Perfect evolution and change:
A sociolinguistic study of Preterit and Present Perfect usage in contemporary and earlier Argentina

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Dedication

Para mi mamá, que me enseñó a amar la vida y el lenguaje.
For my mother, who taught me to love life and language.
Abstract

This thesis is a sociolinguistic study of Preterit and Present Perfect (PP) usage in contemporary and earlier Argentinian River Plate Spanish (ARPS). The data analyzed stem from a 244,034-word corpus collected for the purposes of the study, including contemporary casual conversation, sociolinguistic interviews, participant observation, written questionnaires, and newspapers spanning the 19th–21st centuries.

The study is motivated by previous claims that in Latin America the PP is restricted to contexts that extend into the present time, resembling Peninsular medieval and Renaissance usage (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972: 138; Harris 1982: 50; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413). I challenge this proposal showing that (1) ARPS has undergone its own development, and (2) Latin American varieties do not represent earlier frozen developmental stages akin to earlier Peninsular Spanish.

Although low in overall frequency, the contemporary ARPS PP is used in experiential settings to express indefinite past (a vernacular use). Moreover, multivariate analysis of the contemporary oral data reveals that the ARPS PP is not aspectually restricted to repetitive and iterative contexts extending into speech time – contrary to Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008) findings for contemporary oral Mexican Spanish. Indeed, the data show that the ARPS continuative PP is losing its link-to-present requirement. The ARPS PP also features minimally in resultative and continuative settings, supporting layering of old and new grammaticalizing structures (Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca 1994: 21). Present relevance does not determine ARPS PP usage and is instead encoded through the Preterit and temporal adverbials (TAs).

Historically, the PP has dwindled in usage frequency since the 19th century and the Preterit has invaded the spaces erstwhile occupied by the PP. PP functions like result, continuity, current relevance, and hot news are currently fulfilled by the Preterit, in combination with TAs (TA + VERB-PRET). I argue that the TA + VERB-PRET construction has emerged as a periphrastic encoder of PP nuances, a development reminiscent of perfect periphrases in languages such as Yoruba and Karaboro (Niger-Congo) (Dahl 1985: 130). A contemporary example of this construction includes the...
widespread temporal marker \textit{ahí} ‘at this point in time’ (lit. ‘there’) in combination with the Preterit to indicate temporal immediacy.

The contemporary ARPS PP is sociolinguistically constrained; men use it significantly more often than women. The PP is also employed by younger speakers, challenging the position that this form is on the verge of extinction (Kubarth 1992a: 565; Burgos 2004: 103). In contrast to the contention that the PP occurs more frequently in written media (e.g. De Kock 1989: 489; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413), the contemporary oral and newspaper corpora show similar distributional tendencies. Only in the questionnaire is the PP used more readily in ways unattested in oral interaction (i.e. in current relevance and past perfective settings). ARPS ambivalent use of the PP represents the essence of the so-called “actuation problem”; that is, the contention that the process of linguistic change involves stimuli and constraints from both society and from the structure of language (Weinrech, Labov & Herzog 1968: 186).
Declaration

This is to certify that

the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD

due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,

the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

______________________________
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# Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................................... iii  
Acknowledgments ................................................................................................................................... vi  
Table of Contents .................................................................................................................................. viii  
List of Tables ......................................................................................................................................... xiii  
List of Figures ........................................................................................................................................ xv  
Conventions ........................................................................................................................................... xvi  

1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 1  
   1.1 Argentinian River Plate Spanish ................................................................................................. 1  
   1.2 The Preterit and the Present Perfect ........................................................................................... 3  
   1.3 Methodology ................................................................................................................................. 5  
   1.4 Thesis aim ...................................................................................................................................... 6  
   1.5 Thesis contribution ......................................................................................................................... 7  
   1.6 Thesis overview ............................................................................................................................ 8  

2. Tense, aspect, and the present perfect .............................................................................................. 9  
   2.1 Temporality in natural language .................................................................................................... 10  
   2.2 Tense and aspect ........................................................................................................................... 11  
      2.2.1 Aspect versus Aktionsart .......................................................................................................... 13  
      2.2.2 Aspectual compositionality: Vendler’s classification ............................................................... 14  
      2.2.3 Temporal relations according to Reichenbach ................................................................. 15  
      2.2.4 Definite and indefinite temporal reference ............................................................................. 16  
      2.2.5 The past adverb constraint ...................................................................................................... 17  
      2.2.6 Narrative tenses ....................................................................................................................... 18  
      2.2.7 Current relevance ..................................................................................................................... 19  
   2.3 The perfect .................................................................................................................................... 20  
      2.3.1 Perspectives on the perfect ...................................................................................................... 21  
      2.3.2 Perfect types ............................................................................................................................ 22  
      2.3.3 The perfect across languages ............................................................................................... 26  
   2.4 Temporal adverbials ......................................................................................................................... 27  
   2.5 Concluding remarks ........................................................................................................................ 28
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Period I: 1810–1898</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.1</td>
<td>Temporal adverbial</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.2</td>
<td>Present Perfect function</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.3</td>
<td>Summary of Period I usage by perfect function</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>Period II: 1910–1970</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4.1</td>
<td>Clause type and object number</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4.2</td>
<td>Present Perfect function</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4.3</td>
<td>Summary of Period II usage by perfect function</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Period III: 1982–2007</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5.1</td>
<td>Temporal adverbial, Aktionsart, and object number</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5.2</td>
<td>Present Perfect function</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5.3</td>
<td>Summary of Period III usage by perfect function</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Summary of early and contemporary usage</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>Concluding remarks</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Semantic, evolutionary, and sociolinguistic issues</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Linguistic internal issues</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.1</td>
<td>The ARPS Present Perfect vis-à-vis Mexican and Peninsular Spanish</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.2</td>
<td>The ARPS experiential Present Perfect</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.3</td>
<td>The ARPS link-to-present problem</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.4</td>
<td>Recency and the ARPS Preterit</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.5</td>
<td>The Preterit in Present Perfect contexts</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Perfect functions throughout time</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Style issues</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3.1</td>
<td>The speaker ambivalence problem</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3.2</td>
<td>The naturalistic data problem</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>Bringing it all together</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4.1</td>
<td>The ARPS Present Perfect as a past-referring form</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4.2</td>
<td>Grammaticalization</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4.3</td>
<td>Sociolinguistics</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Further research</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A: Sociolinguistic interview questions......................................................254
Appendix B: Questionnaire........................................................................................256
Appendix C: Coding instructions...............................................................................262
References..................................................................................................................268
# List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Labeling of perfect types according to different authors</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Evolution of past systems in Romance</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Relative frequencies of Preterit and Present Perfect usage in pre- and post-colonial Argentina</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Summary of Preterit and Present Perfect research findings across Spanish varieties</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Corpora of Argentinian River Plate Spanish used in this thesis</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Participant demographics for the oral and questionnaire data</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Comparison of Present Perfect usage in the digitally recorded and observational data</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Linguistic means used to construct formality in the questionnaire</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Present Perfect tokens by perfect function in the questionnaire</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Written data sources by publication date</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Sample verbs coded for the four Vendlerian categories</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8 Summary of proposed hypotheses</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Overall frequency distributions of Preterit and Present Perfect forms in the casual conversation, sociolinguistic interview, and questionnaire data</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Number of excluded tokens in the oral data</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Contribution of internal factors on the use of the Present Perfect over the Preterit in the oral data</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Contribution of external factors on the use of the Present Perfect over the Preterit in the oral data</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5 Overall frequency distributions of Preterit and Present Perfect forms in the extended oral data</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6 Present Perfect usage across style in questionnaire experiential settings</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7 Present Perfect usage across style in questionnaire resultative settings</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8 Preterit, Present Perfect, and simple Present usage across style in questionnaire continuative settings</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9 Present Perfect usage across style in questionnaire current relevance settings</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.10 Summary of hypotheses and results for the ARPS contemporary data ...............138
6.1 Overall frequency distributions of Preterit and Present Perfect forms across historical periods ........................................................................................................157
6.2 Contribution of internal factors on the use of the Present Perfect over the Preterit in the Period I corpora ........................................................................................................159
6.3 Summary of Preterit and Present Perfect use by perfect function in Period I ..........175
6.4 Contribution of internal factors on the use of the Present Perfect over the Preterit in the Period II corpora ..............................................................................................175
6.5 Summary of Preterit and Present Perfect use by perfect function in Period II ....189
6.6 Contribution of internal factors on the use of the Present Perfect over the Preterit in the Period III corpora .............................................................................................189
6.7 Summary of Preterit and Present Perfect use by perfect function in Period III ...202
6.8 Comparison of factor weights across time and data type .................................203
7.1 Comparison of Present Perfect usage in ARPS, Mexican, and Peninsular Spanish ....................................................................................................................................209
7.2 Combined effect of corrected mean and factor weight in ARPS, Mexican, and Peninsular Spanish .................................................................................................................................210
7.3 Contemporary ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect usage.................................231
7.4 Preferred tense forms for the expression of perfect functions across time ..........237
7.5 Revised Preterit and Present Perfect research findings across Spanish varieties 241
## List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Past time reference and definiteness</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Grammaticalization cline</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Pathways leading up to perfective and simple past meanings</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Perfect evolution across Romance</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Tense semantic overlap in Mexican and Peninsular Spanish</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Overall usage frequency of the Present Perfect in seven Spanish varieties</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Comparison of Preterit and Present Perfect usage percentage in Peninsular, Mexican, and Argentinian River Plate Spanish</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Cross-tabulation of temporal adverbial and style groups vis-à-vis Present Perfect usage in the questionnaire</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Usage percentage of questionnaire Present Perfect types by age group</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Usage percentage of questionnaire temporal adverbials across style</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Present Perfect usage percentage in the four sociolinguistic interview sections</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>Preterit and Present Perfect usage percentages by perfect function in the questionnaire</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Preterit and Present Perfect usage percentages by perfect function in the extended oral corpora</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Preterit and Present Perfect usage percentages across historical periods</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Preterit and Present Perfect newspaper usage in resultative contexts across time</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>Preterit and Present Perfect newspaper usage in continuative contexts across time</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Preterit and Present Perfect newspaper usage in current relevance contexts across time</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>Present Perfect usage in current relevance settings in the contemporary oral and newspaper data and in the informal and formal questionnaire items</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>Tense semantic overlap in ARPS</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>Past time reference and definiteness in ARPS</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conventions

