In the first part of this paper we developed an analysis of tense, aspect and time adverbials. Crucial to that analysis was the peculiar status accorded a context-dependent variable over intervals, which was introduced within tense. By introducing this variable only in tense, as opposed to the perfective aspect or time adverbials, we were able to allow aspect and time adverbials freely in untensed sentences. At the same time, we were able to treat tense, aspect and time adverbials all as sentence operators. With this analysis, we were able to provide at least partial solutions to a number of interesting logical puzzles.

In this part of the paper we take a hard look at the facts of English. As we shall see, a careful consideration of the language supports our analysis—to a degree. But it suggests that some aspects of the formalization in Part I are seriously inadequate. For the most part, we shall be content to point out the problems and say briefly where we think solutions may lie: had we been able to extend the insights in Part I to cover the problems raised in this section without losing the advantages of rigorous formulation, we would have done so. The heart of our analysis will remain unchanged, but we shall suggest that that there may be reason to question many details, and use partial models.

That being the case, let us quickly review the main lines of our analysis. We observed that natural language contains several kinds of elements expressing temporal notions. Among these are at least Tense, Aspect and temporal Adverbs:

(1)  
(a) Jane finished her homework.  
(b) Jane has finished her homework.  
(c) Jane has finished her homework today.

Probably there is a separate class of temporally significant Modals, too:

(d) Jane will finish her homework.
There are probably more, in fact, but in this paper we have concentrated on just these classes. What is the basis for distinguishing these four—and is it justified? What, for example, characterizes tense as opposed to aspect?

It is well known that Reichenbach’s analysis of the simple past tense makes it fundamentally equivalent in terms of truth conditions to the (present) perfect aspect. They differ only in ‘point of view’. That such an analysis can not be wholly correct is suggested by the fact that (2a) said on June 12, 1981 is true, while (2b) is not—it probably has no defined truth value until the end of the year.

(2)  (a) Reagan has only been shot once during 1981.
     (b) Reagan was only shot once during 1981.

But this observation does nothing to illuminate the nature of the difference in principle, if any, between tense and aspect. In our analysis we try to establish that there is indeed an essential difference between tense and all other temporal elements. This we ascribe to the free variables which appear in (our analysis of) tense. Although, like time adverbials and the perfective have, tenses are sentential operators, they are complex operators whose truth conditions are only well-defined when those variables are assigned a value. If, as we must assume, a definite value is assigned to those variables in every well-formed sentence in which tense appears, then every such sentence will be evaluated relative to some specific (w, i) pair. Other things being equal, it will then be either true or false—simpliciter.

Not so an untensed sentence. Even if such a sentence contains the perfective have or a specifically deictic adverbial like yesterday it will not of itself contain the means to fix evaluation relative to any specific (w, i) pair. Hence, while such a sentence will be assigned a truth value relative to each of the set of world-interval pairs (or near enough to that), this evaluation will never be relativized to any specific index—and hence it will not acquire a definite truth value. Embedded within a tense element, of course, a sentence containing have or a time adverbial will in effect be evaluated only relative to the indexical pair ‘fixed’ by tense. (These are of course, the consequences of I(28), I(35), I(39), I(43), I(117) and e.g. I(132)—we cite references to examples from Part I henceforth in this way). Hence, all and only tensed sentences should end up with a definite truth value, being evaluated relative to some world-interval index fixed by context.

Given this hypothesis, it is not surprising that there are few in-