

**ENGLISH TENSES AND VERB GROUPS**

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to present a new approach in teaching English tenses to Indonesian students. Tenses are one of the many difficulties which non-European speakers face when studying English language. I was interested in the lectures on Tenses and Verb Groups given by Mr. R.L.Fountain in 1970 and 1971 which suggested a new approach in dealing with tenses. Since then I have been thinking about it hoping to find a good technique to help Indonesian students in understanding English tenses.

Because of linguistic differences, Indonesian students tend to forget the redundant forms of English verbs. They find the s after a third person singular verb superfluous. For them "He open<sub>s</sub> the window" is as good as "He opens the window" which is equivalent to "Ia membuka jendela".

In this study I try to approach Tenses and Verb Groups in such a way that they will appear simpler and easier to the students to learn. This is done by means of analysing Tenses and Verb Groups through their form and usage.

A study of Tenses and Verb Groups is a study of verbs. Verbs can be finite or non-finite. A finite verb is a verb that can make a sentence and therefore can change the person, number, mood and tense, while a non-finite verb cannot. Based on their forms, verbs are classified into regular verbs which take the form of stem, stem + s, stem + ed and stem + ing, and the irregular ones which follow their own rule of form.



The division of finite and non-finite verbs leads to the understanding of Tenses and Verb Groups. When a finite verb stands by itself and is not the first item in a Verb Group, we speak of a Tense. Since a finite verb can take the form of stem, stem + s, stem + ed, it is logical to say that there are two kinds of tenses which are Simple Present Tense (stem and stem + s forms) and Simple Past Tense (stem + ed form).

When there are two or more verb forms found together - can walk, is walking, has been walking, etc.-, we speak of a Verb Group. A finite verb is only found in the first item of a verb group. The rest of the items are always non-finite verb forms. A verb group beginning with a finite form is called a finite verb group and a verb group beginning with a non-finite form is called a non-finite verb group.

For the sake of teaching Tenses and Verb Groups we have to take into consideration the frequency count of each of them. In daily practice, whether it is spoken or written, native English speakers use one tense more frequently than the other. It shows that each Tense and Verb Groups has its own rank in the order of importance. This concludes that in teaching Tenses and Verb Groups we must begin from the most frequent items to the less frequent ones.

The idea of optional and obligatory will help us to leave the less frequent items for a while and to teach them later when a certain establishment of a frequent one has been made so that no cross-association will happen.

In short the reader will find in this paper a study of Tenses and Verb Groups viewed from a paedagogical

aspect aiming at a simplification and effectiveness in teaching them to Indonesian students.

*I will do this* For further discussion it will be helpful to set limits to our study. First, we will not discuss Tenses according to their notional and linguistic time. It means that we will leave out the study of parallelism between content side and expression side such as : we must take an expression of "future will" to correspond with the notional time of "an event thought of as a fact in the future" ; He will come; I will do it, etc. Neither will we discuss the total number of tenses.

Secondly, it is not our attempt here to make a comparative analysis on several theories of tenses. There will be no discussion on whether the one is better than the other. Here we are concerned merely in Tenses and Verb Groups as they are explained by this theory.

Lastly, in so far that this theory is still being experimented at the IKIP Negeri Jogya, it is too soon yet to speak of a result. Therefore we will not make a conclusion that this is the best way of teaching Tenses and Verb Groups.

Realizing the difficulties that Indonesian students meet when tackling the problems of Tenses I want to offer one of the many possible solutions by doing a study on Tenses and Verb Groups from a paedagogical point of view, hoping that a good result could benefit students, teachers especially those who teach structure courses.

## CHAPTER I

### WHAT IS TENSE

#### A. DEFINITION

Before we go further into a discussion of the body of tense itself, it is of capital importance to have a clear idea about the term "tense", since there have been many interpretations which seem to have slight differences caused by a special stress each author gives to the meaning of tense.

Our procedure will begin with taking and examining some of these interpretations made by several authors and trying to see which elements they agree upon and then we will come to a deeper analysis of Tense and Verb Groups according to the new approach as they were explained by Mr. Fountain in the methods courses in 1970 and 1971.

If we open "The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English" and look for a definition of tense, we will find this statement :

tense/tens/n.verb form that shows time : the present (past, etc)-.

Here we find two elements that work together, the one indicates or gives a further meaning of the other. Tense is a form of a verb and this form of a verb indicates time.

S.E. Harman explains further by saying that this form of a verb indicates the time when an action takes place or indicates the state of being. She makes a restriction, however, that we should not always match a form of a verb with an actual time because sometimes they do not agree with each other :

Grammatical tense (a verb form) must be carefully differentiated from actual time, for the two are not always identical.<sup>1</sup>

Although Zandvoort inclines to put a stress on the main function of tense being that denoting the time of action, he offers a new vision of tense in his way of looking at it :

English grammatical terminology has a special word, **TENSE**, to denote two verbal forms (past and present) and an equal number of verbal groups (perfect and future) whose main function it is to denote the **TIME** at which an action takes place.<sup>2</sup>

We notice here that his division of tense is on the basis of how many verbs there are that take forms, whether it is a verbal form or a verb group. When there is only one verb which takes a form then it is a simple tense which can be either the simple present tense with the form of stem, stem + s, or the simple past tense with the form of stem + ed. When there is a verbal group then it is a compound tense which can be either the perfect tense having the form of to have + stem + ed, the future tense having the form of shall/will + stem. This division on the basis of the verb form will be useful in our later discussion on Tense and Verb Groups according to the new approach.

Roberts agrees that there is a correlation between tense and time, but this agreement may not be taken exclusively. Among other functions, tense expresses time. Besides indicating present time, for example, the present tense may indicate other time as well. The reverse is

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<sup>1</sup> Homer C. House and Susan Emelyn Harman, Descriptive English Grammar, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1950, p.116.

<sup>2</sup> R.W. Zandvoort, A Handbook of English Grammar, Longmans, 1957, p.58.

also true that the present time can be indicated by other tenses besides present tense :

**Tense :** Expression of time concepts by means of verb forms. Though tense comes from a Latin word meaning "time" (tempus), the correspondence between tense and time is only approximate. For example, the form that we call the present tense does not always point to present time; it often indicates future or past time.

Because of this weak correspondence between present tense and present time, and because of the constant reference of the past tense to past time, Roberts suggests a simpler division of tense into the non-past forms and the past forms. The non-past tense may denote several meanings besides present time, while the past tense refers almost faithfully to past time :

Forms like come, comes; walk, walks; and teach, teaches are often called present tense forms to distinguish them from the past tense - came, walked, taught. These forms do not always express present time, however, and perhaps it is a little simpler to call them non-past forms. The past tense expresses past time pretty regularly.

This is also the opinion of Otto Jespersen :

The English verb has only two tenses proper, the Present and the Preterit.

To distinguish the concept of time from that of tense, Jespersen describes time as a common experience of every human being and stands outside the order of language while tense belongs to a language, it is a linguistic expression refers not only to time but also to other purposes :

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<sup>3</sup> Paul Roberts, Understanding Grammar, Harpers & Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1954, pp. 529-530.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Roberts, Patterns of English, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., New York, 1956, p. 66.

<sup>5</sup> Otto Jespersen, Essentials of English Grammar, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1933, p. 231.

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It is important to keep the two concepts time and tense strictly apart. The former is common to all man kind and is independent of language; the latter varies from language to language and is the linguistic expression of time-relations, so far as these are indicated in verb forms. In English, however, as well as in many other languages, such forms serve not only for time-relations, but also for other purposes; they are also often inextricably confused with marks for person and mood.

Up to now we have been discussing the concepts of time and tense relations. Time has a real meaning in our lives. Time exists in the real world and we can experience it. But tense does not have such a meaning. Tense as one of the grammatical features, has only a structural meaning. It will only have its meaning in its structure, in its formation. It is not to be expected that tense will give the real meaning of experience :

*Used to denote age in a particular time*

Statements as to the structural meanings of such grammatical features as gender, tense, aspect, case, etc, all have a place in the description of a language system. It must be realized, nevertheless, that these meanings are solely formal and structural and may have only accidental bearing on anything in the world of experience.

Let us now discuss the total number of tenses. Roberts says :

English is generally said to have six tenses: present, past, future, present perfect, past perfect and future perfect. There are also other forms that are occasionally called tenses.

This division into six tenses, however, does not come out from the English language itself. It is the product of 18th and 19th centuries ideas of grammar. At that time linguistic science did not exist yet and the gram-

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 230.

<sup>7</sup> John B. Carroll, The Study of Language, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1966, p. 36.

<sup>8</sup> Paul Roberts, Understanding Grammar, loc cit.



grammarians thought that in analysing a language one must continually refer to the Latin language as a standard. English grammar adopted Latin structure and terminology. English grammar differentiated six tenses because Latin grammar had six tenses. So they were not English grammar really, but they were "Latin grammar disguised" as Roberts states it :

This is why, for example, English grammars describe six tenses. English doesn't have six tenses. It has two looked at one way or several dozen looked at another. But it happens that Latin does have six tenses, differentiated by inflectional endings, and the grammarians simply took the English translations of the six Latin tenses and called them the English tense system.

Concerning the total number of tenses, there are varied opinions. It depends on how and from what angle one is trying to describe the tense. It can be two, the non-past tense and the past tense as described by Roberts, or the Present and the Preterit according to Otto Jespersen; or, it can be four either : the present, past, perfect and future tense as Zandvoort differentiates.

From the discussion above we can draw some conclusions as follow :

1. That a verb can take the form of stem (walk), stem + s (walks), stem + ing (walking) and stem + ed (walked).
- 2; That a verb can either be finite or non-finite.
3. That a tense is a form of a finite verb.
4. That verb forms are linguistic expressions which have their meaning in their structure or construction.
5. That linguistic expressions must be kept apart from time of experience. Tense might denote time, but in it

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<sup>9</sup> Paul Roberts, Understanding English,  
Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1953, p. 134.



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self it does not have the actual meaning which time has. Therefore to deal with tense independently from time relation is possible and justified. It is important to remember this statement later when we come to our next discussion of Tense and Verb Groups.

6. That the total number of tenses are irrelevant, depending on the way they are looked at. Zandvoort for example, does not include "progressive" within his four tenses but deals with it separately as a verbal predicate.

These elements must be taken into account if we would like to succeed in our discussion of Tense and Verb Groups.

### B. FINITE VERBS

What is a finite verb? Finite means limited, bounded. In the Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English we read a definition of finite as follows:

Finite : limited by number and person.

"am", "is", "was", and "were", are the finite forms of "be".

"be", "being", and "been", are the non-finite forms.

Two things can be drawn from this definition:

- 1) finite is a form of verb, 2) that this form of a verb is always in agreement with number and person. This makes it differ from a non-finite.

Kruisinga defines finite as a predicative verb that is a verbal form that changes its form to agree with the number, person or tense of the sentence. This capability of changing form is its distinctive characteristic.

A predicate mostly contains a verbal form capable of assuming changes of form to denote such grammatical categories as number, person, or tense. Such a verbal form is called the finite (*fainait*) or predicative (*pri'dikativ*) verb. Verbal forms incapable of assuming such changes are called non-finite or non-predicative.<sup>10</sup>

In the above quotation Kruisinga does not equalize predicate with finite. Besides a finite verb, a predicate may contain some other verbal forms. Zandvoort explains that a predicate may have one finite and one or more non finite forms which are closely related with the finite of the sentence.

... the predicate may consist of one or more words, one of these being usually a finite verb (cf. p. 35, n. 1). Besides the finite verb the predicate may contain one or more non-finite forms closely connected with the finite verb (don't say, were killed, has been, etc.).<sup>11</sup>

In this case, Roberts seems to make finite verb equal with predicate. In his definition of finite verb he mentions the capability of a finite to complete a statement. The word "was" in "who was staying with us" has not completed the statement yet, therefore it's was staying that he calls the finite verb.

**Finite verb :** A verb capable of completing a statement as opposed to the nonfinite verb (*gerund, participle, or infinitive*), which may express action but which cannot make a complete statement about a subject. The term finite comes from a Latin word meaning "limit" and finite verbs were first so-called because, by adding inflectional endings, they limited the meaning in terms of person and number, as nonfinite verbs do not. In the following passage, the italicized verbs are finite verbs. (They are underlined here).

We first encountered Paganhead one summer at Lake Tahoe, where he bought a lot next to ours. One morning a truck drove up and deposited a load of lumber, and we knew that someone intended to build a cabin. "Looks like a pretty fancy cabin," I remarked to Wesley, who

<sup>10</sup> E. Kruisinga and P.A. Erades, *An English Grammar*, Vol. I, P. Noordhoff N.V., Groningen, 1947, p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> R.W. Zandvoort, *op cit*, p. 197.

was staying with us. "I should say so," he replied. "Observe the Grade - A redwood." At that moment Paganhead arrived. Glad only in a leopard skin, he was leading a closely clipped sheep. I perceived that living at Lake Tahoe was about to take on a more interesting and exotic aspect.<sup>12</sup>

Kruisinga and Zandvoort do not identify was staying as a finite verb but rather as a predicate consisting of a finite verb was and a nonfinite verb staying, should say consisting of a finite verb should and a nonfinite verb say, and was leading consisting of a finite verb was and a nonfinite verb leading.

Palmer has another way in looking at it. He classifies finites into three groups :

1) simple finites, consisting of one word only.

(encountered, bought, drove etc.)

2) compound finites, consisting of compound tense of the conjugation (was staying, should say, was leading).

3) group finites, consisting of group of verbs <sup>which</sup> are not considered as tenses of conjugation. In the above passage there is no group finite. Here are some examples :

I am just beginning to understand.

I don't always like to do it.

Stop doing that.<sup>13</sup>

After having studied several explanations about finites, I will now state which of which are to be used in the further discussion.

A finite verb is a verb form which changes its form when we change the number and person or the tense of the sentence. To recognize a finite verb we can test it

<sup>12</sup> Paul Roberts, Understanding Grammar, op cit., p. 489.

<sup>13</sup> Harold & Palmer, A Grammar of Spoken English, W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., Cambridge, 1929, pp. 94-95.

either by changing the number and the person or the tense of the sentence. For example the word "looks" in "she looks at the picture" is a finite verb because it changes its form into "look" when we change the third person singular into a first or second person singular or plural : "We look at the picture". The word "play" in "We play volleyball" is a finite verb, because it changes its form into "played" when we change the present into the past tense : "We played volleyball yesterday".

The forms that a finite verb takes might be stem, stem + s, or stem + ed. Stem is used in the present tense for the first and second singular and plural and third person plural :

I, you, we, they, --- walk

Stem + s form is used in the present tense for the third person singular :

He, she, it --- walks

Stem + ed form is used in the past tense for all persons:

I, you, he, she, it, we, they --- walked.

A finite verb may be found singly in a sentence, standing by itself as one word finite verb such as :

walks, goes, stands,

pray, think, try

walked, prayed, talked, etc.

It may also be found together with other verb forms, making a finite verb group such as :

am standing, was standing, has been standing,

is beaten, was beaten, has been beaten, had been beaten.

will go, can go, may come etc.

Palmer calls the first "simple finite" and the

second "compound finite". I do not think it is necessary here to add with another group of verb as Palmer does with his "group finite" (example : He wants to go to buy a match), since the combination of the verbs here is a loose one, it has nothing to do with the verb conjugation. To make it clear, here below is a passage in which all the finite verb forms are underlined :

Life with Robert.

He chose as his sleeping place a red-velvet pill box hat of Mildred's on the dressing-room shelf. "Up with the birds" did not apply to him; he often did not make an appearance until ten or eleven in the morning. He would fly down from the shelf and dash pellmell into the bathroom, where he made two large deposits on a piece of Kleenex placed on the floor for that purpose. (Lest eyebrows rise at the thought of a quail loose in the house, Robert was beautifully house-broken).

Physical changes in his surrounding upset him. Let a davenport be moved, a bottle of nail polish left where it did not belong, the corner of a rug inadvertently turned back, and Robert would stalk and call until someone came to straighten things out. When the telephone rang, he knew, it should be answered, and would hop up on the shoulder of the person talking, to chirrup into the mouthpiece.

One day the telephone repairman came. He had read about Robert in the local paper, but was not prepared to find a quail standing on tiptoe looking into his toolbox. When the repairman

called the operator, Robert hopped up on his shoulder and began to chirp. We heard the repair man say, "Sure it's in the house. You don't think I'm calling from out in the woods, do you? It's that quail, Robert."<sup>14</sup>

### C. NON-FINITE VERBS.

Most English verbs have four forms : stem, stem + s, stem + ed and stem + ing. Stem and stem + ed can be either finite or non-finite, while stem + s is always finite and stem + ing is always non-finite.