Typesetting

Lower case: For cross-linguistic tense categories (e.g. past perfective, present perfect)
Initial caps: For language-specific tense categories (e.g. Preterit, Present Perfect, Present)
Italics: Used in examples, citations from languages other than English, and for emphasis
Bold face: Used to highlight relevant elements in the examples
Underscore: Used to highlight relevant elements (such as temporal adverbials, direct objects, etc.) in the examples

Glossing rules

1  first person
2  second person
3  third person
IMFV  imperfective
INF  infinitive
PFT  perfective
PP  present perfect
PL  plural
PRET  preterite
PRS  present
PST  past
SG  singular

1 Partly based on Comrie, Haspelmath and Bickel (2004)
Abbreviations for corpus sources

CC06   Casual Conversation 2006
CC07   Casual Conversation 2007
CC08   Casual Conversation 2008
FW08   Fieldwork notes 2008 (i.e. observational data)
SLI07  Sociolinguistic Interview 2007
SLI08  Sociolinguistic Interview 2008
BCN08  Barcelona data
QUST06 Questionnaire 2006\(^2\)
BAN1816-2007 Buenos Aires Newspaper data\(^3\)
BAD1910 Buenos Aires Documents

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\(^2\) Data sources for the contemporary data (casual conversation, sociolinguistic interview, fieldwork notes, Barcelona data, and the questionnaire) show the following data labeling protocol: type of data, year, participant gender, participant code. For example, CC07FJ13 indicates casual conversation, recorded in 2007, token spoken by female speaker, participant code J13.

\(^3\) The exact year is specified after BAN and the name of the daily is abbreviated as GZ (La Gazeta de Buenos Aires), EN (El Nacional), CL (Clarín), LN (La Nación), etc. For example, BAN1940LN stands for Buenos Aires newspaper, published in 1940, sourced from La Nación.
CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This thesis is a sociolinguistic study of Preterit and Present Perfect usage in earlier and contemporary Argentina. I focus on Argentinian River Plate Spanish, the dialect used by the majority of the Argentinian population. The study is motivated by previous claims that in Latin America the Present Perfect is restricted to contexts that extend into the present time, thus resembling Peninsular medieval and Renaissance usage (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972: 138; Harris 1982: 50; Fleischman 1983: 196; Schwenter 1994a: 79; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413; Howe 2006: 115, 211). I challenge this proposal by showing that (1) Argentinian Spanish has undergone its own development, and (2) Latin American varieties do not represent earlier frozen developmental stages akin to those of earlier Peninsular Spanish.

Argentinian Spanish has generally been likened to Mexican Spanish in its use of the Present Perfect (e.g. Howe 2006). However, no systematic investigation of Present Perfect use has been carried out on this variety. Kempas (2006; 2008) gives an insightful treatment of the Present Perfect in northwestern Argentina, but a clear analysis of the Preterit and the Present Perfect in contemporary and earlier Argentinian River Plate Spanish remains to be offered.

1.1 Argentinian River Plate Spanish

Argentinian River Plate Spanish (henceforth ARPS) – also known as Buenos Aires Spanish, bonaerense Spanish, porteño or rioplatense Spanish – is the variety of Argentinian Spanish spoken by the majority of the Argentinian population.1 Geographically, the entirety of the River Plate dialect includes the province of Buenos Aires and coastal zones of Uruguay. However, the current work focuses exclusively on the Argentinian variety.

ARPS represents the Argentinian standard (Mackenzie 2001: 156). As Lipski (1994: 162) explains: “within [Argentina’s] boundaries are found a number of

1 At the time of writing (January 2009), Argentina’s population is 40.482 million – with almost 95% of inhabitants living in the Province of Buenos Aires.
regional and social dialects, all overshadowed by the prestigious *porteño* speech of Buenos Aires, the prototype for Argentinian Spanish in the rest of the Spanish-speaking world”. ARPS is preferred in public domains such as the media, a fact which has contributed to its standing as the country’s *normal nacional* ‘national (linguistic) norm’ (De Granda 2003: 207).

Structurally, contemporary ARPS is characterized by several distinctive linguistic features. The most pervasive include: the systematic use of the pre-palatal fricative [ž] where other varieties of Spanish prefer [y] (known as *žeísmo* or *rehilamiento*); the uniform use of the second person singular pronoun *vos* ‘you’ where other Spanish dialects use *tú* ‘you’ (known as *voseo*); and the preference for the Preterit where other varieties employ the Present Perfect (Lipski 1994: 170, 173).

Historically, the use of [ž] and *voseo* have been attested as early as the 19th century and have been taken as evidence for the standardization of ARPS, a process accelerated by the establishment of Higher Education institutions, the beginning of journalism, and the rise of romantic ideals on economic and linguistic issues (Fontanella de Weinberg 1992: 425–426). The most heated debates on linguistic independence were held by the so-called Generation of 1837 – a group of thinkers educated in the European traditions of socialism and linguistic nationalism. Velleman (2002: 14) describes this generation as “the most articulate and self-conscious group of Latin American intellectuals of their century”. The debate over linguistic emancipation from Spain is pivotal in the formation of a post-colonial linguistic standard in the 19th century.

