

# Present perfect questionnaire (for languages with perfect of evidentiality)

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★ **Note:** This questionnaire is intended for languages that have, or might have, perfect of evidentiality (Izvorski 1997).

The basic contrast we are interested in: Is it more natural to use the present perfect or the simple past (or potentially some other expression) when saying the following expressions? Do any of these contexts require the use of one versus the other? Is the present perfect infelicitous in any of these contexts?

(1) **Present perfect puzzle context (Klein 1992)**

You walk into an Olympic changing room the morning after a race and see Usain Bolt's jersey in the laundry basket. You didn't witness the race, but you have evidence that Usain Bolt ran yesterday. You say:

'Usain Bolt (has) ran yesterday.'

Can you say this with the present perfect?

(2) **Current salience (McCoard 1978)**

You have been studying the history of the art of printing. You see Gutenberg's name everywhere in the resources and you make the inference that Gutenberg discovered the art of printing. You say:

'Gutenberg (has) discovered/invented the art of printing.'

Can you say this with the present perfect?

(3) **Perfect of result (Iatridou et al. 2001)**

a. **Perfect of result context**

Your roommate Ali calls you and tells you that he can't find his keys. You tell him you haven't seen them either. Your officemate asks you what happened. You say:

'Ali (has) lost his keys.'

Can you say this with the present perfect?

- b. **Updated perfect of result context**  
Ali calls you back and says he found his keys. You tell your officemate:  
'Ali (has) lost his keys, but now he found them.'  
Can you say the present perfect in the first clause with this continuation?
- (4) **Lifetime effects context (Chomsky 1970)**  
You visit Princeton and see Einstein's signature in the physics department guestbook. You say:  
'Einstein (has) visited Princeton.'  
Can you say this with the present perfect?
- (5) **Universal perfect (McCawley 1981)**
- a. **Universal perfect context**  
You have not heard from your friend Ali in a long time. You go on his Facebook page and see that he moved to Istanbul in 2010. You say:  
'Ali (has) lived in Istanbul since 2010, and he lives there today.'  
Can you say the present perfect in the first clause with (and without) this continuation?
- b. **Updated universal perfect context**  
You have not heard from your friend Ayse in a long time. You go on her Facebook page and see that she moved to Istanbul in 2010. Then, you see a newer post saying that she accepted a job in Ankara. You say:  
'Ayse (has) lived in Istanbul since 2010, but she doesn't live there anymore.'  
Can you say the present perfect in the first clause with (and without) this continuation?
- (6) **Repeatability effects (Katz 2003)**
- a. **Repeatability context**  
You are discussing the Picasso exhibit at LACMA with your friend Ayse. You are curious if your mutual friend Leyla went to see it. The Picasso exhibit is closed now; Leyla can no longer go to it. You ask:  
'Has Leyla been to the Picasso exhibit?'  
Can you say this with the present perfect? What about the simple past?

b. **Updated repeatability context**

You are discussing the Monet exhibit at LACMA with your friend Ayse. You are curious if your mutual friend Ali went to see it. The Monet exhibit is still open; Ali could go to it this weekend if he wanted. You ask:

‘Has Ali been to the Monet exhibit?’

Can you say this with the present perfect? What about the simple past?

(7) **Present perfect and questions**

a. **Question about a specific past time**

Our mutual friend Seren is a somewhat picky eater. I know that Seren went to a Japanese restaurant last night, and that you talked to her after she went there. I ask you:

‘Has Seren eaten sushi?’

Can you say this with the present perfect? What about the simple past?

b. **Question about the general past**

You are discussing foods you have tried with your co-workers. Your co-worker Ayse is notoriously picky. You ask your mutual friend Leyla: ‘Has Ayse eaten sushi?’

Can you say this with the present perfect? Does it require an additional adverb, e.g. *ever*? What about the simple past?

c. **Out of the blue question**

Your co-worker sticks their head in your office and asks out of the blue: ‘Has Ali eaten sushi?’

Can you say this with the present perfect? Does it require an additional adverb, e.g. *ever*? What about the simple past? Does it sound better to use the simple past, or the present perfect, in an out of the blue context?

## References

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