In this part we will deal with the non-finite verb forms of stem, stem + ed and stem + ing. why?

1. Stem Form : A stem can be found either as a plain stem or as a stem with to.

#### a. Plain Stem :

1. After modal verbs : can, could, will, would, may, might, shall, should, must, etc.

- Sitting at his desk, he would pull out a sheet of foolscap and ask with concern, "Now, just what seems to be the matter?"<sup>15</sup>
- And I wonder how I can best combat this state of mind .....
- In one man they may come every 16 days; in another, every 62; the average among

<sup>14</sup> Margaret A. Stanger, "That Quail, Robert", Reader's Digest, May, 1967, pp. 66-67.

<sup>15</sup> Most of the examples are taken from : Janet Graham, "To Beat the Blues", Reader's Digest, op.cit., pp. 45-48.



men is a five-week cycle.

- There is no reason why the hopeless chest shouldn't also contain a few dollars.

2. After : do, had better, would sooner, dare, need.

- But how do you know when the blues are most likely to strike ?
- Only occasional psychotics do not suffer regular mood cycles.
- I'd rather not stay here alone.

3. After some familiar verbs as : feel, hear, see, find, watch, let, make, help, have (used with the indefinite case)

- I felt my hand shake.
- No one sees the boy walk in.
- Watch that dog jump.

4. Two plain stems having the same leading verb :

- Sitting at his desk, he would pull out a sheet of foolscap and ask with concern, .....
- I would rack my brain but fail to think of anything else.
- He would grin and hand me my list of disasters and .....
- But the blues sufferer can lunch at a new place, repaint the kitchen, take up judo, talk to a stranger or use a different route home from work.

5. In exclamatory sentences :

- "Promise ?" I asked. He took my hand and said weakly, "I promise."



b. Stem with to :

1. In groups with another word for their leading member :

a). With verbs :

- "Now, just what seems to be the matter ?"
- ..... When I turned to leave with lightened heart, the sight of his crutches propped in the corner would remind me that there are problems even graver than cold and history test.
- One housewife, tired of enduring a weekly blue Monday crammed with the debris of the weekend and a mountain of washing, decided to abolish Mondays.

b). With adjectives :

- As soon as the family was off to work and school, she went .....
- Thus rested, she was ready to face the chores cheerfully on Tuesday.

c). With participles :

- To beat the blues, I have learned to take action, any kind of action, rather than wallow in my own melan-  
choly.

d). With nouns :

- Since depression is often nothing more than the feeling of being

trapped by unalterable circum-  
stances, one secret of consolation  
is to exercise the God-given facul-  
ty of choice.

- Another friend uses the "at least"  
technique to beat the blues.
- This last, the determination to give  
cheer even though one cannot feel it,  
is one of the most valuable cures for  
depression.

e). With connecting words as how, what, whither,  
etc.

- She doesn't know how to cook rice.

2. In free adjuncts :

- She had an unvarying technique for  
her dirt bath, working down into  
the dirt with head and wings, then  
staggering out, her feathers laden  
with dirt, to shake three - always  
three - times.

3. As the subject of a sentence :

- To beat the blues, I have learned  
to take action, any kind of action,  
rather than wallow in my melancholy.

4. In exclamatory sentences :

- But how to finish it within a week !

5. After a secondary subject :

- They asked me to go;

6. After preposition groups :

- He went behind the door to hide him  
self there.

## 2. Stem + ed Form

Stem + ed form or Participle as non-finite can be found in a group of words with the leading member a verb, noun, or standing by itself as a free adjunct.

### a. With the leading verb : have :

#### 1). Resultative Perfect :

Now when the blues strike, I pull out a mental sheet of foolscap and try to decide just what has brought on this mood of leaden misery.

#### 2). Perfect Present :

These may include your favorite record, new clothing, one or two of the nicer letters you've received.

#### 3). Irrealis :

I should have finished it if I had not been asked to do something else.

#### 4). Future Action :

I will come back as soon as you have finished your dinner.

#### 5). Continuative Perfect :

To beat the blues, I have learned to take action, any kind of action, rather than wallow in my own melancholy.

#### 6). Narrative Past Tense :

He was a big jovial man who had learned serenity the hard way, having been struck down by polio when he was a young athlete.

### b. With the leading verb : be

#### 1). Predicative Participle of State :

A woman's pattern is complicated by the more dominant mood cycle caused by .....

In this case the leading verb of : feel, look, stay, remain, stand, grow, can be included :

My voice would falter, and he would look up, surprised.  
"What else ?"

#### 2). Predicative Participle of Occurrence :

"That would be written down."

The leading verb : come, get, become, can also be applied here.

We will get lost if we don't follow the guide.

c. With two objects :

The students are given more lectures now.

d. With prepositional objects :

He is the man to be spoken to.

e. Completed by a verbal ing :

From where we stood they could be seen struggling to get the tickets.

f. With the indefinite case :

1). With the leading verb : hear, feel, see, find.

I found the cup broken.

2). With the leading verb : make, order, get, denoting wish :

He ordered the shoes polished.

3). With have in an accusative construction :

As soon as the family was off to work and school, she went shopping, had her hair done came home to put her feet up and read her favorite magazine.

g. In noun groups :

There was a wise teacher at my school to whom I used to turn sometimes in despair, with tearstained face and all the cares of the world on my wretched adolescent shoulders.

He would grin and hand me my list of disasters and, when I turned to leave with lightened heart, .....

h. In free adjuncts :

Armed with such knowledge, we sometimes can plan our lives so that periods of foreseeable depression do not coincide with days when we have extra-troublesome affairs to cope with; .....

### 3. Stem + ing Form

Here follow some functions of the stem + ing form in a sentence :

- a. In a prepositional group : The stem + ing is connected with the leading verb with a preposition :

Darrell Huff, in his book Cycles in Your Life, points out that we can chart our own mood cycles simply by keeping track of daily moods over a period of time.

- b. In a group with a verb as its leading member :

And pull out the foolscap sheet on which you jotted down your last set of blues - rereading them now may remind you that the current crop cannot bloom forever.

- c. Being the dominant member of the group :

He stood leaning against the wall.

- d. As a Progressive expressing an activity, occurrence or state which continues for a certain period of time :

Psychologists and social scientists have been investigating mood patterns for some years.

- e. After an Adjective :

Shopping - particularly extravagant shopping for delicious unecessaries - is women's traditional refuge from unhappiness.

- f. With formal it and there to complete the meaning of the predicative adjective :

It is no use repeating those questions.  
There are many books worth reading in the library.

- g. In a noun group :

It was obvious from his expression, kind as it was, that he didn't consider this paltry, self-pitying list grounds for suicide.

- h. With a predicative participle :

He must have been seen running out the house.

i. In free adjunct :

Sitting at his desk, he would pull out a sheet of foolscap and ask with concern, "Now, just what seems to be the matter."

y. As subject or nominal part of the predicate :

Shopping - particularly extravagant shopping for delicious unnecessaries - is woman's traditional refuge from unhappiness.

One of my friends tackles the most loathsome job he can think of, the one he's been avoiding for weeks - paying the bills or clearing out the kitchen drain.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FORMS OF ENGLISH TENSES AND VERB GROUPS

In the first chapter we have discussed tense, the finite and non-finite verb forms and now we will continue with the forms of tenses and verb groups.

Based on the changing forms of the finite verb we can draw a conclusion that there are only two tenses in the English language, namely the Present Tense (the actual tense) and the Past Tense (the remote tense).

The form of the Present Tense can either be stem or stem + s. The form of the Past Tense is stem + ed. Seeing that English verbs are not always regular, it is necessary therefore to have a discussion about it.

In this chapter I will try to examine the Tense and Verb Groups from the aspects of their forms in spoken and written language and their regular and irregular formation.

#### A. THE FORMS OF ENGLISH TENSES.

##### 1. Present Tense.

The Present Tense is expressed in two forms : stem and stem + s.

Stem : is used for all persons singular and plural, except the third person singular :

I	}	talk, walk, sing, etc.
you		
we		
they		

Some finite verbs as : can, will, shall, may,



ought to, keep their form for all persons singular and plural.

Stem + s : is used for the third person singular :

He	}	talks, walks, sings, etc.
She		
It		
The man		

Since the stem form does not present any problem, we will discuss the stem + s form, first in spoken and then in written English.

a. Stem + s in Spoken English :

Considered phonemically, this stem + s form is the same as the plural noun form. It is constructed in the same way as the regular plural of nouns.

We differentiate 3 phonemes for the stem + s :

stem + s		iz
		s
		z

|iz| is added to the base forms ending in sibilants

(hissing sounds) : |s, z, ʒ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ| :

s	: dresses	dresiz
	faces	feisiz
	relaxes	rilæksiz
	passes	pa:siz
	uses	ju:siz

z	: advises	advaiziz
	chooses	tʃu:ziz
	closes	klouziz
	exercises	eksəsaiziz
	supposes	səpəuziz

ʃ	: abolishes	ə bɒlɪʃɪz
	accomplishes	ə kɒmplɪʃɪz
	dashes	dæʃɪz
	polishes	pɒlɪʃɪz
	washes	wɒʃɪz

ʒ	: camouflages	kæmʊflɑ:ʒɪz
	garages	gæra:ʒɪz
	massages	mæsɑ:ʒɪz
	sabotages	sæbətɑ:ʒɪz

tʃ	: approaches	ə prəʊtʃɪz
	catches	kætʃɪz
	lunches	lʌntʃɪz
	stretches	stretʃɪz
	teaches	ti:tʃɪz

dʒ	: arranges	ə reɪndʒɪz
	changes	tʃeɪndʒɪz
	emerges	ɪmə:dʒɪz
	indulges	ɪndʌldʒɪz
	revenges	rɪvɛndʒɪz

|s| is added to the base forms ending in breathed consonants except sibilants : |p, t, k, f| :

p	: copes	kəʊps
	hopes	həʊps
	keeps	ki:ps
	slips	slɪps
	traps	træps

t	: accepts	ə'k'septs
	combats	kɒmbəts
	gets	gɛts
	investigates	ɪnvɛstɪgeɪts
	sits	sɪts
k	: asks	ɑ:skʰs
	breaks	breɪks
	looks	lu:ks
	strikes	straɪks
	thinks	θɪŋks
f	: bluffs	blʌfts
	chafes	tʃeɪfs
	cuffs	kʌfts
	puffs	pʌfts
	reproofs	rɪpru:fts

|z| is added to the base forms ending in other cases than mentioned above :

adds	ədʒz
brings	brɪŋz
buys	baɪz
describes	dɪs'kraɪbz
grounds	graʊndz
learns	lɜ:nz
leaves	li:vz
sees	si:mz
smuggles	smʌŋlʒ
knows	naʊz
spares	speə*z
fails	feɪlʒ



**b. Stem + s in Written English :**

**|iz|** is written as es. All verbs ending in sibilants **|s, z, ʒ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ|** add es. Those which have a final e get only an s instead of es :

dress	+ es	advice	+ s
abolish	+ es	arrange	+ s
catch	+ es	camouflage	+ s
approach	+ es	choose	+ s
pass	+ es	face	+ s

**|s|** is written as s. All verbs ending in

add s :

prop	+ s
write	+ s
take	+ s
spoof	+ s

**|z|** is written as s :

consider	+ s
decide	+ s
hand	+ s
pull	+ s
remind	+ s
turn	+ s

Stems ending in o add es :

go	+ es
do	+ es

Stems ending in y preceded by a consonant symbol change y into ie :

cry      --->      cries

carry	→	carries
dry	→	dries
marry	→	marries
try	→	tries

## 2. Past Tense

There are two kinds of verbs in English, regular and irregular verbs. We will discuss the regular ones first.

### a. Stem + ed form in Spoken English.

Regular verbs form the past tense by adding |t|, |ɪd|, |d|, according to the final sound of the stem.

|t| is added to stems which end in |p, k, t, s, ʃ, t|:

p	coped	koupt
	hoped	houpt
	popped	pɒpt
	slipped	slipt
	trapped	træpt

k	asked	ɑ:skt
	looked	lu:kt
	picked	pɪkt
	talked	tɔ:kt
	walked	wɔ:kt

f	bluffed	blʌft
	cuffed	kʌft
	puffed	pʌft
	reproofed	ripru:ft
	spoofed	spu:ft

s	experienced	iksɪəriənst	
	dressed	drest	
	noticed	nəʊtɪst	
	relaxed	rɪlækst	
	used	ju:st	

ʃ	abolished	əbəlɪʃt	
	accomplished	əkəmplɪʃt	
	dashed	dæʃt	
	polished	pəlɪʃt	
	washed	wɒʃt	

tʃ	approached	əprəʊtʃt	
	lunched	lʌntʃt	
	searched	sə:tʃt	
	stretched	stretʃt	
	watched	wɒtʃt	

|d| is added to stems ending in |t, d| .

congratulated	kəŋgrætuleɪtɪd	
demonstrated	dɛmənstreɪtɪd	
investigated	ɪnvɛstɪgeɪtɪd	
repeated	rɪpi:tɪd	
stated	steɪtɪd	
added	ædɪd	
decided	dɪsaɪdɪd	
divided	dɪvaɪdɪd	
mended	mɛndɪd	
surrounded	səraʊndɪd	

|d| is added to stems ending in other cases than mentioned above :

dried	draɪd
failed	feɪld
jeered	dʒiə*d
opened	oʊpənd
rescued	reskju:d
received	rɪsɪ:vɪd
sprinkled	sprɪŋkld
turned	tɜ:rnd
wallowed	wɒləʊd

**b. Stem + ed form in Written English.**

As a general rule Past Tense is formed by adding ed to the stem :

explained  
happened  
looked  
lifted  
pointed

With stems ending in e, the e is dropped :

completed  
desired  
moved  
tasted

With stems ending in y preceded by a consonant symbol, the y changes into i + ed :

cry	---	cried
dry	---	dried
carry	---	carried
marry	---	married
try	---	tried

With stems ending in a consonant symbol preceded





keep - kept - kept  
 sleep - slept - slept  
 weep - wept - wept

2). Verbs ending in -d, ded change into t :

bend - bent - bent  
 (bend -- bended/t/ -- bent)  
 lend - lent - lent  
 rend - rent - rent  
 send - sent - sent  
 spend - spent - spent  
 build - built - built

3). Verbs ending in -d and -t, drop the suffix

-ed :

cut - cut - cut (cutted --- cut)  
 hit - hit - hit  
 set - set - set  
 shut - shut - shut  
 shed - shed - shed  
 slit - slit - slit  
 bid - bid - bid  
 spread - spread - spread

4). Verbs ending in -l or -n get the suffix -ed

or -t :

spell - spelled / spelt - spelled/spelt  
 learn - learned / learnt - learned/learnt  
 burn - burned / burnt - burned /burnt  
 dwell - / dwelt - /dwelt  
 smell - smelled / smelt - smelled/smelt

b. Formation of Strong Past.

Strong verbs form the past tense by changing the root vowel only; while the suffix is left out.

abide - abode

arise - arose

awake - awoke

blow - blew

cling - clung

The participle is formed by adding the suffix -en / -n, by changing the vowel into the same vowel of past or present tense, or into a completely different vowel.

1). suffix -en / -n :

beget - begotten

forsake - forsaken

grow - grown

know - known

2). the same as the vowel of past tense :

forget - forgotten

broke - broken

begot - begotten

3). the same as the vowel of the present tense:

forbid - forbidden

blow - blown

grow - grown

4). different vowel :

swim - swam - swum

ring - rang - rung

fly - flew - flown

Many verbs have lost their suffix in the participle :

find - found - found

bind - bound - bound

grind - ground - ground

## B. THE FORMS OF VERB GROUPS.

We have discussed the finite and non-finite verb forms. We know that only the finite forms can be tenses. By forming the stem, stem + s, or stem + ed, the present or past tense is constructed. Now in many instances, a sentence does not consist of one finite form only, it has a group of verbs, a combination of finite and non-finite forms, called verb groups. These verb groups have their finite forms the verbs to be, to have, and the modal verbs : shall, should, can, could, may, might, must, will, would, ought to,

A verb group <sup>which</sup> begins with a finite verb is called a finite verb group :

- can come
- has been going
- were taken
- is walking, etc.

A verb group begins with a non-finite verb is called a non-finite verb group :

- having taken
- having been finished, etc.

The construction of verb groups can be illustrated in the following chart. This chart has five columns consisting of :

- a. finite will, shall, can, etc. (modal verbs)
- b. finite and non-finite forms of have, except non-finite had.
- c. finite and non finite forms of be.
- d. finite and non finite forms of be.
- e. non finite forms of any verb.