These attitudes take a different turn in the 20th century. The establishment of the *Academia Argentina de Letras* ‘Argentinian Academy of Letters’ in 1931 starts a period of strong prescriptivism where the Argentinian language is considered imperfect, ugly, and unhealthy (Blanco 1994: 102). The educational system also contributes to form views of linguistic inferiority and insecurity throughout the 20th century. As Mar-Molinero puts it “Standard language has been promoted and protected and regulated by national governments (through, for example, their education systems and such organizations as language academies). This is clearly evident in the Spanish-speaking world” (2004: 16).

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2 The following quote by Esteban Echeverría (a prominent Generation of 1837 Argentinian intellectual) reflects some of the controversy around language and identity in Argentina: “We believe that it is ridiculous for us to be Spanish in literature and American in politics…The Argentine language is not the Spanish language” (Velleman 2002: 15).
Two realities emerge in contemporary Argentina: a language variety structurally distinct from other Spanish dialects (cf. *rehilamiento*, widespread use of *voseo*, etc.), and a sense of insecurity regarding this variety via-à-vis the perceived purity of the Peninsular norm (Mar-Molinero 1997: 60; Muysken 2008: 19). I have argued elsewhere (Rodríguez Louro 2008a) for the existence of *double standards* in Argentina. That is, speakers’ antagonistic views on ARPS as both quintessentially Argentinian and corrupt. The latter view is expressed through metaphors of illness and corruption including adjectives such as *deformado* ‘deformed’, *desfigurado* ‘disfigured’, *impuro* ‘impure’, and *manchado* ‘stained’. Further empirical evidence for these contradictory views is provided by Solé (1992), who shows that while 74% of his Argentinian interviewees believe that Argentinian Spanish needs to follow the lead of the Argentinian Academy of Letters (rather than the *Real Academia Española* ‘Royal Spanish Academy’), 48% of his participants think that Spanish is spoken best outside of Argentina itself. Peninsular Spanish is considered to be the most correct (at 42%), followed by Colombian Spanish (13%), Mexican Spanish (10%), Peruvian Spanish (7%), and other countries (15%), while 13% of the interviewees hold no opinion (1992: 801). I later show in chapter 5 that these contradictory judgments – or double standards – are reflected in Argentinians’ preference for the Preterit and the Present Perfect across a range of language settings, involving both naturally occurring and highly monitored usage.

1.2 The Preterit and the Present Perfect

In the current work, I focus on the ARPS Preterit and the Present Perfect (consisting of the auxiliary *haber* ‘have’ plus Past Participle form), as shown in (1) and (2).

(1)  *Yo fui a tu casa.*

    ‘I went to your place.’

(2)  *Yo he ido a tu casa.*

    ‘I have gone to your place.’

In canonical Spanish, the Preterit is used to refer to bounded situations that occurred in the past and bear no temporal relation to the present. In example (1), the speaker’s
visit is presented as belonging to the finished past. On the other hand, the perfect links some present state to a prior situation and is unique in viewing the situation from the perspective of the point of speech, or as relevant to the moment of speech (Comrie 1976: 52; Bybee & Dahl 1989: 67). In example (2), the speaker’s visit to the interlocutor’s house is somewhat connected to the speech time.

The present perfect has been approached from a multiplicity of linguistic subfields and in a variety of languages and dialects. Synchronic studies have attempted to identify invariant semantic features and correspondences independently of actual usage contexts (Inoue 1978; Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski 2001; Pancheva & von Stechow 2004). Another approach has focused on the evolution in the pragmatics of the perfect across time, adopting a diachronic usage-based perspective to form and meaning development – known as grammaticalization. The latter approach has explained perfect evolution as involving the expansion of a resultative construction to include epistemic and perfective nuances. Research within this approach has proposed that similar developmental paths exist across languages, even among those which are areally unrelated (Anderson 1982; Bybee & Dahl 1989; Bybee et al. 1994; Schwenter 1994b). Moreover, the present perfect has been described as performing a variety of cross-linguistic functions, including result, continuity, current relevance, experience, and hot news. This typology – generally based on Comrie (1976) – remains central in studies of the perfect across languages.

Research on the Spanish Present Perfect in the last decade has focused on a variety of dialects, including Argentinian, Salvadoran, Peruvian, Peninsular, and Mexican Spanish (e.g. Burgos 2004; Hernández 2004; Howe 2006; Jara Yupanqui 2006; Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008). The Spanish Present Perfect has been described as undergoing anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization, a process whereby the perfect is encroaching on the semantic spaces previously occupied by the past perfective (as in French) (Comrie 1976; Schwenter 1994a). Latin American varieties are claimed to use the Preterit more frequently than the Present Perfect (Kany 1970: 199–200; Westmoreland 1988; Penny 2000). Some scholars have even argued for the existence of a “Latin American norm”; that is, a group of Preterit-favoring dialects.

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3 The terms *canonical*, *prescriptive*, *normative* and the like are used in this thesis to refer to expected language usage, as articulated in language books and grammars.

4 Throughout this thesis, in line with Bybee (1985), tense labels that apply cross-linguistically are written in lower case (e.g. preterit, present perfect, present simple), while language-specific names for tenses are written with initial caps (e.g. Preterit, Present Perfect, Present Simple).
(Howe 2006: 8). However, little has been said about the use of the Preterit in expressing the various nuances canonically ascribed to the Present Perfect. I later show that the ARPS Preterit is productively used to encode many of the functions erstwhile expressed through the Present Perfect.

In Latin America, the Present Perfect has been argued to represent an earlier stage in the grammaticalization of perfects, with durative, iterative, and continuative contexts (including the speech time) favoring its use (Harris 1982: 50; Fleischman 1983: 196; Schwenter 1994a: 79; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413). These claims are based on Mexican usage and then extended to the rest of Latin America. As Penny (2000: 160) puts it, “it is likely (but in the absence of further studies, undemonstrable) that this value of the Present Perfect [to encode a situation that continues into the moment of speaking] is typical of the whole of American Spanish”. For Argentina, Kubarth (1992a: 565) suggests that the Present Perfect is used al azar ‘randomly’ and that this random usage is innovative. In this study I show that the ARPS Present Perfect is crucially not like its Mexican counterpart and that the ‘random’ usage suggested by Kubarth is actually patterned and predictable.

The role of language-external considerations – such as style, education, and age – has also been analyzed vis-à-vis the Present Perfect. In Latin America, the Present Perfect has been noted to feature frequently in formal styles, due to the influence of the Peninsular norm (Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413). The Present Perfect has also been claimed to occur more readily in the written medium across Latin American varieties (De Kock 1989: 489). Regarding Argentina, the Present Perfect has been said to be virtually non-existent in informal styles (Donni de Mirande 1977: 46–49). This form is favored by older and university-educated speakers (Kubarth 1992a). I show that: (a) style does indeed play an important role in ARPS perfect choice; (b) although low in overall frequency, the Present Perfect features frequently in experiential contexts in informal oral interaction; and (c) use of the Present Perfect is by no means restricted to the older cohort.

1.3 Methodology

For the most part, research on the Present Perfect in Argentina rests heavily on distributional analyses, which only pinpoint the extent to which one form prevails over the other in terms of overall frequency, with little indication as to what constraints apply to their selection. While overall frequencies may offer an
understanding of the general usage trends associated with the variables under study, this treatment alone does not specify the patterns of variability that determine choice of these forms and possible routes to further development, since layering of forms may represent change in the direction of grammaticalization paths (Tagliamonte 2000: 340). A multivariate analysis (also known as Varbrul analysis) offers a useful tool in accounting for the factors that play a role in the choice of the variables analyzed. In this thesis, I set out to empirically establish the linguistic conditioning of the ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect through multivariate analyses of both contemporary and earlier data. I also offer a qualitative analysis of Preterit and Present Perfect usage in different canonically perfect functions.

