Unità 21

Past Perfect

B2/FCE

Il Past Perfect (trapassato prossimo) si forma con l'ausiliare had + il participio passato per tutte le persone. (Vedi l'elenco dei participi passati irregolari a pagina 431.)

I had decided

she had left

we had eaten.

La forma negativa si ottiene con not. I had not decided.

Nel linguaggio parlato e informale, si usa la forma contratta.

I'd decided

she'd left

we hadn't eaten

Il Past Perfect si usa

 per parlare di un'azione nel passato avvenuta prima di un'altra azione ugualmente passata.
 Sue left at 7.00. We arrived at her house at 8,30.
 Sue andò via alle 7.00. Arrivammo a casa sua alle 8.30.

When we arrived at Sue's house, she had already left. Quando arrivammo a casa di Sue, se n'era già andata.

 con espressioni temporali come when, after, since, for, already, yet, by the time.

By the time we got to the station, the train had left. Quando arrivammo alla stazione, il treno era già partito.

spesso con verbi come think, know, be sure, realize, remember, suspect, understand, ecc.
 I thought I'd seen the film before, but I hadn't.
 Pensavo di aver già visto (= che avevo già visto) il film, ma non l'avevo visto.

Ellen was sure she'd locked the door.
Ellen era sicura di aver chiuso (= che aveva chiuso) la porta a chiave.

nel discorso indiretto
 She said she had locked the door.
 Disse di aver chiuso (che aveva chiuso) la porta a chiave.

Past Perfect Continuous

Il Past Perfect Continuous si forma con had been + forma in -ing del verbo principale.

had been living

had been eating

had been thinking

Si usa per indicare un'azione in corso fino a un certo momento nel passato.

I had been living in a bed-sitter up to then. Avevo vissuto in un monolocale fino ad allora.

Confronta l'uso del Past Perfect Simple e Continuous.

I had been watching horror films, and my mind was full of strange images. (=situazione temporanea) Avevo guardato (=ero stato a guardare) di film dell'orrore, e la mia mente era piena di immagini strane.

I had watched all the video tapes, and I was starting to get bored.

Avevo guardato tutte le cassette, e cominciavo ad annoiarmi.

Con alcuni verbi (work, live, learn, ecc.) non c'è pressoché differenza di significato.

I'd worked in Paris for three years when I was fired. = I'd been working...

Lavoravo a Parigi da tre anni quando fui licenziato.

Coniuga i verbi tra parentesi al Past Perfect.

- a) When I got my job, I ... had been married ... (be married) for two months.
- b) Mrs Forbes was furious with her students, because they (not do) their homework.
- c) That old castle (stand) for ten centuries when it was pulled down.
- d) My parents (know) each other for two years before they decided to get married.
- e) After she (tell) him what she thought, she left.
- f) What a nice surprise party it was! My parents (invite) all my friends.
- g) Bob was upset because he (lose) his new mobile.
- h) Only three people came to the restaurant, and we (book) for eight!