5	4	3	2	1
<u>modal verbs</u> can; could; shall; should; will; would; may; might; must, etc.	<u>to have</u> stem : have stem + s : has stem + ed : had	<u>to be</u> stem : am; are stem + s : is stem + ed : was; were	<u>to be</u> stem : am; are stem + s : is stem + ed : was; were	
	stem : have stem + ed : --- stem + ing : having	stem : be stem + ed : been stem + ing : being	stem : be stem + ed : been stem + ing : being	stem : (walk) stem + ed : (walked) stem + ing : (walking)

An explanation of the chart :

1. It goes from left to right without turning back again.  
Any verb group must end at column number 1.
2. In each verb group there can be only one finite verb form which must be the first item. The other items will be non finite forms.
3. It can happen that the first item in a sentence is a non finite form. Then it is a non finite verb group :

Having seen him, she ran into the house.

4. There are four rules to be followed :

- a. Finites of column 5 must be followed by a stem  
(5 - stem)

He could come	( 5 - 1 )
He could have come	( 5 - 4 - 1 )
He could be coming	( 5 - 3 - 1 )
He could be punished	( 5 - 2 - 1 )

- b. Finites of column 4 must be followed by stem + ed  
(4 - stem + ed)

He has mended	( 4 - 1 )
He has been mending	( 4 - 3 - 1 )
It has been mended	( 4 - 2 - 1 )

c. Finites of column, must be followed by stem + ing  
(3 stem - ing)

He was swimming ( 3 - 1 )

He was being punished ( 3 - 2 - 1 )

d. Finites of column 2 must be followed by stem + ed  
(2 - stem + ed)

It was mended ( 2 - 1 )

The Forms — The Many (Concept)  
3 — the Use

### CHAPTER III

## THE USE OF ENGLISH TENSES AND VERB GROUPS

### A. THE USE OF ENGLISH TENSES.

#### 1. Simple Present Tense.

The simple present tense presents four different kinds of meanings :

- simple present actual
- simple present neutral
- simple present habitual
- simple present future

The simple present tense is used especially when we describe or explain something. From the four meanings the present actual and the present neutral are the most common. This is shown in the examples below. Concerning the frequency count we will discuss it later.

#### a. Simple Present Actual.

The present tense is used when the activity, state, or occurrence takes place at the moment of speaking or writing. The stress is on the present time. We are interested in what happens now. In the sentence 'He is upstairs', we mean to give an answer to somebody who is asking 'Where is father?'. The person wants to know where father is now, at this moment.

#### b. Simple Present Neutral.

The present tense is used when a general truth is stated, where no particular time is thought

*ambiguous.*

*viewing  
the fact as a  
whole.*



of. The time is not important here. We are interested in the statement being made. The sentence 'The moon goes round the earth', means that the 'going round' of the moon takes place any time. It is not limited by the past, present or future. In this case we are interested in the truth of the statement.

c. Simple Present Habitual.

The present tense is used when an action is repeated at intervals. When we say 'I often meet him', we mean that the action of meeting him takes place from time to time. We are interested in the fact of meeting him many times, although at this very moment there is no meeting.

The repetition is denoted by an adjunct like : every day, every morning, twice a month, often, usually, etc.

d. Simple Present Future.

The present tense is used to denote future. Usually it is accompanied by adjuncts of time as tomorrow, next Friday, next month, soon, later, etc. In 'He comes on Friday', the finite comes does not mean that he is here now, but that he will come in the future namely on Friday.

The passages below are written in the present tense. They are taken from several sources. The present tense is mostly found in a conversation, explanation and description. I have underlined the finite present verbs

limited in  
number

and given the meaning of each. (n) : neutral, (a) : actual, (h) : habitual, (f) : future. From these examples we can state that from the four meanings of the present tense, the actual and the neutral are the most common. This agrees with the frequency count which will be discussed later.

### 1). Speech.

Every man is (n) conscious that he leads (n) two lives, the one trivial and ordinary, the other sacred and recluse; the one which he carries (n) to the dinner table and to his daily work, which grows (n) old with his body and dies (n) with it, the other that which is (n) made up of the few inspiring moments of his higher aspiration and attainment, and in which his youth survives (n) for him, his dreams, his unquenchable longings for something nobler than success. It is (n) this life which the poets nourish (n) for him, and sustain (n) with their immortalizing nectar. Through them he feels (n) once more the white innocence of his youth. His faith in something nobler than gold and iron and cotton comes (n) back to him, not as an upbraiding ghost that wrings (n) its pale hands and is (n) gone, but beautiful and inspiring as a first love that recognizes (n) nothing in him that is (n) not high and noble. The poets are (n) nature's perpetual pleaders, and protest (n) with us against what is (n) worldly. Out of their own undying youth they speak (n) to ours. "Wretched is (n) the man," says (n) Goethe, "who has learned to despise the dreams of his youth!" It is (n) from this misery that the imagination and the poets, who are (n) its spokes-men, rescue (n) us. The world goes (n) to church, kneels (n) to the eternal Purity, and then contrives (n) to sneer at innocence and ignorance of evil by calling it green. Let every man thank God for what little there may (n) be left in him of his vernal sweetness. Let him thank God if he have (n) still the capacity for feeling an unmarketable enthusiasm, for that will (f) make him worthy of the society of the noble dead, of the companionship of the poets. And let him love the poets for keeping youth young, woman womanly, and beauty beautiful.

There is (n) much poetry in the world if we only knew how to find it out; and as much imagination, perhaps, only that it takes (n) a more prosaic direction. Every man who meets (n) with misfortune, who is (n) stripped of material prosperity, finds (n) that he has (n) a little outlying mountain-farm of imagination, which did not appear in the schedule of his effects, on which his spirit is (n) able to keep itself alive, though he never thought of it while he was fortunate. Job turns (n) out to be a great poet as soon as his flocks and herds are (n) taken away from him.

<sup>1</sup> Albert D. van Nostrand (ed), Literary Criticism in America, The Liberal Arts Press, New York, 1957, pp. 107-108.

2). Conversation.

AGATHA. It's (a) infamous, infamous.

LORD LOAM. (strongly). My orders, Agatha.

LADY MARY. Now, father, please.

LORD LOAM (striking an attitude). Before I give (f) you any further orders, Crichton.

CRICHTON. Yes, my lord.

LORD LOAM (delighted). Fock! It's (a) all right.

LADY MARY. No. Please go on.

LORD LOAM. Well, well. This question of the leadership; what do (a) you think now, Crichton?

CRICHTON. My lord, I feel (a) it is (a) a matter with which I have (a) nothing to do.

LORD LOAM. Excellent. Ha, Mary? That settled it, I think (a).

LADY MARY. it seems (a) to; but - I'm (a) not sure.

CRICHTON. It will (f) settle itself naturally, my lord, without any interference from us.

(The reference to nature gives (a) general dissatisfaction.)

LADY MARY. Father.

LORD LOAM (a little severely). It settled itself long ago, Crichton, when I was born a peer, and you, for instance, were born a servant.

CRICHTON (acquiescing). Yes, my lord, that was how it all came about quite naturally in England. We had nothing to do with it there, and we shall (f) have as little to do with it here.

TREHERNE (relieved). That's (a) all right.

LADY MARY (determined to clinch the matter). One moment. In short. In short, Crichton, his lordship will (f) continue to be our natural head.

CRICHTON. I dare (a) say, my lady, I dare (a) say.

CATHERINE. But you must (a) know.

CRICHTON. Asking your pardon, my lady, one can't (a) be sure - on an island. (They look (a) at each other uneasily).

LORD LOAM (warningly). Crichton, I don't (a) like this.

CRICHTON (harassed). The more I think (a) of it, your lordship, the more uneasy I become (a) myself. When I heard, my lord, that you had left that hairpin behind -

(He is (a) pained.)

LORD LOAM (feebly). One hairpin among so many would only have caused dissension.

CRICHTON (very sorry to have to contradict him). Not so, my lord. From that hairpin we could have made a needle; with that needle we could, out of, skins, have sewn trousers - of which your lordship is (a) in need; indeed, we are (a) all in need of them.

LADY MARY. (suddenly self-conscious). All?

CRICHTON. On an island, my lady.

LADY MARY. Father.

CRICHTON (really more distressed by the prospect than she.) My lady, if nature does (a) not think them necessary, you may (a) be sure she will (a) not ask you to wear them. (Shaking his head). But among all this undergrowth -



LADY MARY. Now you see (a) this man in his true colours.<sup>2</sup>

3). Introduction of a play.

1. An unseemly fracas appears (a) to be inevitable, but something happens (a).
2. The whir is (a) again heard, and the notice is (a) displayed 'Dogs delight (n) to bark and bite'.
3. Its effect is (n) instantaneous and cheering.
4. The lady looks (a) at each other guiltily and immediately proceeds (a) on tiptoe to their duties.
5. These are (a) all concerned with the master's dinner.
6. Catherine attends (a) to his fish.
7. Agatha fills (a) a quaint toast-rack and brings (a) the menu, which is (a) written on a shell.
8. Lady Mary twists (a) wreath of green leaves around her head, and places (a) a flower beside the master's plate.
9. Tweeny signs (a) that all is (a) ready, and she and the younger sisters retire (a) into the kitchen, drawing the screen that separates (n) it from the rest of the room.
10. Lady Mary beats (a) a tom-tom, which is (n) the dinner bell.
11. She then gently works (a) a punkah, which we have not hitherto observed, and stands (a) at attention.
12. No doubt she is (a) in hopes that the Gov. will (f) enter into conversation with her, but she is (n) too good a parlour-maid to let her hopes appear in her face.
13. We may (a) watch her manner with complete approval.
14. There is (a) not one of us who would not give her £25 a year.
15. The master comes (a) in quietly, a book in his hand, still the only book on the island, for he has not thought it worth while to build a printing-press.
16. His dress is (a) not noticeably different from that of the others, the skins are (n) similar, but perhaps these are (n) a trifle more carefully cut or he carries (n) them better.
17. One sees (a) somehow that he has changed for his evening meal.
18. There is (a) an odd suggestion of a dinner jacket about his doeskin coat.
19. It is (n), perhaps, too grave a face for a man of thirty-two, as if he were over much immersed in affairs, yet there is (n) a sunny smile left to light on it at times and bring back its youth; perhaps too intellectual a face to pass as strictly handsome, not sufficiently suggestive of oats.
20. His tall figure is (n) very straight, slight rather than thick-set, but nobly muscular.
21. His big hands, firm and hard with labour though they be, are (n) finely shaped - note the fingers so much more tapered, the nails better tended than those of

<sup>2</sup>Crosby E. Redman, A Second Book of Plays, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1964, pp. 218-219.

his domestics : they are (n) one of many indications that he is (n) of a superior breed.

22. Such signs, as has often been pointed out, are (n) in fallible.

23. A romantic figure too. One can (n) easily see why the women-folks of this strong man's house both adore (n) and fear (n) him.

#### 4). Description.

1. At the controls of a sailplane, you fly (n) as a man has (n) always dreamed of flying.

2. The thrill of this freedom is (n) overwhelming : some people shout (n), sing (n) or shed (n) tears of joy the first time they experience it.

4. An airline pilot with 22,000 hours at the control of the powerfull multi-engined aircraft, I still find(a) the airplane a fascinating machine.

5. But it is (n) just a form of transportation, so I spend (h) every hour I can (a) flying an aircraft that doesn't (n) have any engine.

6. Despite all my transport experience, it is (n) only when I am (h) in a sailplane (sometimes still called a glider) that I feel (n) that I am (a) really flying a bird among the clouds.

11. And occasionally one has (h) a sense of being a bird among birds.

15. He estimates there were more than a hundred birds.

16. Hawks are (h) not always so genial.

20. Pilots learn (n) a good deal from the hawks.

21. On the ground particularly early in the morning, you watch (h) them to see how well the thermals are (a) forming.

22. If a hawk flaps (n) his wings, you know (n) his tail is (n) weak : the ground isn't (n) hot enough to make the air rise : if he is (n) soaring, you know (n) that you can (n).

23. And the air, when you spot (n) a hawk circling, you may (n) sail over, get in his lift and go up with him.

24. Americans are (a) fast catching onto the joy and excitement of this sport that has long been popular in other parts of the world.

25. Germany has (n) more than 900 soaring clubs.

26. Paris has (n) a dozen soaring fields within a radius of 50 miles, and London has (n) almost as many.

27. We are (a) far behind Europe, but already the Soaring Society of America catalogues (a) 170 clubs of enthusiasts around the country.

28. The Schweizer Aircraft Corp., at Elmira, biggest maker of sailplanes in the United States, reports (a) its sales went up 50 percent last year.

30. In addition, many sailplanes are (n) being imported from Europe.

31. Ideal soaring conditions invite (n) American pilots into the sky.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 232-233.

32. We have (n) a land of mountains and plains and a marvelous mixture of southern air masses and cold winds from the north that produce (n) updrafts.
33. In the far West near the Sierras, strong winds flowing over the big mountains make (n) airways ideal for high flying.
35. In the middle West you can (n) find conditions that make (n) for distance.
37. In the East you get (n) both strong currents of rising air and mountain updrafts.
38. Almost anywhere is (n) good.
39. Soaring appeals (n) to young and old.
41. Some are (n) businessmen in search of beauty, eager to rise above daily routine.
42. Others are (n) wives who want (n) to share the exhilaration they hear (n) their husbands.<sup>4</sup>

## 2. Simple Past Tense.

In general, the simple past tense is used to indicate an action an event, or a state, which took place in the past. The event might be thought of as completely separated from the present time or related to it. When we say 'The war broke out in 1942', we think of a happening in the remote past. When we say 'Let's go now. I got the ticket.', the finite verb 'got' is connected with the present action 'go' which is taking place now.

Simple Past Tense has four meanings :

Simple Past Narrative

Simple Past Actual

Simple Past Neutral

Simple Past Habitual

### a. Simple Past Narrative.

A narrative means a story. The past tense is used in narration. A story consists of events that happen according to a natural sequence, according to the

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<sup>4</sup>Robert N. Buck, "The Sky Is Their Limit", Reader's Digest, May 1967, pp. 34-36.



order of happening in the notional time of the past.

Each event which is represented by a finite verb carries the story forward. Each finite verb has two functions : to denote that the action, event or state happened in the past time and to indicate the place of each event in the sequence of happenings.

Let us study the passage below :

1. On that morning of July 15, 1962, my close friends and neighbors, Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Kienzle, took me into the kitchen of their house in Orleans on Cape Cod - and invited me to look into a carton.
2. At first I saw nothing but a small lamp, a lamb's-wool duster and receptacles containing chick feed and water.
3. Then Mildred Kienzle gently lifted the duster.
4. Snuggled beneath was an exquisite, puffball-size baby quail with bright little eyes.
5. "Tom and I found the egg in an abandoned nest four days ago," Mildred explained.
6. They took the egg home, and for two days nothing happened.
7. Then on the third day the egg moved slightly.
8. Holding it to their ears, the Kienzles could hear a faint ticking inside, like that of miniature time bomb.
9. Transfixed, they watched tiny holes appear around the pointed end of the egg.
10. When the circle of holes was complete, there was a silent convulsive shudder and the egg parted.
11. Slowly there emerged something resembling a wet bumblebee.
12. But within half an hour, the little quail's appearance began to change.
13. When I saw him on the second day of his life, he was brown instead of black and growing fluffier and downier by the minute.
14. Neighbors were outspokenly gloomy about his chances for survival.
15. "He'll never live" they prophesied.
16. But the little quail snuggled under the lamb's-wool duster as he would have under the soft underfeathers of his quail mother.
17. Tommy and Mildred started calling him Bobby White, but I suggested a more dignified name.
18. Robert he became.
19. Robert grew swiftly, and soon soft breast feathers appeared over the down in a tiny chain-mail pattern.
20. The top of his head darkened, with gold lines down the sides that set off his darkbrown eyes startlingly.
21. But the most incredible feature of his development was his emerging personality.



22. Quail are among the shyest of birds, but Robert was a total extrovert.
23. He filled the house with song - greeting Mildred and Tommy with distinctive chirps of pleasure and anticipation, cooing mournfully whenever he wanted companionship, and trilling over more softly as he fell asleep.
24. On a warm, sunny August day, when Robert was two weeks old, Mildred and Tommy sadly decided it was time to free him.
25. When they carried him to the lawn, Robert looked about in bewilderment for a minute or two, then spied a tiny bug which he ran after and ate.
26. After a while, satisfied that Robert knew instinctively how to find food, Mildred and Tommy walked back to the house.
27. Tommy was just putting his hand on the door latch when a sharp, shrill call went up behind them.
28. As the door opened, Robert running as fast as his legs could carry him, darted into the house ahead of them.
29. After this performance was repeated several days, the answer was plain : Robert had come to stay.
30. From then on, he was outdoors a great deal.
31. Tommy, a retired doctor, has made their grounds a haven for birds and Robert remained nearby as Tom worked around the yard.
32. Several times Robert's quail family, still in the vicinity, passed near - his mother and 11 chicks.
33. There was never the slightest sign of recognition, much less desire for reunion, on either side.
34. Who snubbed whom was not clear.
35. Robert made the Klenzles' house his own, stalking around investigating everything with outstretched neck.
36. If Mildred was in the sewing room, Robert was there, investigating patterns, running off with bits of cloth.
37. If Tommy was reading the paper, Robert was in his lap begging for attention.
38. Highly sociable, Robert greeted guests with cries of delight.
39. He would get up on the coffee table and preen himself, daintily help himself to any cookies <sup>5</sup>that might appear, even drink tea when it cooled.