The study of variation, initiated by Labov (Weinrech et al. 1968) and further developed by other sociolinguists (Guy 1997: 128; Mendoza-Denton, Hay & Jannedy 2003: 99), is concerned with accounting for grammatical structure in connected discourse and explaining the asymmetry of form-function relations in natural language. The principle of orderly heterogeneity (Labov 1978: 13) is a hallmark of this approach. This principle disregards free variation as the reason for non-categorical realizations in language, and supports the position that sociolinguistic variation, although non-categorical, shows certain significant statistical regularities and is thus quantifiable. As stated by Labov, variationism seeks to establish the set of constraints (both quantitative and discrete) that allow linguists to build grammatical theory based on “production and perception in every-day life”.

Variation studies also focus on the role of both linguistic-internal and linguistic-external constraints on language use and change. This concern is the essence of the so-called “actuation problem”; that is, the contention that “the over-all process of linguistic change may involve stimuli and constraints from both society and from the structure of language” (Weinrech et al. 1968: 186). In fact, it is indeed questionable whether linguistic change per se may possibly be isolated from social considerations (Silva Corvalán 2001: 277; Milroy 2003: 156). In this thesis, I explore the role of both linguistic-internal and linguistic-external factors on ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect usage.

1.4 Thesis aim

The aim of this thesis is to offer an empirically-based account of semantic, evolutionary, and sociolinguistic concerns surrounding ARPS Preterit and Present
Perfect usage across a range of data types and historical times. This entails a thorough study of Preterit and Present Perfect usage in a variety of oral and written corpora in both contemporary and earlier Argentina. The goal of this analysis is to put to the test the various semantic, evolutionary, and sociolinguistic proposals made regarding this variety by providing observations grounded on different genres, ranging from naturally occurring interaction to experimental settings.

1.5 Thesis contribution

This thesis contributes to the debate on Preterit and Present Perfect usage in Spanish by analyzing a variety of data and employing a multivariate analysis to explore usage patterns lying beyond overall frequencies. A crucial strength of this work is the use of data specifically collected for the purposes of the study, including both oral and written corpora. In line with Travis (2007: 103, 131), I demonstrate the value of using various data types in describing formal and functional constraints on a particular variable. I suggest that linguistic usage and change is shaped by both linguistic-internal and linguistic-external constraints (cf. Weinrech et al. 1968: 188) and that analysis of a broad range of data is best suited to document this complex relationship. A crucial methodological innovation of the current work is the inclusion of inter-rater reliability in quantifying Present Perfect function, as I show in chapter 4 (§4.6.7). Finally, my analysis is innovative in that it questions the view that geographical proximity per se dictates patterns of language variation and change (cf. Muysken 2008). Specifically, this work challenges the belief that Latin American Spanish varieties are located at similar stages of linguistic evolution and that they represent earlier phases of development similar to those of Peninsular Spanish. My analysis includes both quantitative and qualitative observations on Preterit and Present Perfect use in ARPS and demonstrates that – although low in overall frequency – the Present Perfect is used differently from other Spanish varieties and the Preterit has encroached on most of the functions erstwhile encoded through the Present Perfect. Moreover, the sociolinguistic patterns that emerge from the analysis indicate that the Present Perfect is a prestigious variable in ARPS.
1.6 Thesis overview

The thesis is organized as follows. In chapter 2, I deal with temporal and aspectual issues concerning the preterit and the present perfect across languages. I also introduce the several semantic readings of the perfect as well as other perfect-related concerns, such as the notion of current relevance, the perfect across languages, structural constraints, and the role of temporal adverbials (TAs) in encoding temporality and aspectuality. In chapter 3, I tackle some grammaticalization essentials and offer a description of perfect evolution and change in Romance and Spanish. I then review what has been proposed for the Preterit and the Present Perfect in Peninsular, Peruvian, Salvadoran, Mexican, and Argentinian Spanish. I present the research design in chapter 4 and introduce the specifics of data collection and the various linguistic-internal and linguistic-external hypotheses to be tested in chapters 5 and 6. In chapter 5 I test the proposed hypotheses through a multivariate analysis of the oral data. I also explore overall frequencies in the questionnaire, and offer a qualitative analysis of the Preterit and the Present Perfect by perfect function. I here propose two uses of the Present Perfect in contemporary ARPS: a vernacular use and a normative use. I further analyze the use of the Preterit and TAs – a construction I operationalize as TA + VERB-PRET – in encoding functions erstwhile expressed through the Present Perfect. I then deal with the written newspaper data in chapter 6, where I analyze Preterit and Present Perfect usage (quantitatively and qualitatively) across time. In chapter 7, I discuss perfect semantics, language change, and sociolinguistic issues and revisit the claims advanced previously by other scholars in the light of my own findings. I conclude with chapter 8, where I offer an overview of the main observations and suggestions advanced in this thesis – and their implications for future research.

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5 Recall that cross-linguistic tense categories are written in lower case (e.g. preterit, present perfect) while language specific names for tenses are written with initial caps (e.g. Preterit, Present Perfect). This convention is used throughout the thesis.
CHAPTER 2

Tense, aspect, and the present perfect

The general aim of this chapter is to locate the study of the Spanish Preterit and the Present Perfect within the broader theoretical framework of how temporality is expressed linguistically and in relation to the various semantic features of the perfect and its interaction with temporal adverbials (TAs). I focus on issues germane to the study of the preterit and the present perfect, including Reichenbach’s well-known system of temporal relations and the semantic features central to different perfect types, which is used in the data analysis further on (in §2.2.3). I then tackle some linguistic restrictions concerning perfects in different languages (e.g. English, French and Portuguese) so as to offer a background against which the Spanish Present Perfect may be understood. I also address the value of TAs and complex constructions in expressing a number of semantic nuances, such as continuity and experience. I leave the specifics of Preterit and Present Perfect usage and evolution in actual Spanish varieties until the following chapter.

I begin by describing the various means by which temporality is encoded in natural language, with special attention to how the preterit or past perfective, the present perfect, and complex constructions – such as verb clusters and TAs – carry temporal and aspectual meanings cross-linguistically. In §2.2 I discuss Aktionsart and aspectual compositionality à la Vendler (1967). I also describe Reichenbach’s (1948) well-known treatment of temporality. I then address the importance of definiteness in past temporal reference and outline some of the main features of perfects cross-linguistically, including restrictions such as co-occurrence with past TAs and use in narrative sequencing. I end the section with a discussion of the controversial notion of current relevance. In §2.3 I deal with the various perspectives on the perfect – including indefinite past and extended now theories. I then introduce the various perfect types, which will prove crucial in my data analysis. In §2.4 I focus on how TAs play a role in encoding semantic notions such as result, continuity, current relevance, and experience. I conclude in §2.5 with a summary of the main observations of the chapter.
2.1 Temporality in natural language

The idea of locating situations within specific time frames is an abstract notion, which is independent of particular linguistic expression. As Bull (1963) puts it: “the problem is to determine whether language is structured in terms of objective reality or in terms of the abstractions derived from the observation of objective reality” (1963: 12). Human languages are able to locate time (Comrie 1985: 7) and linguistic systems differ in terms of (a) how exact time location can be, and (b) the relative load assigned to the lexicon and to the grammar in establishing such time location. According to (Klein 1994: 14) temporality is encoded in natural language through some of the following grammatical and lexical means:

(i) The grammatical categories of tense and aspect;
(ii) Inherent temporal features of the verb (and its complements) such as punctuality, durativity, and the like;
(iii) Complex verb clusters or compound expressions, such as to begin to, to continue to, etc;
(iv) TAs of various types;
(v) Special particles, such as the Chinese perfectivity marker –le;
(vi) Principles of discourse organization (where the order in which situations are reported is thought to correspond to their temporal order in reality).

