

Past tenses

Past simple

I was a teacher in 1990.

I graduated in 1990.

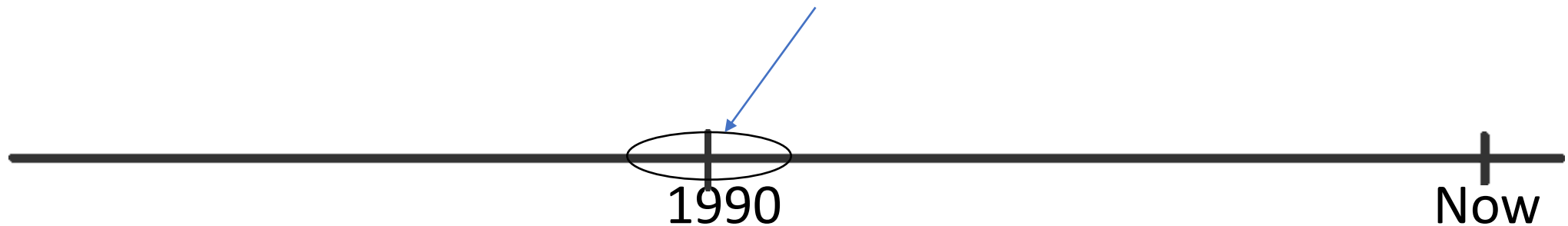


We know exactly when. Usually, is one instantaneous moment.

Past continuous

I was working as a waiter when I graduated in 1990.

I was playing football for 5 hours every day when I graduated.

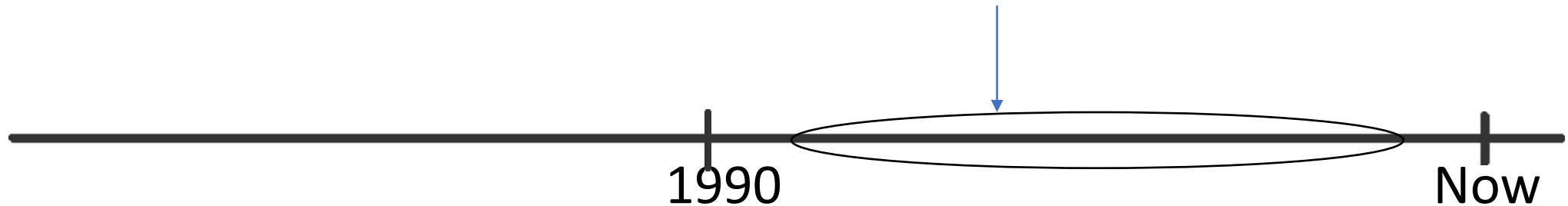


Finished activity in the past that had a longer duration or the duration matters. Usually connected to some past simple time specification in the sentence or the previous text.

Present perfect

I have already brushed my teeth.

I have worked as a teacher.

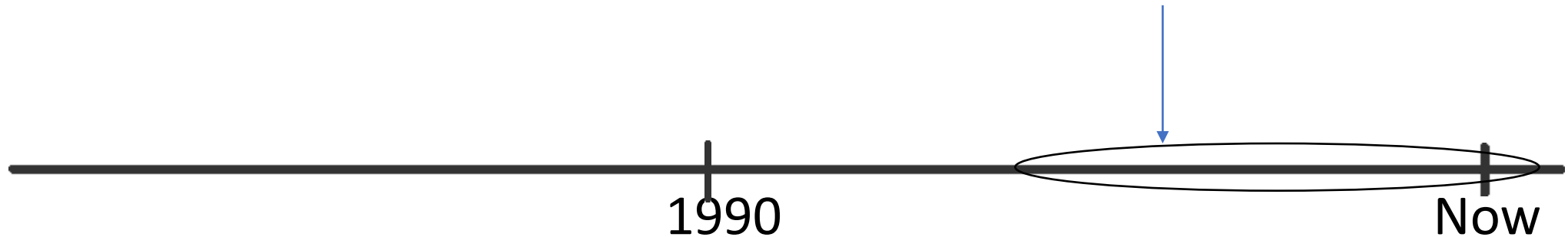


We do not know when exactly it happened, but it is finished at the moment – I am no longer a teacher.

Present perfect continuous

I have been working as a teacher for 5 years

I have been reading this book for ages.

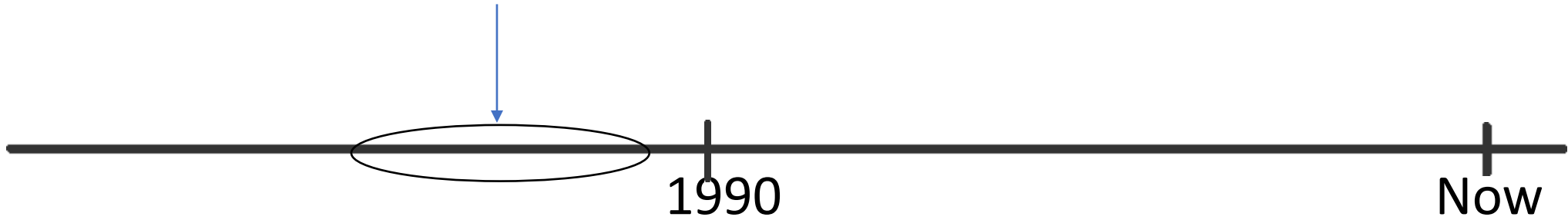


We do not know when exactly the activity started, but it is still in the process now and is going to continue probably – I still teach / I have not yet finished reading the book.

Past perfect

I had had an important surgery before 1990.

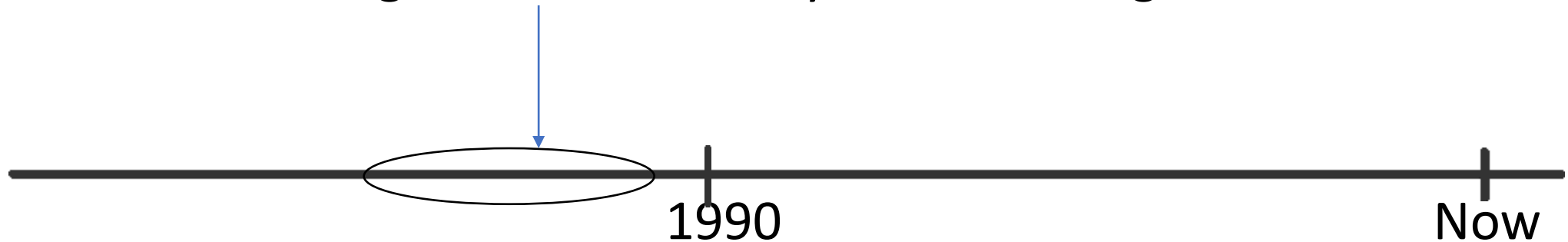
I had worked as a waiter before I graduated in 1990.



An action that happened before the past, but we do not know when exactly, instant event or fact, and is already finished – I no longer work as a waiter after graduation and we don't know when I stopped exactly.

Past perfect continuous

I had been working as a waiter for 5 years before I graduated in 1990.



An activity before a past event that took a longer duration and the duration is important. We do not know when exactly, but it is already finished – I no longer work as a waiter after graduation