The finite verbs 'took', 'invited', 'saw' and 'lifted' from sentence number 1, 2 and 3, are arranged according to the order of happening. The finite verb 'took' shows that the action happened in the past time, namely 'on that morning of July. 15, 1962'. In the order

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<sup>5</sup>Margaret A. Stanger, op cit, pp. 64 - 66.

of sequence it comes before the action 'invited' and in its turn, 'invited' is followed by 'saw', etc.

When there is a shift of time in the story that goes back to the time before the past (before the time of the story itself), the past tense can be used. This is shown in the story, in sentences number 5 to 12. The story begins with the finite verb 'found' (no.5) and is followed by 'took' (no.6), etc. All those events took place before the past time, the time when the writer came to visit the family. The finite verb 'explained' (no.5), however, belongs to the first story, because the act of explaining occurred at the same time of the first story, it carries the first story forward. So in the order of happening the finite verb 'explained' comes after 'lifted' (no.3).

The time of occurrence, action or state in the past can either be implied or expressly mentioned by using adverbial adjuncts such as, yesterday, a week ago, last night, recently, etc. The above passage supplies enough examples :

1. On that morning of July 15, 1962, my close friends and neighbors, Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Kienzle, took me into the kitchen of their house .....
5. Tom and I found the egg in an abandoned nest four days ago, "Mildred explained.
6. They took the egg home, and for two days nothing happened.
7. Then on the third day the egg moved slightly.
12. But within half an hour, the little quail's appearance began to change.
13. When I saw him on the second day of his life, he was brown instead of black and growing fluffier and downier by the minute, etc.

The past tense is also used to express an isolated event (not in a frame of a story) in a definite time in the past :

*asking about experience in the past*

1. When the speaker is interested in the action **being** completed : *at the time of its occurrence*

- What did you do this morning ?
- The girls made some cakes this morning.<sup>6</sup>

2. When the speaker prefers not to continue the conversation : *simple questions*

- 'Did you hear about that terrible motor-car accident on the Dover Road last week ?'
- 'Yes, Black told me about it'.<sup>7</sup>

3. When used in an emotional exclamation :

- Did you ever hear of such a thing ?

(Notice : in normal conversation we prefer to say 'Have you ever heard of such a thing ?')<sup>8</sup>

#### b. Simple Past Actual.

The word 'actual' means real, existing in fact, in what has happened or been done, in something which is known to be true. Actual means concerned with facts. It is concrete, it can be touched or felt.

The finite verb stem + ed form is used to denote a state which was factual, concrete, existing as a fact (a reality) in the past time. There is no question of imagination or supposition. It denotes a state, a condition that tells about the nature, quality or character of persons or things. Finite verbs

<sup>6</sup> A.S. Hornby, A Guide to Patterns and Usage in English, Oxford University Press, London, 1954, p.93.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Otto Jespersen, *op cit.*, pp. 244-245.

such as liked, felt, was/were, seemed, looked, are often found in this actual meaning :

- We liked the play so much that we decided to play ourselves.
- It was completely in order.
- He felt sorry for his behaviour.
- She was pleased with the good conduct of her daughter.
- They seemed tired after having worked the whole day.
- She looked strong and young although she was above 50.

Or, we can examine the sentence number 4 from the above passage :

- Snuggled beneath was an exquisite, puffball-size baby quail with bright little eyes.

The finite verb 'was' here is a real fact in the past time, but it is not a logical continuation of the finite verb 'lifted' from the preceding sentence(no.3):

- Then Mildred Kienzle gently lifted the duster.

The baby quail was already there as an existing reality, independent from the act of lifting the duster.

The 'actual' meaning includes also other events which were taking place at the same time or together with the event mentioned in the main - clause.

In this case, they are found in sub-clauses. Examples are taken from the above passage :

10. When the circle of holes was complete, there was a silent convulsive shudder and the egg parted.
13. When I saw him on the second day of his life, he was brown ....
20. The top of his head darkened, with gold lines down the sides that set off his dark brown eyes startlingly.

28. As the door opened, Robert, running as fast as his legs could carry him, darted into the house ahead of them etc.

c. Simple Past Neutral.

'Neutral' means free from any entanglements or not being involved in one or another side. Something is neutral when it is impartial, indifferent, or undecided; when it does not have any definite characteristics, neither for nor against.

Finite verb stem + ed form is used to denote events, activities or states that are neutral in time, mood and characteristics. General truths are included in this category. We can find this neutral meaning in a story or in a reported speech. Here are some examples :

*Only As the result of logical sequence*

- He said that Borobudur was very beautiful.
- The teacher explained that water changed into steam by heat and into ice by cold.
- He observed that children did not like to play when they felt unwell.
- \* - Freedom was something to fight for.

d. Simple Past Habitual.

'Habitual' means usual, ordinary, customary. A habitual action means an action which was performed again and again and has become a habit.

Finite verb stem + ed form is used to denote actions, occurrences or states that were repeated a number of times in the past. The stem + ed form 'went' in 'She went to church daily' shows that the action of going to church was not only once but it was repeated everyday in the past time. Here are some examples



taken from the passage above (see page 44) :

23. He filled the house with song - greeting Mildred and Tommy with distinctive chirps of pleasure and anticipation, cooing mournfully whenever he wanted companionship, and trilling ever more softly as he fell asleep.
30. From then on, he was outdoors a great deal.
31. Tommy, a retired doctor, has made their grounds a haven for birds and Robert remained nearby as Tom worked around the yard.
32. Several times Robert's quail family, still in the vicinity, passed near - his mother and 11 chicks.

The act of 'filling the house with song' (no.23) did not happen only once, but it was repeated several times namely whenever Robert wanted companionship. Here, the habit - the repetition of action of filling the house with song - is being stressed more than the time of happening in the past. It is highly probable that Robert did not sing at the time when the story was taking place.

The repeated action might be revealed by the presence of an adverb of time or an adverbial clause. We can easily recognize the habitual meaning by the present of : whenever (no.23), from then on - a great deal (no.30), and several times (no.32). Adverbs such as : often, sometimes, usually, until, etc. are frequently used :

- He worked hard whenever I looked at him.
- Usually they went to bed at 8.30 p.m.
- We helped him sometimes.
- We went to the movies every week.
- He worked at the office until 1967.

## B. THE USE OF VERB GROUPS.

In the preceding chapters we have dealt with the

usage of the two tenses, the simple present and the simple past tense. Now we will continue with the usage of Verb Groups. The order of the Verb Groups can be found on the chart on page 24. There are four kinds of Verb Groups, namely :

- The 5-1 Verb Group
- The 4-1 Verb Group
- The 3-1 Verb Group
- The 2-1 Verb Group



In this chapter we will analyse these Verb Groups one by one since each of them has its own meaning.

#### 1. The 5-1 Verb Group.

The 5-1 Verb Group consists of a modal verb + stem verb form. The modal verb serves as the leading verb, having no independent meaning in itself it modifies the meaning of the non-finite stem form. The stem verb form acts as the dominant member of the group. By modal verbs I mean, all verbs which are non-factual. They carry the attitude of the speaker toward the sentence. The modal verbs are : can, could, will, would, shall, should, may, might and must. These are used only as a finite verb in a sentence.

The preterite (could, should, might, would, must) can be used as a preterite of concord as in :

- I was surprised at how wonderfully she could sing.
- The man carried the child on his shoulder that she might see the play going on.

They can also be used as a modal preterite which is neutral to time and can be found either in simple sentences or in the main-clauses of compound sentences.



This can have the meaning of irrealis or as a form of modesty :

- He would have gone if you asked him.
- He should have died of suffering.
- Would you open the door, please ?
- Could we begin now ?

All modal verbs can denote future time :

- She can go if she wants to.
- He could come tomorrow.
- He will buy your car if you sell it.
- Would you wait for a minute, please ?
- I shall do the dishes.
- We should walk faster if we want to be there on time.
- We may use the room next door.
- He might arrive this week.
- You must go to the doctor as soon as possible.

a. The meaning of 'can'.

The finite verb 'can' is used when the action of the non-finite verb does not really take place. The difference between 'We work hard' and 'We can work hard' is that the first, the action of working hard does really happen and therefore produce a result, while the second means that there is a chance, a possibility to work hard but the action is still undone. Here are some meanings of 'can' :

1). Characteristically able.

The ability of doing things is a distinctive feature of the subject of the sentence, therefore it

is always present at any time :

'..... Lawyer can steal more money with a briefcase than a thousand men with guns and masks.' (p.225)  
 'He is the father of your child. What can a child come to this world if he has no father ?' (p.244)  
 '..... It is your own property after all. If you don't want the dog in there, I can understand....' (p.215)  
 'I can learn how to sell olive oil.' (p.225)

2). Occasionally able.

It is almost the same as characteristically able, except that it lasts only within a period of time. It is an ability that works sometimes, now and then. It comes and goes. It is not permanent attribute.

Here are some examples :

'Perhaps I can help you in your plans.' (p.203)  
 'To see my father out in long Beach. He still can't get out of bed, and he needs company.' (p.242)

3). Immediately able.

The ability of doing things is neither characteristic nor occasional but it is at this very moment of speaking :

Mr. Adams said to Phillips, 'You can use my study. Will you stay for lunch ?' (p.234)  
 She called out, 'Dad, can you join us ?' (p.236)  
 '..... Maybe you can talk to her.' (p.236)

4). Possibility and impossibility due to circumstances.

The truth of a statement is being questioned because of some reasons. We find this meaning in negative (never, hardly, only, seldom, etc.) and interrogative sentences.

'What can he do to the three of us ?' (p.204)  
 '..... If you want the woman out of your house, how can I stop you ?' (p.215)

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<sup>9</sup> Examples marked with page numbers are taken from: Mario Puzo, The God Father, Pan Books Ltd., London, 1970.

'Get everyone on it even if they can't help us right now....' (p.218)

'Do you know where I can get in touch with him ?' (p.237)

'To see my father out in Long Beach. He still can't get out of bed, and he needs company.' (p.242)

#### 5). Permission.

In this meaning 'can' might be a mild command, a permission given by the speaker or a request for permission :

'You can tell your two friends that I expect them to let me wet my beak in the same manner. Don't be afraid to tell them,' he added reassuringly.

(p.203)

Mr. Adams said to Phillips, 'You can use my study. Will you stay for lunch ?' (p.234)

She called out, 'Dad, can you join us ?' (p.236)

#### b. The meaning of 'could'.

'Could' can be used as a preterite of concord or a modal preterite. As a preterite of concord it functions as a reported 'can' and has all the meanings of 'can' (see above) :

##### 1). Characteristically able :

He had a friendship with Capone in Chicago and could call on help in that quarter. (p.221)

The Corleone family could not eat that beautiful rug. (p.201)

Surely the world could do without such a person. (p.207)

Capone's world, and others like it, could be easily destroyed. (p.222)

He believed he could do this with no loss of profit. (p.229)

She was his favorite and could speak to him so impudently. (p.245)

##### 2). Occasionally able :

He was devoted father and husband but so busy he could spare his family little of his time

(p.216)

And even Don Corleone, that most modest men, could not help feeling a sense of pride. (p.219)

##### 3). Immediately able :

Vito went up along side Clemenza so that he too could see what was happening. (p.200)

He was surprised at how clearly he could think.

(p.204)

On that night he could have paid Fanucci the tribute and have become again a grocery clerk with perhaps his own grocery store in the years to come. (p.205)

Against this Don Corleone could throw two small but superbly organized regimes led by Clemenza and Tessio. (p.221)

Now she could face him. (p.237)

She had always been her father's favorite and she could not understand his coldness now.

(p.244)

#### 4). Possibility and impossibility due to circumstances :

And suddenly he was sure that Fanucci had no great connexions, could not possibly have.

(p.204)

He had private business with Fanucci that could not be interrupted. (p.206)

He smiled as if it was some private joke only he himself could appreciate. (p.212)

It was not possible that the law could allow such thievery (p.229)

But the Don could not interfere (p.244)

#### 5). Permission :

He assured Vito Corleone that it had all been a dreadful misunderstanding, that of course she could keep the dog. (p.215)

He had a friendship with Capone in Chicago and could call on help in that quarter. (p.221)

She was his favorite and could speak to him so impudently. (p.243)

As a modal preterite 'could' is used in the present time contexts :

'.... He'd like us to tell him our plans because he could set up for the cops and earn their gratitude.' (p.204)

'I could find some work for you to do that would be very profitable.' (p.208)

'What I find incredible is that my daughter could be in serious trouble....' (p.237)

#### c. The meaning of 'will'

##### 1). Future event. Will is used to denote events that take place in the future time :

'.... Tell him you have to get the money and will give it to me to give him.' (p.205)

'.... I'll quarrel over the price with him.'

(p.205)

'Fanucci told me nothing below three hundred dollars, how will you make him take less ?' (p.205)

'Tell Fanucci I'll pay him the money in my house at nine o'clock tonight. I'll have to give him a glass of wine and talk, reason with him to take the lesser sum.' (p.206)

'.... Genco will show you what to do.' (p.225)

2). Natural truth.

'Will' is used to denote that a statement is a result of a general observation in the world around us :

'Otherwise the police will come to see you, your wife and children will be shamed and destitute.. ..' (p.202).

3). Agreement to do something.

It can be a wish, an intention, or a strong determination :

'My two friends have my share of the money, I'll have to speak to them.' (p.203)

'.... I'll settle this problem to your satisfaction.' (p.205)

'Here, I'll pay you ....' (p.211)

'If you wish me to consider you as a friend I owe you a service which I will pay on demand.' (p.222)

'Wait, I'll get you your money.' (p.231)

'I'll have your balls hanging from your ears.' (p.231)

'I'll talk to them alone.' (p.234)

4). Inferred probability.

Here an assumption is made after some reason :

'.... Fanucci won't take a dime less than three hundred dollars. We'll have to pay.' (p.204)

'You won't have much luck....' (p.206)

5). Request or command.

'....You won't have to move....' (p.212)

'You needn't speak to her about it, she's proud woman. See me again in another six months. But of course you'll let her keep her dog.' (p.213)

'.... Watch your manner or you'll be out on your Sicilian ass in the street there,' (p.213)

'Will you let us know if Mike contacts you ?' Philips asked. (p.236)

'Will you deliver this to him if he gets in touch with you ?' (p.237)



d. The meaning of 'would'.

'Would' can be used either as a preterite of concord, a narrative preterite or a modal preterite.

1). Preterite of Concord.

Would functions as a reported 'will' either in a speech or thought. All the meanings of 'will' can be applied here :

a). Future :

By doing so he would have an extra seven hundred dollars in his bankroll. (p.208)  
The Capone sent back word that they would not interfere. (p.224)  
His own world would be more impregnable than before. (p.228)

b). Natural truth :

And such men would not give information to the police. (p.210)  
No person in that house would deliberately expose himself to police suspicion or questioning. They would locked their doors and pretend the had heard nothing. (p.210)

c). Agreement to do something :

He would not pay seven hundred dollars to keep Fanucci alive. (p.207)  
She knew he would tell her nothing. (p.237)

d). Inferred probability :

If he did not kill Fanucci, he would have to pay the man seven hundred dollars cold cash. (p.206)  
If his intelligence was so good, any further move would be fraught with danger. (p.222)  
At the end of World War II Don Corleone knew that again his world would have to change its ways, that it would have to fit itself more snugly into the ways of the other, larger world. (p.229)

e). Request or command :

Then they would owe him a favour. (p.204)  
All for nothing, they would lose their home. (p.212)

2). Narrative Preterite.