Berman and Slobin (1994: 19) define temporality as the “expression of the location of events on the time line, temporal relations between events, and temporal constituency of events”. Temporality may be expressed – they claim – as tense/aspect marking on verbs, lexical marking of aspect (particles, verbs, adverbs), and temporal subordination and conjunction.

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6 In line with Comrie (1976, 1985), Fleischman (1983), and Bybee et al. (1994) the label situation is used throughout this thesis as an umbrella term to include states, processes, and events encoded by the verbal forms under study. Bybee et al. explain that, “The term ‘situation’ is a cover term for event, activity, and state, in other words, those notions covered by verbs” (1994: 316).
7 Li, Thompson, and McMillan (1982) argue that the main pragmatic function of the Mandarin sentence-particle -le is to express current relevance and encode “perfect aspect”, although the particle in itself is not directly related to the verb.
2.2 Tense and aspect

Tense and aspect have long been researched by scholars of various theoretical persuasions. Comrie (1985) views tense as the “grammaticalization of location in time” (1985: 1) while aspect involves the “grammaticalization of expression of internal temporal constituency” (1985: 5). It is important to note that while tense is an inherently deictic category (locating the time of the situation being referred to in relation to the situation of the utterance), aspect is not concerned with location in time but rather, with the different manners of viewing the internal constituency of a situation (e.g. as completed or in progress). Some of the meaning features of the situation encoded by the verb are duration, boundedness, inception, repetition, and completion, among others (Fleischman 1983). The difference between tense and aspect is referred to by Comrie as “situation-external time” (tense) versus “situation-internal time” (aspect) (1976: 4). In most definitions, tense is metaphorically viewed as a straight line whereas aspect is understood as an object to be scrutinized from the inside out. Assuming that time can indeed be accurately presented as a straight line, tense relates the time of an event (E) or situation predicated in the utterance or discourse to the moment of speech (S), in the case of absolute tenses, or to a reference point (R), for relative tense relationships. In this sense, tense functions to “sequence events in a discourse” (Fleischman 1983: 184). Klein (1994: xi) notes that tense “serves to localize an event in time – notably before, around, or after the time of utterance” while aspect “allows us to present the event as completed, or as seen from the inside or the outside”. The contrastive uses of the English Preterit\(^8\) and the simple Present illustrate the distinction between tense and aspect.\(^9\) Consider:

(1) *Mary arrived late at the meeting.* (Preterit)

(2) *Mary arrives late at meetings.* (simple Present)

In example (1) the Preterit is used to refer to Mary’s late arrival at one particular point in time in the past. Aspectually, the situation expressed by the verb is past perfective as it has come to completion crucially before utterance time. Thus, the first example

\(^8\) The English past perfective is usually known as *Simple Past* due to the inexistence of imperfect past tenses in this language. This is in line with Bybee et al.’s (1994) observation for languages with no imperfect tenses. However, here I label the English perfective past *Preterit* for purposes of consistency.

\(^9\) In this chapter, I use constructed examples in both English and Spanish to illustrate the issues under discussion.
illustrates the prototypical use of the past perfective. In Comrie’s words, when using the past perfective “the event is aspectually presented as a single unanalyzable whole, with beginning, middle, and end all rolled up into one” (1976: 3). On the other hand, example (2) features a simple Present verb with a clearly imperfective aspectual reading. The implicature in this case is that Mary is customarily late to meetings. In English, past and present exist as grammaticalized temporal categories, such that, at least in principle, use of the Preterit expresses pastness, and the simple Present encodes presentness. The Spanish tense system includes three basic tenses: simple Present (Yo trabajo en Madrid ‘I work in Madrid’), Future Simple (Yo trabajaré en Madrid ‘I will work in Madrid’), and past. Past tenses involve both the Imperfect (e.g. Yo trabajaba en Madrid ‘I used to work in Madrid’) and the Preterit (e.g. Yo trabajé en Madrid ‘I worked in Madrid’), while anterior/perfect categories encompass both Past Perfect (e.g. Yo había trabajado en Madrid ‘I had worked in Madrid’) and Present Perfect forms (Yo he trabajado en Madrid ‘I have worked in Madrid’).

Many Indo-European languages display a tripartite system of tense/mood/aspect with perfective, past, and imperfective categories at their core (Dahl 1985: 189). For example, a crucial feature of the Spanish past verbal system is the existence of the aspectual perfective/imperfective dichotomy grammaticalized as tense throughout the verbal paradigm. This distinction is represented in examples (3) and (4).

(3) Ayer ví a Marcos. (Preterit)
    ‘Yesterday I saw Marcos.’

(4) Siempre veía a Marcos. (Imperfect)
    ‘I always used to see Marcos.’

In (3) the event of seeing is reported as a one-time event, as a completely finished situation in the past. Contrastively, example (4) presents the seeing as a series of iterative events, almost as a routine in the past. The existence of the Imperfect tense in the Spanish verbal system provides a means to encode the important semantic distinction between fully completed bounded events and continuous, iterative, or

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10 Note that, due to its specificity, the use of the definite article further contributes to the perfective reading of the predicate.

11 The terms anterior and perfect are used to encode aspectual distinctions and include more than just the Present Perfect (Comrie 1976: 52). However, the terms anterior and perfect are used as synonymous with Present Perfect in this thesis.
habitual unbounded situations in the past (Silva-Corvalán 1983: 76). Let me now introduce the crucial overarching debates concerning the categories of aspect and Aktionsart.

2.2.1 Aspect versus Aktionsart

The German term Aktionsart (plural Aktionsarten) translates into English as ‘kind of action’ (Comrie 1976: 6), and has customarily been used in Slavonic linguistics to describe the lexicalization of aspectual features mainly by derivational morphology. According to Comrie, the distinction between aspect and Aktionsart is twofold.

Firstly, while aspect is the grammaticalization of the salient semantic distinctions, Aktionsart represents lexicalization of these distinctions, independently of how these are lexicalized. Second, aspect and Aktionsart differ in that the former exists as “grammaticalization of the semantic distinction” whereas the latter involves “lexicalization of the distinction, provided that the lexicalization is by derivational morphology” (1976: 7 ff.).

Comrie eschews the use of the (in his view ambiguous) term Aktionsart altogether, and instead employs the label aspect throughout his 1976 monograph. Indeed, the boundaries between aspect and Aktionsart remain rather fussy. Several scholars have further noted this lack of clarity and provided alternative solutions for the perceived terminological inaccuracy surrounding these notions. For example, Hopper (1982: 5) explains that most linguists studying tense and aspect have tended to consider all instances of language use which are not obviously modality or tense as aspect. Hopper adopts a semantic-pragmatic view such that the concept of perfective aspect is not “a local-semantic one but is discourse-pragmatic, and is characterizable as a completed event in the discourse” irrespective of how this function is expressed linguistically (1982: 5).

