Episode 092 – Grammar

The past perfect

The past perfect is a grammatical tense to express the "pre-past". It is used to denote an occurrence that took place even further in the past than another event that also happened in the past.

Pre-past

Du **hattest** keine Ausbildung **gemacht**, und deswegen **hast** du mich zur Adoption **freigegeben**.

(= Anna’s mother gave Anna up for adoption because she hadn't completed any vocational training previously.)

Past

Als der Pfleger ins Zimmer **kam**, **hatte** Harry schon das Bett **gemacht**.

(= Harry had made the bed before the caregiver came into the room.)

The past perfect is formed like the present perfect with the helping verbs "haben" or "sein" and a past participle. But for the past perfect, the helping verbs are conjugated in the simple past tense. The past participle remains unchanged. In a typical declarative sentence, the conjugated verb takes the second position and the past participle goes to the end of the sentence.

Examples:

*Harry **hatte** auf Anna **gewartet**.*
*Harry **war** mit Anna ins Seniorenheim **gefahren**.*
**Overview of the past tenses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simple past</th>
<th>Present perfect</th>
<th>Past perfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harry <em>wartete.</em></td>
<td>Harry <em>hat gewartet.</em></td>
<td>Harry <em>hatte gewartet.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry <em>hatte</em> Glück.</td>
<td>Harry <em>hat</em> Glück <em>gehabt.</em></td>
<td>Harry <em>hatte</em> Glück <em>gehabt.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry <em>ging weg.</em></td>
<td>Harry <em>ist weggegangen.</em></td>
<td>Harry <em>war weggegangen.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>