Unlike other modal verbs, 'would' has something

of an independent meaning, therefore it can be regarded as event in the past :

Some of the merchandise would be sold to an Italian wholesaler, part of the loot would be sold door - to door ..... (p.201)

Clemense cursed, Tessio scowled, but then both men starting talking about whether Fanucci would be satisfied with two hundred dollars. (p.203)

The they would own him a favour. (p.204)

In the morning more garbage would be thrown out of the windows and, with luck, would cover everything. (p.210)

### 3). Modal Preterite.

'Would' is used in modal preterite related to present time :

'I told her that I would speak to you, that you are a reasonable man who acted out of some misunderstanding.' (p.213)

'I wouldn't dare to quarrel with it,' (p.213)

'.... My dear, would you rather speak to these gentlemen alone or would you prefer to have me present ?' (p.234)

'Mike wouldn't do anything like that.' (p.235)

'I would have done the same if my wife had been as presumptuous as you.' (p.244)

### e. The meaning of 'may'.

'May' is used to express ideas of which realization depends on circumstances which are beyond the speaker's control. The time referred to is either present or future. There are four meanings of 'may' :

- uncertainty of possibility
- Permission and absence of permission
- reasonableness
- wish

#### 1). Uncertainty or possibility.

'May' is used to denote an idea that the realization of it, the speaker does not know for certain :

The waiter who witness the shooting doesn't re-



cognize a picture of Mike but he may recognize him in person. (p.236)

'.... Your daughter refuses to give us any information that may help us....' (p.237)

## 2). Permission or absence of permission.

'May' is used here when a certain law, rule or the will of other person controls the realization of the idea :

'May we come in and talk to you for a few minutes.....' (p.234)

## 3). Reasonableness.

'May' is used to express what is reasonable.

'.... I must warn you that if you do have contact with him you may be getting involved in a very dangerous situation. If you help him in any way, you may get yourself in very serious trouble.' (p.235)

## 4). A wish.

'May' could be used to express a wish :

May God bless you.

I hope you may succeed in your study.

## f. The meaning of 'might'.

'Might' can be used in place of 'may' in the meaning of uncertainty or possibility. It refers to the present or future time.

'.... One never knows when one might need a friend, isn't that true ?' (p.213)

Might can also be used in the preterite of concord, as a reported speech or thought. In this case it can have all the meanings of 'may' :

### 1). Uncertainty or possibility.

Fanucci might indeed have powerful friends who would seek vengeance. (p.207)

He might have been persuaded to take nothing more or to wait a little longer. (p.208)

He also knew that Capone's influence did not extend the boundaries of Chicago, terrible and all-pervading as that influence there might be. (p.222)

This might take three years and Nazorine would be lucky to get back ten cents on the dollar.  
(p.229)

2). Permission / absence of permission.

This includes admission, concession :

Clemenza cursed, Tessie scowled, but then both men started talking about whether Fanucci would be satisfied with two hundred dollars. Tessie thought he might. (p.203)  
He might be persuaded to take nothing more or to wait a little longer. (p.208)  
He foresaw that public indignation might even lead to a suspension of democratic procedures which could be fatal to him and his people.  
(p.226)

3). Reasonableness.

He changed his clothes and fearful that some blood might have splattered on them, he threw them into a metal tub his wife used for washing. (p.210)  
That might have really caused some trouble. (p.241)  
Connie even hinted that she might want a divorce. (p.244)

4). A wish.

Connie even hinted that she might want a divorce. (p.244)

Sometimes 'might' is used in modal preterite denoting present time :

Might I borrow that book, please ?  
Might I use that room, please ?

G. The meaning of 'shall'.

'Shall' is used to express future time, to denote the speaker's intention or to ask for a wish of the person addressed.

1). Future time.

The action or state which will take place in the future is independent of the speaker's will :

I am afraid we shall meet him there.  
We shall have to leave this house as soon as possible.  
When they leave us, we shall take care of everything.

2). The speaker's intention.

The intention expressed might be a wish, assurance, decision, promise, threat, warning or undertaking.

You shall go and find the book you want.  
We shall give you the money.  
Please, be quiet, or, I shall leave you alone.

3). Asking for the wish of the person addressed.

This is found in interrogative sentences :

Shall I open the window ?  
Shall we invite him to come ?

h. The meaning of 'should'.

'Should' is used in the preterite of concord to report 'shall' or in the modal preterite.

1). Preterite of concord, having all meanings of shall.

a). Future time :

He was afraid that we should be late.  
They said that we should leave the house as soon as possible.

b). The speaker's intention :

He told me that I should go and find the book I wanted.  
He said that we should give the money to you.

c). A request for the wishes of the person addressed.

I asked whether I should open the window.  
We wondered whether we should invite him to come.

2). Modal preterite.

Should is used to denote :

a). Moral obligation or desirability.

Where 'must' is thought to be too strong, 'should' is used to make it sound softer in instruction and correction.

'She has got rid of the animal that caused all the trouble and so why shouldn't she stay ? As one Italian to another, I ask you the favour.'  
(p.214)

'I think there are a few things you should know,'  
'Detective Phillips said. (p.235)

b). Personal feeling of the speaker.

'I think there are a few things you should know,'  
Detective Phillips said. (p.235)

c). Contingency in conditional clauses.

If you should go, take this umbrella with you.  
If he should come, you shall take care of him.

1. The meaning of 'must'.

Must is used to denote a necessity from circumstances and an inferred certainty of a fact.

1). Necessity from circumstances.

Must is used when out of surrounding circumstances, a decision or action is thought to be important to make. When someone said, 'You must go now.', the action of 'going' is important to perform because of some reasons. The reasons might be expressed or implied in the contexts :

'But then I must tell you that the climate in this city is damp; unhealthy for Neapolitans, and you are advised never to visit it.' (p.222)  
'..... I must warn you that if you do have contact with him you may be getting involved in a very dangerous situation ..... ' (p.235)

2). Inferred certainty of a fact.

Because of the presence of some facts which we regard as truth, we make a judgement or conclusion. In 'She must be angry', we observe the facts that might cause her anger, we look at her facial expression, listen to her words, and finally we conclude: 'She must be angry'.

'A man like yourself must know how much more profitable it is to have a friend, who, instead of calling on you for help, takes care of his own affairs and stand ever ready to help you in some future time of trouble.' (p.222)

'Must not' is used in prohibition. We forbid some-



body to perform an action :

You must not smoke here.

We must not say those things in front of her.

In past-time contexts, must is used as a reported speech or thought, having the same meanings as those mentioned above :

'No, that scarseface bastard must have found out what we made from the whole saler who bought the dresses .....' (p.204)

The course his own life must take. (p.205)

In the kitchen her mother took no notice of her weeping, and Kay realized that her father must have told her about the two detectives. (p.237)

## 2. The 4-1 Verb Group.

A 4-1 Verb Group consists of a finite or non-finite form of have (except the non-finite form had) plus a non-finite verb stem + ed form :

- They have done their duty.
- We have finished our homework.
- She has answered politely.
- He has been taken to the hospital, etc.

A 4-1 Verb Group denotes an activity, occurrence or state that took place sometime in the past and is connected with the present time in one way or another. There are several meanings of 4-1 Verb Group. Almost all of them can also be expressed by the simple past tense, but we will discuss this later.

Here are some meanings of the 4-1 Verb Group :

### a. Resultative meaning.

A 4-1 Verb Group denotes an activity, occurrence or state which happened in the past time and is now completed. There is no activity at present, but the result of the activity is felt now. We are interested in the result of the action. The situation in

which an action has taken place is not important. 'I have finished my paper' means that I don't care now how many difficulties I have had in making it, how much time I have spent for it; the only thing matters is that I am happy now since I have the paper in my hand as the result of all that has been done before. Here are some examples to clarify the resultative meaning :

- You need not worry about it. I have locked all the doors.
- I have strung together a little speech, in case I should be asked to say a few words.
- He has cut his finger.
- She has given him a ring as a sign of her fidelity.
- He has kicked the dog outside the room.
- Someone has cleaned the house.
- I have decided that the girls, instead of going by train, shall go by bus.
- I have finished my homework.
- He has given us permission to go.
- She has treated him badly.

#### b. Recent Past Meaning.

To denote an activity that has just taken place and <sup>the effect of which</sup> is thought of as being very close to the present, we may use a 4-1 Verb Group :

- Mr. White, this is John. I think you have met him in the parlor.
- I have asked her to have a second cup of tea now.

*Completed aspect*

- All this has taken sometime and by now their appetites have been satisfied.
- You have given me some satisfaction of late, you may stay here.
- We haven't seen her lately.
- Look, the boat has turned back.
- I have noticed that the others tend to do it also.
- He has just left.
- We have missed the train.
- It is the old life that has come back again.
- I think I have said too much.
- Have you said him already ?

c. Continuative Meaning.

*durative aspect*

In 'I have live in Yogya for two years.', have lived means a continuity of living in Yogya beginning two years ago up to now. A 4-1 Verb Group might denote a past activity which extends to and includes the present. The stress is upon the duration or continuation of the action. The continuative meaning will easily be felt by the presence of for, since, in, all. Here are some examples :

- How long have you prepared the lesson ?
- She has known him for years.
- They have talked for hours.
- I have waited here since 5 o'clock.
- We have continued our study although the light was very bad.
- What sort of weather have you been having here ?



- We have been to opera twice this month.
- That is what I have been strining to point out to you.
- I have never forgotten it.
- He has gone to Bali.
- Everything he has done has been out of the desire to please you.
- Have we not been happy here ?

d. Meaning of Experience.

A 4-1 Verb Group might denote an event that has taken place once or more than once in the past. The event is within the knowledge of the speaker. 'I have visited Bali' means that sometime in the past the speaker went to Bali for a certain reason. He is no longer there now. Here are some examples:

- We have placed our suitcases on the chairs and have laid down on the bed.
- We have answered all the questions asked.
- They have stood there for hours, waiting for the President to pass.
- He has taken away the money, leaving the bag empty.
- Father has jumped into the water and has grasped the hand of the drowning man.
- She has lived peacefully with her parents.
- They have experienced great hardships.
- The President has invited Mr. Brown to form a Ministry.
- People have worn beautiful dresses on those days.

### e. Future Meaning.

'He will see her after she has finished her homework', means that the meeting will take place in the future time when the action of 'making the homework' is completed. 'Have finished' here means that the action is still going on now and is continued in the future. Here are some examples :

- He will leave the house as soon as they have paid the money.
- After she has been operated, I'll come back again.
- When you have finished your coffee, please open this box for me.
- Do you know what time she will have left the office ?
- I can't speak to him before I have met my mother first.
- You may go home when you have cleaned the room.
- Father asked me to do it after I have taken a bath this afternoon.
- As soon as you have seen her, please let me know.
- They will get their diploma after they have passed their exams.

### f. Has / have got.

Has / have got is used to denote possession or characteristics :

- We have got a new dress.
- They have got another assignment.
- It is true, they haven't got the spirit to do

it.

- I am not sure whether they have got the information or not.
- He has got very fat lately.
- The children have got the measles.
- Where have you got that picture ?
- Have you got the tickets yet ?
- He has got a beautiful wife.
- They have got five children.

**g. Had + stem + ed form.**

The finite had + stem + ed form denotes an event that took place prior to another event in the past :

- After he had finished his speech he went back to his seat.
- He had waited for hours before they arrived.
- Although the doctor had operated her, she died finally.
- As soon as he had gone, mother closed the book and cried.
- They had left the room shortly before the police came in.
- Of course the thief could come in easily because they had forgotten to lock the door.
- They tried to get more and more money after they had received a lot.

Also after said, told, thought, etc. in reported speech, the finite had + stem + ed form has the meaning of anteriority. The reported action happened prior to the saying :

- He said that they had been killed in a colli-

sion.

- I was told that the accident had taken place in front of his house.

- He thought that you had left him alone.

In the following examples the readers will see the use of 4-1 Verb Groups in the contexts :

1). LADY MARY. That cold, haughty, insolent girl, Gov., look around you and forget them both.  
 CHRIGHTON. I had nigh forgotten them. He has had (continuative) a chance, polly - that butler - in these two years of becoming a man, and he has tried (experience) to take it. There have been (continuative) some success, and with it I have let (resultative) the past drop off me, and turned my back on it. That butler seems a faraway figure to me now, and not myself.<sup>10</sup> I hail him, but we scares know each other.

2). LADY MARY. It was glamour. Father, I have lived (continuative) Arabian nights. I have sat (experience) out a dance with the evening star. But it was all in a past existence, in the days of Babylon, and I am myself again. But he has been (continuative) chivalrous always. If the slothful, indolent creature I used to be has improved (continuative) in any way, I owe it all to him ....

3).--'..... We are all men who have refused (resultative) to be fools, who have refused (resultative) to be puppets dancing on a string pulled by the men on high. We have been (continuative) fortunate here in this country. Already most of our children have found (resent) a better life.....'

-'..... Otherwise they will put the ring in our nose as they have put (experience) the ring in the nose of all the millions of Neapolitans and other Italians in the country !

-'I've agreed recent (resultative) to every thing here, I'm willing to forget my own misfortune.....'

-'..... After all, are we or are we not better men than those pezzonovanti who have killed (experience) countless millions of

<sup>10</sup> Crosby E. Redman, op.cit., p. 236.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 248.

men in our lifetimes ?

- Molinori said enough for Don Corleone to gather that Freddie had found (resultative) his niche out there, was happy and had become (continuative) something of 'ladies' man.
- Lampone had not said (recent) a word all day, had not even glanced (recent) at the two men in the back seat. He had opened (resultative) the door for the Don, the car had been (recent) in front of the bank when they emerged, he had done (experience) everything correctly but no more than any well-trained chauffeur might do. Evidently the Don's eye had seen (resultative) something he had not seen (resultative).
- Hagen was to brief Clemenza and Tessio on what had happened (experience) at the meeting that afternoon.
- The Don turned to Hagen, 'You've let (recent) the Bocchicchio hostages go ?'
- '.... But it is true, they haven't got (possessive) the Sicilian head'.
- 'Now, any man should be allowed one foolishness in his life. I have had mine....' (experience)
- '.... I'm being prudent. I've always been (continuative) a prudent man, there is nothing I find so little to my taste as carelessness in life.'
- They had not realized (resultative) Freddie was in such severe disfavour with his father and they suspected it must be because of something they did not know.
- The Don had taken off (recent) his jacket and tie and was lying down on the couch.<sup>12</sup>

### 3. The 3-1 Verb Group.

A 3-1 Verb Group consists of a finite or non-finite form of be plus a non-finite verb stem + ing form :

- You are cheating yourself.
- Mr. Green will be visiting us today.
- I'm not asking for a raise.
- While Linda was crying, Andrew tore up all his letters.
- They were getting ready to go into town.

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<sup>12</sup> Mario Puzo, op cit, pp. 295-300.



A 3-1 Verb Group is found in description, explanations and narrations and has all the meanings of the present and past tenses discussed on pp. 36-49 except that it is less frequent in use :

**Description :** At half-past six on a Friday evening in January, Lincoln International Airport, Illinois, was functioning (actual), though with difficulty.

The airport was reeling (actual) -as was the entire Midwestern United States- from the meanest, roughest winter storm in half a dozen years. The storm had lasted three days. Now, like pustules on a battered, weakened body, trouble<sup>13</sup> spots were erupting (actual) steadily.

**Explanation :** At times, there was violent earth - quake activity. This heaved, twisted, broke the gold icing - hoisting some portions up 300 feet, dropping other as much as 500. That is why today, as a mine is progressing (habitual) nicely, a reef may simply disappear.<sup>14</sup>

**Narration :** When Pearl Harbor plunged the United States into war it was almost inevitable that Charlie and I should become fliers, for our father had been a pioneer Army air officer in World War I. Charlie was still training (narrative) as a Mariner fighter pilot when I was sent to Guadalcanal with an Army P-38 fighter squadron. Then one March day in 1943 as I was returning (narrative) from a combat patrol I heard a familiar voice on the radio. It was Charlie !<sup>15</sup>

A 3-1 Verb Group can denote a state or an event.

A state, when the speaker puts the stress on the situation or condition in which an action takes place; an event, when the continuous nature of the

<sup>13</sup> Arthur Hailey, Airport, Pan Books Ltd., London, 1969, p.9.

<sup>14</sup> "Down to the Deeps for Gold", Reader's Digest, August, 1967, p.26.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas G. Lanphier, Jr., "I Shot Down Yamamoto", Reader's Digest, January, 1967, p.69.



action is being emphasized. But there is no clear line that distinguishes the one from the other. It is advisable therefore to see the meaning in their contexts.

a. Referring to a state.

Included to this category is the adjectival use of the stem + ing form. In this case the stem + inf form functions as a subject complement :

- That man is disgusting.
- Is she interesting ?
- The boys are annoying all the time.
- Those girls are forthcoming.
- That man is deserving of praise.

In the sentence 'That man is disgusting', the word 'disgusting' tells something about the subject, some characteristics that are thought of as belonging to the subject 'that man'.

b. Referring to events.