As Sasse points out, linguists have increasingly become aware that “a pure morphosyntactic approach to aspect [of the

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12 The Russian verb paradigm čital ‘read [IMFV PST]’, pročitá ‘read [PFV PRET]’, and posčítá ‘read a little [PFV PRET]’ illustrates lexicalization by derivational morphology (examples from Hopper 1982: 5).
13 For example, Bertinetto and Delfitto (2000) devote an entire article to making a case for why aspect and actionality (an alternative name for Aktionsart) should be kept apart. Their view can be summarized as follows. The domain of tense and aspect consists of three subdomains: “(i) Temporal reference: localization of the event with respect to the speech point’; “(ii) Aspect: the specific perspective adopted by the speaker/writer” which includes the distinction perfective (encompassing “aoristic” and “perfect” aspects) versus imperfective (inclusive of “progressive” and “habitual” aspects); “(iii) Actionality: the type of event, specified according to a limited number of relevant properties.” This domain includes Vendler’s (1967) categories such as telicity, punctuality, durativity, etc. Bertinetto and Delfitto suggest that “while the notions of temporal reference and aspect (…) are primarily anchored to the inflectional specifications available in each language, actionality is essentially rooted in the lexicon”. Actionality is then illustrated through the Slavic verbal lexicon, where the categories perfective/imperfective “belong, in most cases, to the domain of derivational morphology” (2000: 190).
14 Similarly, in his study of the verbal forms ser and estar ‘to be’ in Spanish, Roby (2007: 182-183) treats aspect “from a Gestalt-like perspective” and calculates it both “at the phrasal level and at higher domains”.
type advocated by Verkuyl (1993)] falls short of recognizing the importance of the interaction between the organization of the verbal lexicon and the aspect markers and/or aspectual interpretation cues operating on the morphosyntactic level” (Sasse 2002: 220). I now turn to a description of Vendler’s compositional approach to aspect.

2.2.2 Aspectual compositionality: Vendler’s classification

In Vendler’s (1967) framework – a proposal that will feature prominently in my data analysis further on – each individual verb carries unique aspectual features, which vary from verb to verb. Vendler systematizes verbs into two different genera based on telicity (from the Greek *telos* meaning ‘purpose’ or ‘end point’) and duration. He proposes four categories: activities, accomplishments, achievements and states. He first identifies durative atelic **activity verbs** such as *running* and *drawing* and differentiates these from durative telic **accomplishments** of the type *running a mile* or *drawing a circle* (1967: 102). He contends that, unlike activities, accomplishments span a period of time during which a climax point is reached: *writing a letter, reading a book, watching a movie, writing a thesis* all constitute examples of accomplishments. Activities, on the other hand, are “homogeneous processes going on in time without an inherent goal” (Montrul 2004: 94) as in *Emily ran for hours.* Vendler’s second genera of verbs encompass **achievements** such as *to reach the top* and **states** like *to know, to be, and to love.* The crucial distinction between achievements and states lies in their duration: while achievements occur at a single moment, in an instantaneous fashion (e.g. *The mountaineer reached the summit*), states stretch for longer periods of time and are thus said to be durational (e.g. *The mountaineer knew how to reach the summit*). With respect to telicity, states and activities are atelic (lacking an end point), whereas accomplishments and achievements are telic, as they include an inherent end. However, telicity (and more generally, aspectual values) is not only determined by the Vendlerian nature of the predicate but also by the linguistic context surrounding these predicates since

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15 Atelic verbs and verb phrases include activities without inherent end points (e.g. *to read, to sing*), whereas telic verbs refer to events with beginning and end points (e.g. *to dive, to devour*); that is, with internal structure (cf. Bybee 1985: 100).

16 More recent approaches to aspectual compositionality calculate aspect distinctions such as telicity taking into account various other features included in the predication. For example, Verkuyl (2004) deals with algebraic formulations where noun phrase quantification helps determine whether a verb bears a [+telic] or [-telic] reading. Thus, *Rakesh ate samosas* would be read as [-telic], while its counterpart *Rakesh ate 3 samosas* would qualify as [+telic], since the situation can be subdivided internally into eating stages, all the way to completion.

17 Achievements do not allow for durational adverbial modification of the type *The mountaineer reached the summit for ten minutes* (cf. Klein 1994). Similarly, states do not generally accept the progressive; thus, *The mountaineer was knowing how to reach the summit* is clearly ungrammatical.
elements such as noun number, negative polarity, adverbial presence, and morphological aspect play a crucial role in identifying predicate telicity as well. For instance, telic predicates such as the Spanish *leer un libro* ‘to read a book’ are *detelicized* when conjugated in the Imperfect (i.e. *leía*) as in *María leía un libro* ‘Mary was reading a book’. In Bertinetto and Delfitto’s words examples like this are “lexically telic but contextually atelic” (Bertinetto & Delfitto 2000: 193). I return to Vendler’s characterization in chapter 4 (§4.6.1), where I analyze the ARPS Preterit and the Present Perfect in terms of their aspectual compositionality.

### 2.2.3 Temporal relations according to Reichenbach

Perhaps the best known treatment of tense to-date is that of Reichenbach (1948). In his work on English, tense forms are taken to express temporal relations between ‘E’ (point of event), ‘S’ (point of situation), and ‘R’ (point of reference). These appear on a straight line, with past located left of present time (1948: 290). Example (5) below presents Reichenbach’s characterization of the preterit, the present perfect, and the simple present both in English and Spanish, with examples illustrating how the points of reference E, S, and R co-occur in each of these. In line with Howe (2006: 27), ‘<’ encodes precedence, while a comma signals co-occurrence. Moreover, E, R, and S should be seen as “more or less extended temporal intervals or time spans” (Klein & Vater 1998: 222).

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15 For a criticism of Reichenbach’s proposal see Binnick (1991: 115).
For the preterit or past perfective (an absolute tense), the point of reference and the point of event are both prior to speech time. Comrie (1985: 41) claims that “the meaning of the past tense is location in time prior to the present moment”. He adds that use of the preterit “provides no information about whether the situation in question continues into present or future time, although there tends to be a conversational implicature that the situation does in fact not continue to or beyond the present” (Comrie 1985: 41). Fleischman (1983) points out that the preterit bears no representation as to being relevant to the speaker’s present time. In contrast, the present perfect (or, in Bybee et al.’s (1994) terminology, the anterior) deals with an event that is both temporally previous to the point of the situation and connected to the here-and-now. In Bybee et al.’s (1994: 61) words “the goal of the [anterior] is not to locate a situation at some definite point in the past, but only to offer it as relevant to the current moment” (emphasis added). Finally, the English simple Present, just like the English Present Perfect, is said to also include indefinite reference. In fact, in languages like Spanish, the simple Present is used to perform functions customarily expressed through the Present Perfect (e.g. continuity) in other languages.

2.2.4 Definite and indefinite temporal reference

The notion of definiteness has been viewed as a crucial cross-linguistic distinction between the preterit and the present perfect. This difference is seen by

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19 The terms speech time, utterance time, situation time, etc. refer to the deictic category now (cf. Reichenbach 1948; Klein 1994; Howe 2006) and are used interchangeably throughout this thesis.
20 However, it has been pointed out to me by an anonymous journal reviewer that in a construction such as Mataron a mi hijo hace dos meses ‘They killed my son two months ago’ the Preterit refers to a past event which nonetheless bears a relation with the present in that the painful effects of the death persist.
Dahl and Hedin (2000: 386–389) as one of “token-focusing” versus “type-focusing” event reference. Dahl and Hedin suggest that, while the English Preterit (e.g. *John winked*) refers specifically to the number of events involved (in this case only one time), the Present Perfect (e.g. *John has winked*) signals one or more occurrences of the event during a certain time period. Likewise, Leech (2004: 63) argues that one of the functions of the English Present Perfect is to encode indefinite past. He suggests that, in its indefinite sense, the English Present Perfect does not name a specific time point. In the presence of a specific “anchor point”, the Preterit is generally required. The relationship between definiteness and past reference is illustrated in Figure 2.1.

