**Class 5: Present Perfect and the Use of Ago, Since and For**

**Facilitator**

***Instructions:*** *Ask learners about what they know or remember on present perfect (rule, uses, uses with since, for, ago, still, just, yet, and already.*

* **Importance of Present Perfect**

*In academic writing, present perfect is one of the most commonly used three tenses along simple present and simple past1.*

1. **Rule of Present Perfect**

Subject + to have (in simple present) + past participle of the verb.

* Recall to have in simple present: I, You, We, You, or They have. She or He or It has.
* Recall the past participle of the verbs:
* Regular verbs: the simple past or preterit is the same as the past participle.
* Irregular verbs: There is no rule. You have to memorize the past participle of the irregular verbs you often use.
* Auxiliary verbs: to be – been; to have – had and to do- done
* Modal verbs: Not applicable. We will not discuss here the modal perfect tense (subject + modal verb + have + past participle of the verb) for making suppositions or speculations regarding a past event or action. In science, especially in biomedical research, we hypothesize based on observations or preliminary data or findings, which leaves almost no room for speculations.

Example 1: He has worked at the hospital. (A regular verb)

Example 2: He has taught English. (An irregular verb)

Example 3: We have had our books in the classroom. (Auxiliary verb to have)

Example 4: He has been an excellent student. (Auxiliary verb to be)

Example 5: He could have played soccer at the professional level. (A modal verb)

**Note:** as opposed to simple past, use the present perfect to indicate an action that occurred at a **nonspecific time** in the past.

**Facilitator**

***Instructions:*** *In small groups, have the**learners write down on a sheet of paper a list of 20 verbs ( a good mix of regular and 10 irregular verbs) without specifying whether a verb is regular or irregular (see Table 1). Exchange the lists of verbs between the small groups. Each group should provide the past participle of all 20 verbs and specify between parentheses whether the verb is regular (R) or Irregular (I). Each group should make sentences (10 simple, 5 compound and 5 complex sentences) in present perfect. Give them 20 minutes for this task. Then, return each assignment to the small group who initially produced the list of the verbs for grading.*

*Make it fun. Have each group score out of 20. Each verb is graded 1 point out of 20 (half point for the correct answer (regular or irregular verbs) and another half point for the correct pronunciation). Each group will get its own grade out of 20 in addition to the total points out of 20 the other group (the one whose assignment they graded) has missed for incorrect answers. Sum up on the board the two sub-scores and have the class applaud the small group with the highest total score and encourage positively the others. Remind them that it was just for funny learning in a relaxed environment.*

*Note: Be mindful when the learners are young adults. Sometime, they take the exercise too seriously due to their high competitiveness and residual immaturity for adolescence. A very severe grading can undermine the safety and trust in your classroom.*

***Table 1:*** *Template to be used for the final “S” pronunciation in simple present in small groups.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***N°*** | ***Verbs*** | ***R=Regular I=Irregular*** | ***Past Participle*** | ***Make a sentence in present perfect*** |
| ***1*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***2*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***3*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***4*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***5*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***6*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***7*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***8*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***9*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***10*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***11*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***12*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***13*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***14*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***15*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***16*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***17*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***18*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***19*** |  |  |  |  |
| ***20*** |  |  |  |  |

**Facilitator**

***Instructions:*** *mention the general uses of present perfect, but focus on the differential use of simple past versus present perfect. In simple past, you have to be specific about the time in the past while in present perfect, you don’t have to. Illustrate the difference in the two examples below:*

Example 6: *At a U.S. airport, the police asked, “Have you ever been in the U.S. before?” Yes, I have been in the U.S. before. Or No, I have not been in the U.S. before. All the police wanted to know whether you were already in the system or not.*

Example 7: *At a U.S. airport, the police asked, “When did you enter in the U.S.?” I entered in the U.S. today ago. The police wanted to know exactly how long you have been in the U.S.*

1. **Uses of Present Perfect**

* **General Uses**

The present perfect is used to talk about experience up to now, a change that occurred over time, recent actions (often used with “just”), and unfinished action that is expected to be completed (in the negative, often with “yet”)2 with relevance in the present.

Go online for your own examples or click [here](https://www.scribbr.com/verbs/present-perfect/).

* **Uses in manuscript writing3-7**

The present perfect is used in the introduction section of a manuscript where it is often used to introduce background information in a paragraph. It is used in the discussion section to refer to findings or results from the literature (others’ results or even your previously published results). Your own results are in simple past with a mention of a table or a figure for indication or direction for the readers.

**Facilitator**

***Instructions:*** *Focus on the use of “for” as they will most likely used it in manuscript writing in the methods section or use in the standard operating procedures (SOP).* ***Example:*** *We have incubated our reactions at room temperature for 20 minutes.*

1. **Uses of Since, Ago and For with Present Perfect8**

* We use “Since” when we indicate the beginning of a specified period of time.

Example 8: My mentor has been in his current position since 2020.

* We use “For” when we are using a specific period of time: one week, three hours, five years, etc…

Example 9: My mentor has been in his current position for the last four (4) years.

* We use “Ago,” when we just refer to “some time” in the past.

Example 10: My mentor has been in his current position four (4) years ago.

**Facilitator**

***Instructions:*** *Mention the use of just, yet, still and already with present perfect. Have the learners write down on a sheet of paper one sentence with each word (still, yet, just, and already) individually in five (5) minutes. Let them work in pair to check the correctness of the sentences (structure, spelling and grammar, proper use of “still, yet, just, and already”) in five (5) minutes. Each pair should report (write on the board and read loudly) their revised sentences to the entire class. Remind them to use free online tools to check the proper pronunciation of unfamiliar words and final “ed” pronunciation.*

**Note:** In addition to “since”, “for” and “ago”, we do use present perfect with just (meaning 'a short time before'), yet (meaning 'at any time up to now'), still (meaning something hasn't happened) and already (meaning 'before now')9. As a simple rule, place this word between the auxiliary verb to have and the past participle of the verb in your affirmative sentences. Example: I have already taken my English classes 1 to 4. We will go more in detail when editing your sentences in present perfect with just, yet, still and already.

**Facilitator**

***Instructions:*** *Tell them to read about the use of adverbs with simple present, simple past and present perfect before next class.*

1. **Simple future**

Importantly, in addition to the three most commonly used tenses in manuscript writing (simple present, simple past, and present perfect), we will discuss here briefly simple future.

* **Rule:**

Subject + will + base form of the verb (regular, irregular and auxiliary verbs).

Example 11: We will conduct a larger and well-designed follow up study.

Uses: We use simple future to express action in the future. In manuscript writing, we use it to express the future direction after the conclusion of the study.

* **Exceptions:**

1. With modal verbs, we do not apply the above mentioned rule.

Example 12**:** We can conduct a larger and well-designed follow up study.

We will be able to conduct a larger and well-designed follow up study.

1. In British English10, we use “shall” for the subject is either first person of singular or first person of plural. I shall or we shall. In American English, we use “shall” only to express the necessity of a future action.

Example 13: The security will test the fire alarm system in five minutes. We shall exit the lab right now.

1. **Evaluation**
2. What is the rule of present perfect?
3. What is the main used of present perfect we covered in this class?
4. **References**
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6. Eaghan Ryan at Scribb. Present Perfect Tense | Examples & Use. Available at <https://www.scribbr.com/verbs/present-perfect/> Published on April 4, 2023, revised on May 11, 2023 and Consulted on May 22nd, 2023.

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