A 3-1 Verb Group refers to events when the speaker gives more stress on the progress of the action. It is an incomplete action, occupying some time within a limited duration. In 'He was reading when I came there', the word 'reading' denotes an action which was going on within a period of time and was still unfinished.

While a simple finite verb expresses an event, state or activity as a mere fact, without any colouring, the 3-1 Verb Group describes things in emotional contexts. The sentence 'People died of cholera', indicates a fact that took place in the past time, without any mentioning of the feeling of the speaker about it. But in 'People were dying of cholera', the speaker expresses also his attitude toward the event.

Especially when an adverbial of frequency such as, always, perpetual constantly, for ever, is used, the feeling of irritation, indignation or weariness is strongly expressed :

- He is always telling the same story.
- People are for ever wanting something.

Here are some examples of 3-1 Verb Groups denoting an event :

- At the Snow Control Desk near Mel, Danny Farrow - at other times an assistant airport manager, now snow shift supervisor - was calling Maintenance Snow Centre by radio phone.
- 'You haven't located it yet ? What are you guys doing - having a supper and ladies'night ?'
- Danny was already doing the right thing - intensifying the truck search, pulling ploughs and men from the terminal area and directing them to the perimeter road.
- In this case, as Danny predicted, there would be a flood of protests when other airliners realized their food trucks were not getting through, whatever the reason.
- With one hand, Danny was using a red telephone ; with the other, leafing through emergency orders - Mel's orders, carefully drawn up for occasions such as this.
- They've been working a couple of hours trying to move it.
- 'We're holding all outbound traffic at the gates, then sending them the long route to the other runways.'
- 'Slowing us fifty per cent. Right now we're holding ten flights for taxi clearance, another dozen waiting to start engines.'
- For three years he had been arguing construction of a new runway to parallel three zero, as well as other operational improvements.
- 'The other thing,' the tower watch chief said, 'is that with three zero out of use, we're having to route takeoffs over Meadowood. The complaints have started coming in already.'
- Their militant leaders were still protesting, organizing, and - according to latest rumours - planning legal harassment of the airport.
- Even before the answer, he decided glumly that still more hours of his working days were going to be consumed by delegations, arguments, and the same insoluble discussions as before.'
- '..... Some of 'em say the problems or not, pilots are still supposed to use noise abatement procedures, but tonight they aren't doing it.'

- 'Seems they still plan to hold it, and the way we heard, they're cooking up something new.
- Danny Farrow was arguing with the parking lot supervisor, harassed individual who for several hours had been fielding irate complaints from marooned car owners. People were asking : didn't whoever ran the airport know it was snowing ?<sup>16</sup>

#### 4. The 2-1 Verb Group.

A 2-1 Verb Group consists of a finite or non-finite form of be (am, is, are, was, were; be, being, been) and a non-finite verb stem + ed form :

- am satisfied
- were amazed
- being punished
- been published, etc.

The non-finite stem + ed form can be regarded as an adjective. Being an adjective it can be placed either before or after a noun or after a verb. In the first case, it is used attributively, like in :

- A wounded soldier.
- A determined teacher.
- A written document.
- A broken chair.
- A fried egg.

In the second case, it is used predicatively with the verb form of be. This is what we call a 2-1 Verb Group :

- The soldier is wounded.
- The teacher is determined.
- The document is written.
- The chair is broken.
- The egg is fried.

The verb form of be can be replaced by verbs like look,

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<sup>16</sup> Arthur Hailey, op cit., pp. 11-19.

seen, appear, become, feel, etc, but since they are not a 2-1 Verb Group, we do not discuss them here.

The non-finite verb stem + ed form of a 2-1 Verb Group can express either a state / condition of the subject of the sentence or an event concerning the subject of the sentence.

a. Referring to a state or condition.

The state or the condition of the subject of the sentence is a result of the action indicated, by the verb. In 'The leg is broken', the speaker means to say that the leg is in a bad state now, and that this condition is revealed in the verb 'broken'. It is not important for him to know when and by whom the leg was broken.

Behind this state or condition of the subject we acknowledge the presence of an event that took place sometime in the past and caused such a state to exist. In 'The water is boiled, you may drink it.', there was an event in the past that heated the water until it reached a certain state of 'boiling' and became drinkable water.

The state of the subject of the sentence might be caused by a change within the body of the subject itself, as in 'All the houses are burned', or it is caused by an outside agency. In 'The shoes are polished', the condition of 'being polished' is caused by somebody who has polished those shoes, although he is not mentioned in the sentence.

Verbs beginning with a prefix un- usually denote a state :

- He was unprepared for such a work.





- Such a story was unheard of.
- Most of our folksongs are unwritten.
- The truth of this statement is unquestioned.

Here are some examples of 2-1 Verb Group denoting a state :

- Campaigns to raise money had brought in thousands of contributions, but most were small; there was far too little in the kitty to build the kind of museum that was needed.
- Then, in 1950, Harry Darby, a Kansas City industrialist, former U.S. Senator and one of Ike's closest friends volunteered his services to what was now called the Eisenhower Center.
- The west wing is devoted largely to Ike's early life and his military career, the east wing to his white House years.
- It is set with 91 diamonds and five large rubies.
- Among them is a large, office-size desk, every square inch of which is covered with a mosaic of gold and ivory and other precious materials.
- One of the most popular exhibits in the Center is housed in a separate glass-walled pavilion near the museum building.
- Most of the space in the Eisenhower library is devoted to these vast files of documents and to reading rooms for researchers, and thus is not open to sightseers.
- Its walls and also the walls of the corridors are paneled with Laredo Chiaro marble from Italy, and the floors are paved with Roman travertine.<sup>17</sup>
- Some say it is an unpopular war we're carrying on in South Vietnam, but, as far as I'm concerned, we have 500,000 of the most popular Americans I know fighting there.
- The men's faces may be bathed in sweat, their eyes glazed with pain or sedation, but almost always manage a smile when I shake hands.
- "I'm really embarrassed to meet you here, Mr. Hope," he said with a grin.
- "I was supposed to be in charge of your security - and look at me!"
- The weather was beautiful, and it was hard to believe that just a few miles away, men were being killed and wounded.<sup>18</sup>

b. Referring to events.

It is often difficult to recognize whether a

17

Ben Hibbs, "Treasure House on the Prairie",  
Reader's Digest, June, 1967, pp. 54-61.

18

Bob Hope, "I Got a Lot More Than I Give", Reader's Digest, February, 1970, pp. 27-31.

non-finite stem + ed form of a 2-1 Verb Group refers to a state or an event. Very often the same verb group refers to both. In such a case we have to consult the contexts and find out what attention is paid to by the speaker. Let us examine these two sentences :

- 1). The car was crashed into a bridge when the driver wanted to avoid a truck.
- 2). The car was crashed into a bridge so that the traffic was halted for about two hours.

The verb group 1) denotes an event. The action of 'being crashed' took place when the driver tried to avoid the truck. The verb group 2) denotes a state. Because the car which had been crashed still stood there, the way was closed and there was no possibility to pass the bridge. Therefore the traffic was stopped for about two hours.

The meaning of occurrence can be recognized in a sentence when the time of event is mentioned, such as, yesterday, several months before, when the driver wanted to avoid the truck, etc. :

- The letter was posted yesterday.
- After several years of suffering, he was finally taken up to a better world.

When there is a naming of an agency, it is quite sure that the 2-1 Verb Group denotes an occurrence :

- He was punished by the teacher.
- The room was swept by the girls.

Here are some examples of 2-1 Verb Group denoting events :



- Although the house has been structurally reinforced to withstand the tread of millions of feet, visitors find everything just as the general's mother left it : the furniture, the carpets, the pictures, the dishes and kitchen utensils - even her potted plants in the bay window have somehow been kept alive all these years.
- Soon a halfmillion dollars had been raised.
- The museum, a Kansas-limestone building located just a block from the Eisenhower homestead, was opened to public in 1954.
- Later, during President Eisenhower's second term, Darby set about raising funds for a library so that Ike's Presidential papers could also be housed at the Center.
- The Center's other major structure, a beautiful little chapel called the place of Meditation, was completed in 1966.
- Today the entire Eisenhower Center, which includes 13 acres of land with a landscaped mall and five dedicatory pylons on a raised plaza - has been turned over to the National Archives for maintenance and operation.
- But, with the exception of the one appropriation from the state of Kansas, its construction was financed entirely through personal gifts from the people of a grateful nation.
- At least two or three hours are needed for even a casual inspection of the items on display.
- Perhaps the most beautiful exhibit is a pair of 3500-years-old gold chalices which were found in the archeological excavations of Mycense, Greece.
- They were given to Ike by the Greek nation, and are worth between a half-million and a million dollars.
- Another, set with 738 diamonds, 217 emeralds and one huge ruby, was given by King Mohammed V of Morocco.
- With 96,000 miles on the odometer, it still ticks along smoothly on the occasions when it is gassed up to participate in parades.
- "The mission of this Allied Force was fulfilled, at 3.a.m., local time, May, 7, 1945. Eisenhower."<sup>19</sup>
- Two Americans were killed, and 50 Americans and 15 Vietnamese were wounded in the blast.
- I met a good looking captain whose head and right arm had been bandaged.
- At each show I'm introduced by an enlisted man, and some of them are pretty darn sharp.
- Last year I was introduced by SP/5 Bruce D. Gaub, of Seattle.
- I asked him how he was chosen for the job.
- This was especially brought home to me last year at Chu Lai, a sprawling, sandy base where about 15,000 men saw our show.

<sup>19</sup> Ben Hibbs, loc cit.

<sup>20</sup> Bob Hope, loc cit.

## CHAPTER IV

### FREQUENCY OF TENSES AND VERB GROUPS

In this section we will examine the Tenses & Verb Groups from the basis of their frequency in daily life of the English Native Speakers. From the Verb-Form Frequency Count<sup>1</sup> we can select several items, make comparison between the frequency of Tenses and Verb Groups and try to arrange them according to their frequent usage.

#### Simple Past Tense :

Simple Past Narrative	: 156.4
Simple Past Actual	: 83.1
Simple Past Neutral	: 15.1
Simple Past Habitual	: 14.3
<hr/>	
T O T A L	: 268.9

#### Simple Present Tense :

Simple Present Actual	: 120.4
Simple Present Neutral	: 69.7
Simple Present Habitual	: 11.4
Simple Present Future	: 6.7
<hr/>	
T O T A L	: 208.2

#### 2-1 Verb Group :

Past participle of occurrence	: 58.9
Past participle of state	: 32.6
<hr/>	
T O T A L	: 91.5

<sup>1</sup>Report on a verb form frequency count, Monograph No.1 of the Central Institute of English, Hyderabad, Orient Longmans, Madras, 1963, as it is copied by Mr. Fountain in his notes.

4-1 Verb Group :

Narrative had + stem + ed	: 14.9
Perfect Present	: 6.1
Resultative Present Perfect	: 6.0
Had + stem + ed (from pre- fect present)	: 3.7
Present Perfect Continuative	: 3.4
<hr/>	
TOTAL	: 34.1

3-1 Verb Group :

Present Progressive	: 5.8
Neutral	: very rare
Habitual	: 1.2
Future	: 1.7
<hr/>	
TOTAL	: 8.7

The 3-1 Verb Group is not copied here because it has very low frequency.

From these data we can make a further comparison :

Past Tense	: 258.9	---	44	%
Present Tense	: 208.2	---	34	%
2-1 Verb Group	: 91.5	---	15	%
4-1 Verb Group	: 34.1	---	5.6	%
3-1 Verb Group	: 8.7	---	1.4	%

TOTAL : 611.4 --- 100 %

What is the use of having these frequency counts presented here ? Frequency Counts tell us which items are the most common in use among the native speakers. They describe the language as it is, as an existing reality. When an item is frequently

used, it means it is important, because the people feel a need to use it.

In learning a foreign language we try to understand the language as it is spoken or written and <sup>by the native speakers</sup> to approximate as much as possible their production. The frequency counts then, tell us which items are common, important and therefore should be learned or taught first. When these have been mastered, we continue from the more frequent to the less frequent ones.

From the tabulation above, we know that the Simple Past Tense and the Simple Present Tense are the most frequent in ordinary usage. And it is striking that these items are simple inform. It means that the simple forms are more common than the complex ones.

Now let us have a few more details :

<u>1. Simple Present Tense</u>		<u>3-1 Verb Group</u>	
Actual	: 120.4	Actual	: 5.8
Neutral	: 69.7	Neutral	: very rare
Habitual	: 11.4	Habitual	: 1.2
Future	: 6.7	Future	: 1.7
<hr/>		<hr/>	
T O T A L : 206.2		T O T A L : 8.7	
206.2 + 8.7		= 216.9 ---- 100 %	
Simple Present Tense = 206.2		---- 96 %	
3-1 Verb Group = 8.7		---- 4 %	

Number 1 shows the comparison between the Simple Present Tense and the 3-1 Verb Group (Present Progressive). Both have the same meanings but the frequency count shows that The Simple Present Tense has much higher frequency than the 3-1 Verb Group does. It follows that not only that the Simple Present Tense should be taught first but also that we should revise

our traditional teaching of the 3-1 Verb Group usually teachers tend to give more emphasis to the 3-1 Verb Group, because besides that it is suggested by the syllabus, it is easier to dramatise in front of the students. V

Looking at the Simple Present Tense meanings, it is obvious that the Actual and Neutral meanings are the most frequent and therefore they should be made familiar to the students.

## 2. Simple Past Tense.

Narrative	:	156.4	----	58.2 %
Actual	:	83.1	----	30.9 %
Neutral	:	15.1	----	5.6 %
Habitual	:	14.3	----	5.3 %
<hr/>				
T O T A L	:	268.9	----	100 %

The Narrative and Actual meanings show the highest percentage of frequency count from all the other meanings of the Past Tense. In teaching the Past Tense therefore, one must keep in mind to make the students familiar with Narrative and Actual usage of the Past Tense.

## 3. 4-1 Verb Group.

Resultative meaning : 6 per 1000 occurrences.

Recent Past : 6

Continuative : 3

Experience : 3

Future :  $\frac{1}{2}$

Has / have got :  $1\frac{1}{2}$

The 4-1 Verb Group shows a very low frequency. More



over most of them are optional and can be replaced by the Simple Past Tense.

#### 4. 5-1 Verb Group.

The 5-1 Verb Group has the smallest frequency of all the Verb Groups.

The list below states only those finites of the 5-1 Verb Group which have the highest frequency of all the other modal verbs :

Can	: immediately able	: 4.2 %
may	: possibility and uncertainty	: 4.0 %
will	: contracted form 'll	: 5.1 %
could	: characteristically able	: 4.6 %
	immediately able	: 4.6 %
would	: reported will (future)	: 4.0 %

5. The readers will ask where the place of shall and will is as a Future Tense. Let us examine the following tabulation :

Shall and will : used as an expression for the Future :

Simple Present	: 39 %
Will + stem	: 19 %
'll + stem	: 13 %
Shall + stem	: 10 %
am / are / is + stem + ing	: 10 %
Rare uses	: 9 %

The above mentioned forms are several ways by which future can be expressed. The frequency count shows that the Simple Present is used almost as frequent as shall, 'll and will.



It is stated in the tabulations below that shall and will do not always refer the future :

Will : (of 100,000 verbs) (% of all verbs)

Future	: 351	3.2
Statements of common observation	: 247	2.2
Assumption	: 143	1.3
Emphatic determination	: 143	1.3
Characteristic habit	: 64	0.6
Present wish or consent	: 231	2.1

Shall :

Future	: 183	1.6
Wishes or decision	: 105	1.0
Ask for wishes of the person addressed	: 46	0.4

Based on these facts namely :

- a). that shall and will do not always refer to the future but
- b). that they refer to other meanings as well and
- c). that future time can be expressed by several items and
- d). that the Simple Present Tense has the highest frequency among the other items denoting the future and
- e). that there is no special verb form to denote future time, I incline to conclude that there is no Future Tense.