![Figure 2.1 Past time reference and definiteness](image)

The notion of definiteness as related to past temporal reference is reminiscent of nominal definiteness. Specifically, Langacker (1991: 56–57) explains that an instance (e.g. *the cat*) but not a type (e.g. *a cat*) “is thought of as having a particular location in the domain of instantiation.” He views a type specification “as floating about unattached through the domain of instantiation, with the potential to be manifested anywhere within it. This potential is realized, and an instance conception obtained, when the specification is anchored at a particular spot”. In chapter 5 I show that these definiteness nuances are crucial predictors of Preterit and Present Perfect usage in ARPS.

### 2.2.5 The past adverb constraint

As mentioned above, the perfect is canonically viewed as incapable of definite temporal expression. Evidence for this is the non-occurrence of the perfect with specific past TAs (Bybee et al. 1994: 62). For English, scholars have noted that, although TAs such as *recently* and *just* are commonly used in conjunction with the Present Perfect, English does not allow constructions of the type *I’ve been to the dentist at 3 o’clock*, whereas other languages such Dutch, French, German, and Icelandic display no restrictions in this respect (Comrie 1976: 61; Giorgi & Pianesi
This constraint, known in the literature as the *past adverb constraint*, is a widespread heuristic device that serves to characterize the English Present Perfect as a prototypical perfect in Dahl’s (1985) sense.

The English Present Perfect has famously been described as prohibiting modification by specific TAs of the kind *at noon today, at 7 o’clock, yesterday,* and the like (Anderson 1973: 39; Comrie 1976: 32; Fleischman 1983: 197; Dahl 1985: 137; Klein 1992: 526; Brugger 2001: 247; Iatridou et al. 2001: 190; Portner 2003: 465). In Comrie’s words “the perfect is incompatible with time adverbials that have definite past reference, i.e. adverbials that refer to a specific moment or stretch of time located wholly in the past” (1976: 32). According to this restriction, the English sentence *Susan has bought a new apartment yesterday* is ungrammatical. The fact that past TAs are incompatible with the present perfect is known as “the present perfect puzzle” (Klein 1992).

The unavailability of adverbial modification of the Present Perfect in most English varieties indicates this form has not suffered the erosion of present relevance undergone by present perfects across several other languages and regional varieties such as French, German, Italian, and some dialects of Spanish. That is, at least ideally, the English Present Perfect remains a true perfect used to express, as one of its main nuances, current relevance of a past event.

2.2.6 Narrative tenses

In line with its indefinite nature, the perfect is incompatible with narrative sequencing – since it is not suited to encoding discrete past events (Givón 1982; Bybee et al. 1994). Instead, perfects are used to situate an eventuality as occurring before another or to refer to past situations, such as experience, which do not move the narrative forward (whereas past perfective forms locate definite situations in the past). Dahl (1985: 139) notes that in his cross-linguistic questionnaire the main

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21 However, Ritz (2007) claims that, in Australian English, the Present Perfect is used in a non-standard fashion to encode narrative progression in spoken discourse. Anecdotally, in Melbourne I have encountered uses of the Present Perfect where one would generally expect a Preterit or Past Perfect form in other English varieties. For example, the sentence ‘They’ve made little multicultural babies’ was uttered by a middle-aged woman while recounting what had happened the previous day at a friend’s baby shower (a clearly finished event in the past). Although a discussion of why Australian English employs the Present Perfect in this manner is beyond the scope of this thesis, it seems fair to acknowledge that not all varieties of a language place the same restrictions on their use of verbal tense forms and accompanying temporal material (e.g. TAs of different kinds), and points to the danger of accepting general descriptions that promote cross-dialectal homogeneity at the expense of descriptive adequacy (cf. Engel & Ritz 2000; Miller 2004).

22 Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish also disallow the co-occurrence of past TAs with the perfect (Giorgi & Pianesi 1998: 87).

23 Brugger (2001: 247) explains that past adverb modification is also restricted in Catalan and 17th century French; although German, Italian, and contemporary French allow present perfect and past adverbial co-occurrence.
difference between past perfectives and perfects is in narrative contexts. Specifically, while the perfect is very rarely used in narratives, the preterit prototypically features in these contexts. This restriction is no longer present in languages such as French and German, where the perfect has encroached on preterit territory and is now not only capable of expressing narrative sequencing but is the preferred form. A similar trend is noted for Australian and New Zealand English, particularly in police reports and in recounting vivid past personal narratives (Engel & Ritz 2000; Cox 2005; Ritz 2007). Spanish dialects use the Present Perfect in narratives to different extents, as I show in chapter 3.

2.2.7 Current relevance

It has been argued that the most relevant distinction between past tenses and the present perfect is the additional semantic (non-temporal) component of current relevance of the latter (Comrie 1976: 32; Bybee et al. 1994: 54 ff.). Both formal and discourse-related concerns surround the idea of current relevance. With regard to formal approaches, and in the spirit of the Reichenbachian tradition, Brugger (2001) suggests that “the Spanish PrP [Present Perfect] has Current Relevance if the Event Time is prior to TODAY. If the Event Time lies within TODAY the PrP may or may not have Current Relevance” (2001: 248, caps in original). Unlike Brugger, both McCoard (1978) and Howe (2003) suggest that current relevance is essentially pragmatically-determined, rather than derived from the semantics of the present perfect itself. Likewise, Comrie (1985: 83) and Fleischman (1989: 20) explain that the nuance of present relevance associated with the perfect is an implicature deriving from the concept of present relevance of past situation attached to this form. Portner (2003) suggests that the relevance of the present perfect stems from its logical relation to another situation which is at issue in the interaction in question (2003: 470). In a similar vein, Howe explains that the perfect is used where the speaker “intends to imply some extra connection between the proposition and the topic of discussion” so the hearer would interpret the situation encoded through the present perfect as topical (Howe 2006: 202).

However, the notion of current relevance remains highly disputed as it is essentially a subjective category, both for the language analyst and the language user. For instance, Klein (1992) states that “is not clear how to determine […] ‘relevance’” as it is always possible to find “a reason why the event is still of particular relevance
to the present” (1992: 531). Binnick (1991: 99) also describes current relevance as a “shadowy and pragmatically dependent concept”. Similarly, Fleischman (1983: 200) views relevance as “a subjective notion which tends to be interpreted differently from one language to another and even between dialects of the same language”. Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2005; 2008) refer to the difficulty of objectively assessing this notion, which is supposed to be the main feature distinguishing use of the preterit and the present perfect across a variety of dialects and languages. This difficulty seems to arise from the fact that current relevance is not an easily falsifiable concept but rather, “[a] subjective notion, expressing some kind of psychological feeling of the speaker for what is currently relevant” (Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 414). Likewise, Engel and Ritz (2000: 120) define current relevance as an essentially pragmatic notion which can theoretically apply to both the present perfect and the preterit. In their view, current relevance cannot be used as an indicator of when to choose the present perfect over the preterit, as one could claim that any situation referred to (independently of which tense is preferred) is pragmatically relevant, otherwise, they contend, there would be absolutely no point in uttering it in the first place. I will later show in chapters 5 and 6 that – although frequently attested in earlier newspaper usage – current relevance plays no role in Present Perfect selection in contemporary ARPS.

2.3 The perfect

As mentioned above, the perfect links some present state to a prior situation and is unique in viewing the situation in question from the perspective of the moment of speech, or as relevant to the moment of speech (Comrie 1976: 52; Bybee & Dahl 1989: 67). Past perfectives, on the other hand, are canonically used to refer to bounded situations that occurred in the past and bear no relation to the present. Because aspect is generally concerned with the internal temporal representation of a situation, rather than with relations between differing time points, the perfect has sometimes been treated as a separate category, rather than as an aspect in itself. Scholars have proposed a variety of treatments in trying to account for the semantic.

