of the construction's functions of background narration and temporal layering. These findings are consistent with the theory of temporal organization proposed by Wolfgang Klein, according to which grammatical forms play a significant role in structuring temporal relations between events within discourse.

Furthermore, it was established that constructions such as *had been worrying*, *had been having*, and *had been looking forward to* are used to express prolonged psychological and mental processes. In such cases, durativity and processuality are dominant, whereas resultativity is weakened or relegated to a secondary position.

The comparative analysis also revealed significant differences in the aspectual organization of English and Uzbek. While the Past Perfect Continuous represents a grammatically encoded category in English, Uzbek lacks a direct morphological equivalent. Consequently, aspectual meaning is reconstructed through auxiliary verb constructions, temporal markers, participial forms, and contextual interpretation.

These observations lead to an important conclusion from the perspective of translation studies: the Uzbek rendering of the Past Perfect Continuous is based not on morphological equivalence but rather on the principle of functional-aspectual equivalence. In this process, preserving the semantic and discourse-related functions of the original construction takes precedence over formal structural correspondence.

The present study has demonstrated that the Past Perfect Continuous construction constitutes a dynamic, multifunctional, and highly adaptable element of the aspectual system of English. In Uzbek, however, these meanings are realized not through a single grammatical category but through a multicomponent system of semantic and syntactic devices.

5. Conclusion

The present study comparatively analyzed the aspectual characteristics of the Past Perfect Continuous construction in English and the means of its expression in Uzbek. The findings demonstrate that this construction is not limited to its traditionally recognized meaning of temporal anteriority, but rather performs complex semantic, aspectual, and discourse-related functions.

The analysis revealed the dominance of durativity, the weakening of resultativity, and, in certain cases, the emergence of an atelic interpretation. The study also confirmed the active realization of the construction's functions of background narration, prior continuity, and temporal layering, as well as its role in expressing psychological and mental processes.

The comparative analysis demonstrated the existence of significant differences in the aspectual organization of English and Uzbek. While the Past Perfect Continuous is a grammatically encoded category in English, its semantic load in Uzbek is conveyed mainly through auxiliary verb constructions, temporal markers, participial forms, and contextual interpretation. Therefore, the Uzbek rendering of this construction relies primarily on the principle of functional-aspectual equivalence.

The present study has demonstrated that the Past Perfect Continuous is one of the dynamic and multifunctional elements of the aspectual system of English. These findings carry theoretical significance for further research in the fields of aspect theory, comparative grammar,

and translation studies. Future research may profitably explore the construction across other discourse types as well as undertake a comparative investigation of its functional equivalents in Turkic languages.

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