## CHAPTER V

### OPTIONAL AND OBLIGATORY

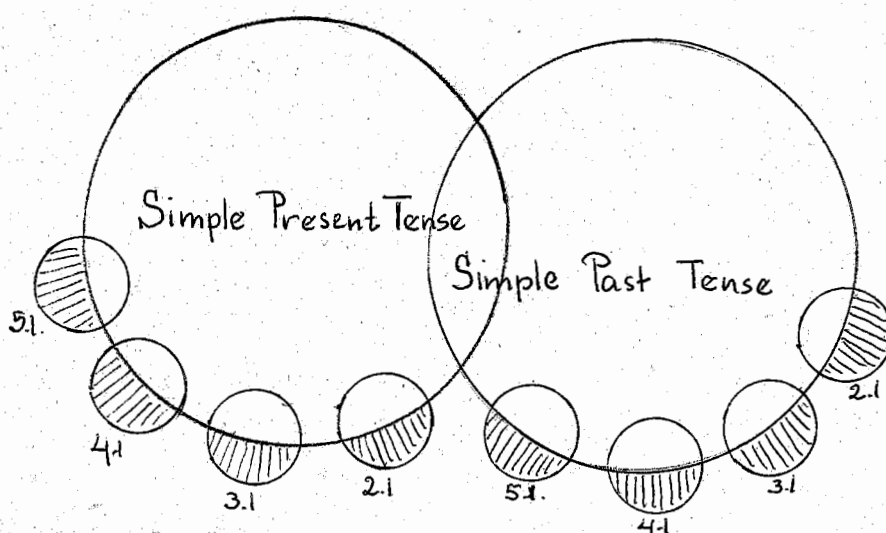
The frequency count shows that not all Tenses and Verb Groups have the same value in the English language. We can divide them into two groups, Tenses with a higher frequency and Verb Groups with a lower frequency. Simple Tenses are more important than all the Verb Groups, therefore they must be given a great deal of attention and more time for practice. *Each has its own characteristics.*

The fact that Simple Tenses are more common in use among the native speakers shows that ordinary people tend to simplify their expressions. They are inclined to use the easiest way to express their needs. The Verb Groups which are formally complex items are not used very frequently because they require more effort. So people find other easier items to replace them. The idea of optional and obligatory has its foundation here.

Optional means that a certain item is not the only way to express a need; it can be expressed by another easier one. As a native speaker avoids using a difficult item, we should do the same with regard to Tenses and Verb Groups. For example : 'He will come on Monday' can be replaced in a much easier way : 'He comes on Monday' , without changing the meaning.

Obligatory means that a certain item is quite single in its position, so that the only thing to do is to use it, since there is no other equivalent. For example : 'He finished his work' cannot be replaced by 'He finishes his work' without changing the meaning.

Based on the frequent occurrence and on the optional and obligatory nature of each item, we can draw a diagram as follows :



The two Simple Tenses overlap each other. Each Verb Group has items which are obligatory, they stand outside the circles of Present and Past Tense, and items which are optional, they stand within the circle, because they can be replaced either by the Present Tense or by the Past Tense.

It is clear then, that the basic teaching of Tenses and Verb Groups is the mastery of Simple Past and Simple Present Tense. The Verb Groups are taught only when they appear to be a help for those two tenses, and even then, the optional has to be avoided. Only the obligatory is taught. In so doing the students will keep the tenses in their right proportion and usage and the danger of cross-association is eluded.

To illustrate this point let us take the 4-1 Verb Group as an example. As we have seen before, the 4-1 Verb Group has several meanings : resultative, recent past, continuative, experience, future and has / had got. Most of these meanings are optional because they can be expres

sed by the Past Tense. Barbara A. Peterson has proved that 4-1 Verb Group and Past Tense are mostly interchangeable and that in many situations the Past Tense has higher frequency than the 4-1 Verb Group does. The preference in choosing between the two is a matter of style rather than of any kind of structure. It is obligatory however, when there are certain expressions such as, for, since, in, all, how long, etc. Changing it into the Past Tense, the meaning will be different :

- I have lived here for ten years.
- I lived here for ten years.

The first sentence means that the act of living is still continued up to now, while the second sentence means that it happened in the past time and that the person does not live there any longer.<sup>1</sup>

Recording the meanings of 4-1 Verb Group that we use here, only the continuative meaning is obligatory and the rest are optional. We will take some examples :

#### 4-1 Verb Group

#### Past Tense

#### Resultative :

- |                                     |                               |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| - He has cut his finger.            | - He cut his finger.          |
| - Someone has cleaned the room.     | - Someone cleaned the room.   |
| - He has given us permission to go. | - He gave us permission to go |
| - She has treated him badly.        | - She treated him badly.      |
| - I have finished my work.          | - I finished my work.         |

<sup>1</sup>Barbara A. Peterson, 'Toward Understanding the "Perfect" Constructions in Spoken English', English Teaching Forum, No.1, Volume VIII, January-February, 1970, pp.2-10.

**Recent Past :**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| - Mr.White, this is John.                            | - Mr.White, this is John.                       |
| I think you have met him in the parlor.              | I think you met him in the parlor.              |
| - I have noticed that the others tend to do it also. | - I noticed that the others tend to do it also. |
| - Look, the boat has turned back.                    | - Look, the boat turned back.                   |
| - We have missed the train.                          | - We missed the train.                          |
| - Have you said him already ?                        | - Did you say him already ?                     |

**Meaning of experience :**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| - We have placed our suitcase on the chairs and have laid down on the bed. | - We placed our suitcase on the chairs and laid down on the bed. |
| - We have answered all the questions asked.                                | - We answered all the questions asked.                           |
| - He has taken away the money, leaving the bag empty.                      | - They took the money, leaving the bag empty.                    |
| - People have worn beautiful dresses on those days.                        | - People wore beautiful dresses on those days.                   |
| - The President has invited Mr.Brown to form a Ministry.                   | - The President invited Mr. Brown to form a Ministry.            |

**Continuative meaning :**

- How long have you prepared the lesson ?
-

- They have talked for hours.
- I have waited here since 5 o'clock.
- We have been to opera twice this month.
- Have we not been happy here ?

----

----

----

----

Has / have got :

- |                                     |                                    |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| - We have got a new dress.          | - We got a new dress.              |
| - He has got very fat lately.       | - He got very fat lately.          |
| - They have got another assignment. | - They got another assignment.     |
| - Where have you got that picture ? | - Where did you get that picture ? |
| - He has got a beautiful wife.      | - He got a beautiful wife.         |

Future meaning :

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| - We will leave the house as soon as they have paid the money.     | - We will leave the house as soon as they pay the money.    |
| - After she has been operated, I'll come back again.               | - After she is operated, I'll come back again.              |
| - When you have finished your coffee, please open this box for me. | - When you finish your coffee, please open this box for me. |
| - Do you know what time she will have left the office ?            | - Do you know what time she will leave the office.          |



- I can't speak to him  
before I have met my  
mother first.

- I can't speak to him  
before I meet my mother  
first.

In the above comparison, we see that the future  
meaning of 4-1 Verb Group is equal to Simple Present  
Tense.

## CHAPTER VI

### TOWARD MORE UNITY

In order not to lose the thread, let us have a summary of what we have done up to now.

First of all, the possible meanings of the term 'tense' are discussed. For the definition of 'tense' we take the one which says that it is a form of a finite verb. From this stand point we discuss the forms of finite and non-finite verbs. The non-finite verbs take the forms of stem, stem + ed and stem + ing. Their meanings are also discussed. The finite verbs take the forms of stem, and stem + s, which we call the Simple Present Tense, and stem + ed, which is the Simple Past Tense.

Secondly, we notice that finite verbs are not only found singly in a sentence but they are also found in a group of verbs, which are called Verb Groups.

Thirdly we discuss the meanings of Tenses and Verb Groups, one by one, as they stand independently from each other with their own system.

And finally we come to the discussion of the frequency count, which sheds light on the order of importance of Tenses and Verb Groups as they are used daily by the native speakers. There is often a choice for using the Tenses and Verb Groups. It is shown that the preference falls into the formally simple items, namely the Simple Past and Present Tenses. *Items or forms? but not means. It is not as simple as the*

What happens then with the formally complex items, the Verb Groups? Each item expresses a meaning. But this meaning can be expressed by other items as well. A great deal of the Verb Groups are optional and they can

be expressed by either Simple Present or Simple Past, without changing the meaning. Therefore only the obligatory items need to be learned.

While analysing these Tenses and Verb Groups I am aware that there is another theory of explaining them that will be a real help for the learners.

English tenses are one of the many difficulties that non-European learners encounter. This is especially true for Indonesian students who have not had the same experience in their own language. My purpose in this study is to find out whether there is a possibility to get an easier, simpler and more unified way in describing Tenses and Verb Groups without discrediting their own value, so that every body as long as he has a brain and will, can understand and feel secure in using them correctly. This feeling of security is important in language learning because unless one feels secure he will not make progress.

To make them simpler means to reduce the number of rules to the minimum. This can be done by examining all the existing similarities in both Tenses and Verb Groups, and leaving out all the unnecessary dissimilarities or exceptions.

Up to now we have been familiar with two substantial elements which are common in both Tenses and Verb Groups namely form and meaning.

From the definition of tenses we know that tenses occur with a finite verb. Tenses and Verb Groups have a finite verb and so they have a tense which is either present or past. So we have :

**A. Formally Simple Structure (Tenses) :**

1. Simple Present

2. Simple Past

**B. Formally complex Structure (Verb Groups) :**

1. 5-1 Verb Group Present / Past

2. 4-1 Verb Group Present / Past

3. 3-1 Verb Group Present / Past

4. 2-1 Verb Group Present / Past.

So whenever we talk about tense, we talk about the form of a certain finite verb. But this form denotes meaning. And this element of meaning is quite a difficult thing to see as a whole, because each item in this paper has been dealt with according to its own system. Each item has its own meanings which are mostly different from the others. Nevertheless, can we still find a hint of similarity here? Are those difference essential? Might the frequency count, the optional and obligatory nature of each item help us to find a way toward more unity.

The frequency count tells us that the Simple Present and Past Tenses are the most commonly used, so they become the centre of all the other items. It follows that their meanings are the most familiar to the native speakers. Moreover the optional characteristics of the other items explain how these are unimportant and therefore we can fit them into the meanings mostly expressed by the Simple Present and Past.

The Present means : actual, neutral, habitual and future. The Simple Past means : narrative, actual, neutral and habitual. All these meanings have been dealt

with on pp.36-49. We won't repeat them here, so we just try to supply examples of each meaning for each Verb Group.<sup>1</sup>

#### A. 5-1 Verb Group Present :

##### 1. Can

- a. Actual : - Mr. Adam said to Phillips, you can use my study. Will you stay for lunch ?' (I, p. 234)  
 - She called out, 'Dad, can you join us ?' (I, p. 236)  
 - '..... Maybe you can talk to her.' (I, p. 236)  
 - What can he do to the three of us ?' (I, p. 204)  
 - '..... If you want the woman out of your house, how can I stop you ?' (I, p. 215)  
 - 'Get everyone on it even if they can't help us right now....' (I, p. 218)  
 - 'Do you know where I can get in touch with him ?' (I, p. 237)  
 - 'To see my father out in Long Beach. He still can't get out of the bed, and he needs company.' (I, p. 242)
- b. Neutral :- '..... Lawyer can steal more money with a brief case than a thousand men with guns and masks.' (I, p. 225)  
 - 'He is father of your child. What can a child come to this world if he has no father ?' (I, p. 244)  
 - '..... It is your own property after all. If you won't want the dog in there, I can understand.' (I, p. 215)  
 - 'I can learn how to sell olive oil.' (I, p. 225)
- c. Habitual :- He can be very angry sometimes.  
 - She can sit all morning doing nothing.
- d. Future : - 'You can tell your two friends that I expect them to let me wet my beak in the same manner. Don't be afraid to tell them,' he added reassuringly. (I, p. 203)

##### 2. Will.

- a. Actual : - 'Here, I'll pay you .....' (I, p. 211)  
 - 'Wait, I'll get you your money.' (I, p. 231)

---

<sup>1</sup> Examples for these 5-1 Verb Group Present and Past are taken from : I. Mario Puzo, op cit, and II. Arthur Hailey, op cit. When there are no examples to be found here to supply a certain meaning, I add my own. This shows that that certain meaning does not occur very frequent.



- 'I'll talk to them alone.' (I,p.234)
- '..... Fanucci won't take a dime less than three hundred dollars. We'll have to pay.' (I,p.204)
- 'You won't have much luck....' (I,p.206)
- 'You won't have to move.' (I,p.206)
- '..... Watch your manner or you'll be out on your Sicilian ass in the street there.' (I,p.213)
- 'I'll have your balls hanging from your ears.' (I,p.231)

b. Neutral :- Heat will changes water into steam.

- Men will die sooner or later.
- Boys will be boys.

c. Habitual:- She will have to help her mother first, before she goes to school.

- She will walk without sandals when she knows that her mother is sleeping.

d. Future : - '..... Tell him you have to get the money and will give it to me to give him.' (I,p.205)

- '..... I'll quarrel over the price with him.' (I,p.205)
- 'Fanucci told me nothing below three hundred dollars, how will you make him take less ?' (I,p.205)
- 'Tell Fanucci I'll pay him the money here in my house at nine o'clock to-night.' (I,p.206)
- 'I'll have to give him a glass of wine and talk, reason with him to take the lesser sum.' (I,p.206)
- '..... Genso will show you what to do.' (I,p.225)
- 'Will you let us know if Mike contacts you ?' Phillips asked. (I,p.236)
- 'Will you deliver this to him if he gets in touch with you ?' (I,p.237)

### 3. May.

a. Actual : - 'May we come in and talk to you for a few minutes ....' (I,p.234)

b. Neutral: - 'The waiter who witness the shooting doesn't recognize a picture of Mike but he may recognize him in person.' (I,p.236)

- '..... Your daughter refuses to give us any information that may help....' (I,p.237)
- '..... I must warn you that if you do have contact with him you may be getting involved in a very dangerous situation. If you help him in any way, you may get yourself in very serious trouble.' (I,p.235)

- c. Habitual : - Usually after he has had his breakfast he may go out to take a walk.
- We may borrow books from the library on Mondays.
  - They may watch the T.V. every evening.
- d. Future : - I hope you may succeed in your study.
- He may come tomorrow.
  - They may have a vacation next month.
  - You may find her interesting when you see her next time.

#### 4. Shall.

- a. Actual : - You shall go now and find the book you want.
- We shall give you the money.
  - Please be quiet, or, I shall leave you alone.
  - Shall I open the window ?
  - Shall we invite him to come ?
- b. Neutral : - The sun shall always rise in the East.
- We shall not steal.
  - Life shall always have its own happiness and sorrow.
- c. Habitual : - I shall always lock my room first before I go out.
- I shall take a bus whenever the train does not run.
- d. Future : - I am afraid we shall meet him there.
- We shall have to leave this house as soon as possible.
  - When they leave us, we shall take care of everything.

## 5. Must

- a. Actual : - 'But I must tell you that the climate in this city is damp; unhealthy for Neapolitans, and you are advised never to visit it.' (I,p.222)
- '..... I must warn you that if you do have contact with him you may be getting involved in a very dangerous situation.... (I,p.235)
- b. Neutral : - 'A man like yourself must know how much more profitable it is to have a friend, who, instead of calling on you for help, takes care of his own affairs and stands ever ready to help you in some future time of trouble.' (I,p.222)
- c. Habitual : - He must go to the doctor once a week.
- She must have coffee in the morning.
- She must write to her parent every month.
- d. Future : - She must come soon.
- They must be going to the wedding tomorrow.
- I must talk to her when she arrives.
- We must pray for him. He will have his operation this afternoon.

## B. 5-1 Verb Group Past.

### 1. Could.

- a. Narrative : - Vito went up along side Clemenza so that he too could see what was happening. (I,p.206)
- On that night he could have paid Fanucci the tribute and have become again a grocery clerk with perhaps his own grocery store in the years to come. (I,p.205)
- Now she could face him. (I,p.237)
- But the Don could not interfere. (I,p.244)
- He was surprised at how clearly he could think. (I,p.204)
- She had always been her father's favorite and she could not understand his coldness now. (I,p.244)
- b. Actual : - And even Don Corleone, that most modest man, could not help feeling a sense of pride. (I,p.219)

- And suddenly he was sure that Fanucci had no great connexions, could not possibly have. (I, p. 204)
- He had private business with Fanucci that could not be interrupted (I, p. 206)
- He smiled as if it was some private joke only he himself could appreciate. (I, p. 212)
- He assured Vito Corleone that it had all been a dreadful misunderstanding, that of course she could keep the dog. (I, p. 215)
- c. Neutral : - He had a friendship with Capone in Chicago and could call on help in that quarter. (I, p. 221)
- The Corleone family could not eat that beautiful rug. (I, p. 201)
- Surely the world could do without such a person. (I, p. 207)
- Capone's world, and others like it, could be easily destroyed. (I, p. 222)
- He believed he could do this with no loss of profit. (I, p. 229)
- Against this Don Corleone could throw two small but superbly organized regimes led by Clemenza and Tessio. (I, p. 221)
- It was not possible that the law could allow such thievery. (I, p. 229)
- d. Habitual : - She was his favorite and could speak to him so impudently. (I, p. 243)
- He was devoted father and husband but so busy he could spare his family little of his time (I, p. 216)

## 2. Would.

- a. Narrative : - By doing so he would have an extra seven hundred dollars in his bank-roll. (I, p. 206)
- His own world would be more impregnable than before. (I, p. 228)
- And such men would not give information to the police. No person in that house would deliberately expose himself to police suspicion or questioning. They would lock their doors and pretend they had heard nothing. (I, p. 210)
- If he did not kill Fanucci, he would have to pay the man seven hundred dollars cold wash. (I, p. 206)
- If his intelligence was good, any further move would be fraught with danger. (I, p. 222)
- Then they would owe him a favour. (I, p. 204)
- All for nothing, they lose their home. (I, p. 212)
- b. Actual : - The Capone sent back word that they would not interfere. (I, p. 224)

- She knew he would tell her nothing. (I,p.210)
- At the end of World War II Don Corleone knew that again his world would have to change its ways, that it would have to fit itself more snugly into the ways of the other, larger world. (I,p.229)
- Clemenza cursed, Tessio scowled, but then both men started talking about whether Fanucci would be satisfied with two hundred dollars. (I,p.203)

c. Neutral : - Copernicus invented that the earth would be moving all the time round the sun.

d. Habitual : - She would walk away whenever he tried to come near her.

### 3. Night.

a. Narrative : - This might take three years and Harroline would be lucky to get back ten cents on the dollar. (I,p.229)

- Clemenza cursed, Tessio scowled, but then both men started talking about whether Fanucci would be satisfied with two hundred dollars. Tessio thought he might. (I,p.203)
- He foresaw that public indignation might even lead to a suspension of democratic procedures which could be fatal to him and his people. (I,p.226)
- That might have really caused some trouble. (I,p.241)

b. Actual : - Fanucci might indeed have powerful friends who would seek vengeance. (I,p.207)

- He might been persuaded to take nothing more or to wait a little longer. (I,p.208)
- He changed his clothes and fearful that some blood might have splattered on them, he threw them into a metal tub his wife used for washing. (I,p.210)
- Connie even hinted that she might want a divorce. (I,p.244)

c. Neutral : - They thought the moon might have a living being.

- They believed that a ghost might have wife and children.



- d. Habitual : - He might be poor when he was young.  
 - He might take a walk in the evening with his wife and children.

#### 4. Should.

- a. Narrative : - Mel flushed. His brother-in-law had caught him. He should have prepared his own case, or at least adapted the insurrection company's notes and hand them retyped. (II, p.191)
- b. Actual : - What the old lady had told Tanya about returning was just as accurate. Airlines took the view that stowaway incidents should not happen and, when they did, it was their own fault for failing to prevent them. (II, p.166)  
 - She listened in silence to Mel's explanation - why it was essential should remain at the airport. (II, p.173)
- c. Neutral : - 'My late husband taught me to be thorough. He was a teacher - of geometry. He always said you should try to think of every angle.' (II, p.168)
- d. Habitual : - He should have written many times to her.

#### 5. Must.

- a. Narrative : - No, that scarface bastard must have found out what we made from the whole saler who bought the dresses. ...' (I, p.204)  
 - And so was Fanucci alone. Or Fanucci with some gunmen hired for special jobs on a strictly cash basis. Which left Vito Corleone with another decision. The course his own life must take. (I, p.205)
- b. Actual : - In the kitchen her mother took no notice of her weeping, and Kay realized that her father must have told her about the two detectives. (I, p.237)
- c. Neutral : - Teachers must give good examples.  
 - We must speak clearly and distinctly in front of the class.  
 - He must be a good wife.  
 - We must watch our tongue.

d. Habitual : - We must leave the room whenever the doctor comes in.



- Since language is a skill, the learners must practise it daily.
- Every time he sees the picture of his dead mother he must keep himself from crying.

As a conclusion we can say that a 5-1 Verb Group can have all the meanings of present actual, neutral habitual and future as well as of past narrative, actual, neutral and habitual. The only exception is when a modal verb is used in Modal Preterite, because while its form denotes past tense, its meaning refers to present time :

- could - 'I could find some work for you to do what would be very profitable.' (I,p.208)
- would - '..... My dear, would you rather speak to these gentlemen alone or would you prefer to have me present ?' (I,p.234)
- might - '..... One never knows when one might need a friend, isn't that true ?' (I,p.213)
- should - 'I think there are a few things you should know,' Detective Phillips said. (I,p.235)

To solve this problem I suggest to avoid teaching this until later time after the usage of the 5-1 Verb Group has been thoroughly mastered, since the use of: could, would, might, should, here is optional and can be replaced by : can, will, may, shall, without changing the meaning. So they will be included in the 5-1 Verb Group Present :

- 'I can find some work for you to do that will be very profitable.'
- '..... My dear, will you rather speak to these gentlemen alone or will you prefer to have me present ?'
- '..... One never knows when one may need a friend,

isn't that true ?'

- 'I think there are a few things you must know,'  
Detective Phillips said. (note : should is the  
preterite of must.)

**C. 4-1 Verb Group Present.**

- 1. Actual** :
- He isn't home. He has gone to Bali.
  - How long have you prepared this lesson ?
  - What sort of weather have you been having here ?
  - I have waited here since 5 o'clock.
  - He has taken away the money, leaving the bag empty.
  - They have stood there for hours, waiting for the President to pass.
  - All this has taken sometimes and now their appetites have been satisfied.
  - We haven't seen her lately.
  - He has given us permission to go.
  - Look, the boat has turned back.

- 2. Neutral** :
- Everything he has done has been out of the desire to please you.
  - Everything that has come to us teaches us for the future.

- 3. Habitual** :
- That is what I have been striving to point out to you.
  - People have worn beautiful dresses on those days.
  - They have experienced great hardships.
  - She has lived peacefully with her parents.
  - Have we not been happy here ? (Note :

in this case being happy is thought of more as a habit than as a result.)

- You have given me some satisfaction of late, you may stay here.

- She has treated him badly.

#### 4. Future

: - We will leave the house as soon as they have paid the money.

- After she has been operated, I'll come back again.

- When you have finished your coffee please open this box for me.

- Do you know what time she will have left the office ?

- I can't speak to him before I have met my mother first.

- You may go home when you have cleaned the room.

- Father asked me to do it after I have taken a bath this afternoon.

- As soon as you have seen her, please let me now.

- They will get their diploma after they have passed their exams.

#### B. 4-1 Verb Group Past.

1. Narrative : - After he had finished his speech he went back to his seat.

- He had waited for hours before they arrived.

- Although the doctor had operated her, she died finally.

- As soon as she had gone, mother closed the book and wept.

- They had left the room shortly before the police came in.
- Of course the thief could come in easily because they had forgotten to lock the door.
- They tried to get more and more money after they had received a lot.

2. Actual : -

3. Neutral : -

2).

4. Habitual : - That was what I had been striving to point out to you.
- People had worn beautiful dresses on those days.
  - They had experienced great hardships.
  - She had lived peacefully with her parents before she was married.
  - She had treated him badly.

E. 3-1 Verb Group Present.

1. Actual : - 'He is working in the garden but don't try to disturb him now.'
- 'Why are you here ? Every body is playing outside.'

---

2). It is very difficult to get an example for 4-1 Verb Group Past meaning actual and neutral.



- 'No matter what you have said before, are you worrying about him? Tell me the truth.'

- 'You are cheating me.'

- 'Listen, they are singing that song again.'

2. Neutral :
- A flower is interesting to look at.
  - To hear a musical band is annoying for old people.
  - Those words are disgusting and are not to be spoken out.
  - People are smiling when they are happy.
  - Such words are comforting.

3. Habitual :
- She is complaining all the time.
  - He is saying 'no' when you ask for help.
  - There must be something. He is going up and down the stairs several times.
  - I hate going to a meeting. They are talking nonsense.
  - They are picnicking on Sundays.

4. Future :
- I am going to leave on Sunday.
  - He is going to Naples soon.
  - If you want to see them, do it now. They are leaving this afternoon.
  - They arrive tomorrow. Are you coming too?

#### F. 3-1 Verb Group Past.

1. Narrative :
- At half-past six on a Friday evening in January Lincoln International Airport, Illinois, was functioning, though with difficulty. (p.9)
  - The airport was reeling - as was the entire Midwestern United States - from the meanest roughest winter storm in half a dozen years. (p.9)
  - Now, like pustules on a battered, weakened body, trouble spots were erupting

- steadily. (p.9)
- On the ground, twice that number were readying for takeoff. (p.9)
- Freight supervisors were nervously watching perishables - hothouse flowers from Wyoming for New England; a ton of Pennsylvania cheese for Anchorage..... (p.10)
- The sweat, in increasing quantity, was gleaming on Danny's balding head. (p.15)
- But, unhappy or not, and despite the sweat, Danny was coping. (p.15)

## 2. Actual

- People were asking : didn't whoever ran the airport know it was snowing ? (p.19)
- He could peremptorily order an airline to remove a door sign which was misleading or failed to conform to terminal standards. (p.19)
- The wonder was, Mel Bakersfeld reflected, that anything was continuing to operate at all. (p.11)
- In this case, as Danny predicted, there would be a flood of protests when other airlines realized their food trucks were not getting through, whatever the reason. (p.15)
- Even before the answer, he decided glumly that still more hours of his working days were going to be consumed by delegations, arguments, and the same insoluble discussions as before. (p.17)<sup>3</sup>

## 3. Neutral

- They wanted to know whether tulips were growing in tropical countries.
- They tried to catch him who was swimming as a fish.
- They told me that the monument was interesting to look at.

## 4. Habitual

- There was a sign that showed when water was running too much.
- He noticed that any time he went there she was sitting on the same chair near her mother.

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<sup>3</sup> Arthur Hailey, op cit.

- He was wearing the same clothes when he went to church.
- He was always interesting.
- They were playing football on Sundays.

G. 2-1 Verb Group Present. 4).

1. Actual : - Some say it is an unpopular war we're carrying on in South Vietnam, but, as far as I'm concerned, we have 500,000 of the most popular Americans I know fighting there. (II,p.27)
  - "I'm really embarrassed to meet you here, Mr.Hope," he said with a grin. (II,p.28)
  - He has been sick here for about a week and he is taken to the hospital today.
  - She is tired after having cooked all morning.
  - Are you interested in those birds ?
2. Neutral : - The west wing is devoted largely to Ike's early life and his military career, the east wing to his White House years. (I,p.58)
  - It is set with 91 diamonds and five large rubies. (I,p.59)
  - Among them is a large, office-size desk, every square inch of which is covered with a mosaic of gold and ivory and other precious materials.(I,p.59)
  - One of the most popular exhibits in the Centre is housed in a separate glass-walled pavilion near the museum building. (I,p.59)
  - Most of the space in the Eisenhower library is devoted to these vast files of documents and to reading rooms for researchers, and thus is not open to sightseers. (I,p.60)
  - Its walls and also the walls of the corridors are paneled with Laredo Chi-aro marble from Italy, and the floors are paved with Roman travertine. (I,p.60)
3. Habitual : - With 96,000 miles on the odometer, it still ticks along smoothly on the occasions when it is gassed up to participate in parades. (I,p.59)
  - At each show I'm introduced by an enlisted man, and some of them are pretty darn sharp. (II,p.29)
4. Future : - You will be there, won't you, when she is operated ?

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4). Examples for these 2-1 Verb Group Present and Past are taken from : I. Ben Hibbs, op cit., and II Bob Hope, op cit.

- John and Marry are soon engaged, I guess.
- When they are married they will live in Malang.
- The bell for supper is rung at 7 o'clock this evening.
- You are expected to come, please don't be late.

#### H. 2-1 Verb Group Past.

1. Narrative : - The museum, a Kansas-limestone building located just a block from the Eisenhower homestead, was opened to public in 1954 (I,p.57)
- The center's other major structure, a beautiful little chapel called the Place of Meditation, was completed in 1966.
- But, with the exception of the one appropriation from the state of Kansas, its construction was financed entirely through personal gifts from the people of a grateful nation (I,p.58)
- They were given to Ike by the Greek nation, and are worth between a half-million and a million dollars. (I,p.58)
- "The mission of this Allied Force, was fulfilled at 3.a.m., local time, May, 7, 1945. Eisenhower." (I,p.60)
- Two Americans were killed, and 50 Americans and 15 Vietnamese were wounded in the blast. (II,p.28)
- Last year I was introduced by SP/5 Bruce D.Gaub, of Seattle. (II,p.29)

2. Actual : - I went to the hospital when she was operated.
- I saw them on the porch, but since I was tired, I did not join them.
- They took the bags from my hands and I was so impressed by their warm welcome.
- She was embarrassed because you said those things in front of her.

- He went to Europe not knowing that his mother was killed in an accident.
- 3. Neutral : - He said that the chalice was beautiful, it was set with many diamonds and several rubies.
- They told me that the desk was covered with a mosaic of gold and ivory and other precious materials.
- They wondered whether the earth was moved by the sun.
- They noticed that the floors were paved with Roman travertine.
- 4. Habitual : - She was tired every time she came from school.
- She was a good girl. Everything was put nicely on its own place after she had finished cooking.
- When he was a child he was operated several times.
- Before she went to bed she rushed to her father and was kissed by him.
- She could not sleep before a story was told to her.

The study of the present and past meanings of 3-1; 2-1; and 4-1 Verb Groups shows that :

1. There is no difficulty to see that the 3-1 and 2-1 Verb Groups have the same meanings as those denoted by the Simple Present and Simple Past Tenses.

2. There is a difficulty with the 4-1 Verb Group. The problem seems to be a contradictory one, because, while the 4-1 Verb Group is shown on pp.86-89 as having



similarity with the Past Tense, now it is looked from the view point of the Present Tense. Does it have a similarity with the Present Tense too ? It does have indeed, but it needs some clarifications.

First, it is not contradictory when an item is looked from different views. It rather shows the richness of a language. Granted that the meaning of a 4-1 Verb Group has a "current relevance", it can lean over to both sides, to the past and the present. Moreover the meaning of a verb depends on several elements namely, on the individual verb itself, on the verb form and on the surrounding circumstances.<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, the present actual meaning of a 4-1 Verb Group has to be understood as something which is thought of to be closely related to the present situation. For example : 'He has gone to Bali'. The situation here is : Somebody came and asked : 'Where is John ?' The answer was : 'He isn't home. He has gone to Bali.'

As for the 4-1 Verb Group Past, although it is difficult to find the actual and neutral meanings, it can always be connected with the Past Narrative, because a 4-1 Verb Group Past denotes anteriority : events which happen prior to those in the story.

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W.F. Twaddell, The English Verb Auxiliaries, Brown University, Providence, 1960, as cited by Barbara A. Peterson in her 'Toward Understanding the "Perfect" Constructions in Spoken English', English Teaching Forum, No.1, Vol. VIII, January - February 1970, p.8.



## CONCLUSION

Everyone knows that tenses are difficult items for Indonesian students to learn. This might be caused by :

1. the different language background of the students and
2. the analysis of the tenses itself.

By the second I mean, that the analysis is too complicated for the students that it causes cross - association or uncertainty. Cross-association can happen easily when there are too many rules to be learned at the same time without any clear cut line of division uncertainty can occur to students who are shy by nature, and therefore afraid to make mistakes. Before they begin to produce the language, they keep asking themselves which rule should be used now, and never produce the right one.

The purpose of this paper is to find a simpler, easier way of analysing tenses. This is done in two steps: form and meaning. Whenever we speak of 'tense' we mean a form of a finite verb. This necessitates division of the traditionally called English Tenses into two groups : the formally simple structure, The Simple Present and Past Tenses and the formally complex structure, The Verb Groups. The forms of the Simple Present and Past Tenses are quite easy to learn. There are only two rules :

stem and stem + s for the Present Tense

stem + ed                      for the Past Tense.

The forms of the Verb Groups are also the same. The difference lies here in that the finite verbs of a Verb Group are found together with the non-finite verbs. This structure can easily be learned by using the chart of the Verb Groups on page 34.

The meanings are more complicated than the forms. But since the Frequency Count shows that the Simple Present and Past Tenses are most frequently used by the native English Speakers, we may conclude that these Simple Present and Past Tenses become the core, the unifying factor in our teaching of Tenses and Verb Groups. Two rules are important in using the Tenses :

in descriptions, explanations, instructions, etc.

the Simple Present Tense is used.

in telling stories the Simple Past Tense is used.

First, the Tenses must be thoroughly mastered, then the Verb Groups, step by step. We learn from what we have known before. When the meanings of the Tenses have been mastered thoroughly, it is easier for the students to recognize the similar meanings found in the Verb Groups.

I believe, that by avoiding or postponing the more difficult items - in this case - the Verb Groups - it will be easier for the students to master the language.

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