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24 This treatment remains inconsistent in Comrie’s (1976) monograph where the perfect is first presented as a relational form, and later described as an aspect. Comrie makes this apparent in his cautionary statement that “the present perfect is only one of the possible tenses of the perfect aspect” (1976: 53).
and pragmatic complexity of the perfect. I introduce these proposals in the next
section.

2.3.1 Perspectives on the perfect

Theoretically, the distinct uses of the perfect (as encoders of result, continuity,
current relevance, experience, and hot news; see §2.3.2 below) have been analyzed
from a variety of perspectives. Three main camps can be identified (Pancheva 2003:
280; Howe 2006: 215 ff.): (a) approaches that view the various perfect readings or
types as deriving from pragmatic interpretations of a basic, uniform perfect meaning
(and possibly structure) (e.g. Comrie 1976; Inoue 1978; McCoard 1978; Heny 1982;
Binnick 1991; Klein 1994; Portner 2003); (b) approaches that propose that perfect
types are in fact semantically different (e.g. McCawley 1971; Dowty 1979; Mittwoch
1988; Iatridou et al. 2001) and (c) approaches that argue for the grammatical encoding
of perfect distinctions. In the view presented in (c), there exists no uniform
representation for the perfect as a grammatical category (Brugger 1997). In terms of
the theories proposed to analyze the perfect across languages, McCoard (1978: 17)
identifies four categories:

i. Current relevance theory, an essentially pragmatic proposal which
views the perfect as a present state resulting from a past action;

ii. Indefinite past theory, in which the perfect is seen as expressing a past
event which is unidentified as to its temporal location (e.g. Binnick
1991: 98; Klein 1992; 1994; Giorgi & Pianesi 1998), and stands in
opposition to the preterit, which encodes anchored past time;

iii. Extended now theory, a semantic approach where the perfect expresses
a past event within a time span which is continuous with the present
(stretching back in time from the present) with no distinction between
then versus now (McCoard 1978; Dowty 1979; Mittwoch 1988: 203);

iv. Embedded past theory, “a purely syntactic approach” (Binnick 1991:
103), where the perfect is seen as made up of a past tense sentence
embedded in a present tense predicate, as sentential subject.
In chapter 7 I argue that, in contrast to the centrality of the extended past theory in recent cross-linguistic research on the perfect, contemporary Present Perfect usage in ARPS best relates to indefinite past theory.

In terms of the relationship between the past situation and the present moment ascribed to the perfect, this may vary depending on which function it is taken to encode. In fact, the perfect has been described as performing a variety of cross-linguistic functions, including result, continuity, current relevance, experience, and hot news. These are discussed in the following section.

2.3.2 Perfect types

The perfect encodes a number of different semantic nuances cross-linguistically, including result, continuity, current relevance, experience, and hot news. The labels used to refer to these types vary from scholar to scholar, sometimes creating terminological overlap and inconsistency. A further problem arises if one considers that these classificatory systems are for the most part based on English and other Indo-European languages. Table 2.1 portrays some of the terminological differences in research on the present perfect across languages and dialects, starting with McCawley (1971). The labels used in the current work are displayed in the first column.

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>resultative</td>
<td>stative</td>
<td>perfect of result</td>
<td>anterior of result</td>
<td>resultative</td>
<td>resultative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continuous</td>
<td>universal</td>
<td>perfect of persistent situation</td>
<td>anterior continuing</td>
<td>continuative</td>
<td>universal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>current relevance</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>perfect of recent past</td>
<td>current relevance</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(variant of) experiential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiential</td>
<td>existential</td>
<td>experiential perfect</td>
<td>experiential</td>
<td>existential</td>
<td>experiential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hot news</td>
<td>hot news</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>hot news</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>(variant of) resultative</td>
</tr>
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Table 2.1 Labeling of perfect types according to different authors

Comrie’s (1976: 56–61) typology is one of the best known in the field. He identifies four different perfect subtypes, (not necessarily in this order):

(a) Perfect of result;
(b) Perfect of persistent situation;

22
(c) Perfect of recent past;
(d) Experiential perfect.

The **perfect of result** (here labeled **resultative**) views a present state as resulting from a past action and implies that a result obtains as a consequence of such action (Bybee et al. 1994: 65). The resultative interpretation, Pancheva (2003: 278) claims, depends on the aspectual makeup of the participle. In this sense, resultatives presuppose a “material bound” in that they collocate with telic predicates (i.e. achievements and accomplishments) (Lindstedt 2000: 368). Pancheva describes these perfects as including a *telos*, or turning point, at which eventualities transition into result states (2003: 278). She also notes the subtle distinction between resultative and experiential perfects and suggests that for resultatives “the resulting state must hold at utterance time” (2003: 277), while such is not the case in experiential contexts. For instance, Pancheva illustrates the crucial difference between *I have built sandcastles* (as an experiential perfect) and *I have built a sandcastle* (as either resultative or experiential). She explains that, in order to pose a resultative reading of the perfect for the second example, the built castle still needs to exist at utterance time (2003: 279). Finally, resultatives tend to co-occur with TAs which make reference to time spans of limited duration such as *still* and *already*, as illustrated in (6).

(6)  *John has already arrived* (and is presently here).

The **perfect of persistent situation** (also known as **continuative**) refers to a situation that began in the past and extends until the present time. For this reason, continuative perfects need to explicitly and unequivocally relate to the present moment. Continuatives occur in contexts that are aspectually durative or iterative (mainly atelic, or telic with iteration/relation to present made explicit) (Mittwoch 1988: 209), and mostly behave like a present tense (Brugger 1997: 53 ff.). As noted above, this is why many languages (such as French, German, Polish, Russian, and Spanish) use the simple present, rather than the present perfect, to encode continuity (Klein & Vater 1998: 219; Tommola 2000: 447). Since continuative perfects establish

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25 Similarly, Brugger explains that with resultatives once the goal or aim of the telic predicate is reached “the action exhausts itself and passes into a state that is the result of the action” (1997: 59). In my data analysis, I provide the resulting state of these Present Perfects in brackets (see chapters 5 and 6).

26 Underscoring is used to highlight elements (such as TAs, verb complements, etc.) of special importance in the examples.
an explicit relationship with the present moment, TAs commonly accompany their predication (Winford 1993: 147; Iatridou et al. 2001: 196; Rothstein 2008: 163). Proximate and frequency TAs such as lately and always are common, while the adverb still is disallowed (Brugger 1997: 62). Example (7) illustrates this use.

(7) Elise has always lived in Paris (and, crucially, still does).

The perfect of recent past is used where the temporal relevance of a specific situation is very close. Also known as current relevance perfect (e.g. Schwenter 1994a), this perfect reading has sometimes been seen as a variant of other perfect types. For example, Pancheva (2003: 301 ff.) views what she labels “perfect of recent past” as a variant of the resultative or experiential perfect. Most definitions agree that the focus of this perfect is on the relationship between a past situation and the time of speech (i.e. a past situation that is very recent). Current relevance perfects presuppose a temporal bound, i.e. a link between a recent situation and the moment of speech. In this respect, current relevance perfects resemble a tense, as they do not affect the temporal constituency of the situation (Bybee 1985: 160). These forms emerge as a result of a generalization of meaning stemming from “current result” to “current relevance” (see §3.1.1). This generalization of meaning is found in the evolution of the resultative construction and its spread from telic to atelic verbs (Bybee 1985: 160; Lindstedt 2000: 368). In this respect, current relevance perfects oppose continuative perfects in that they display no Aktionsart restrictions and can thus occur with predicates of various lexical types. The clearest instances of current relevance perfects occur when the situation being described is temporally close to the moment of speech, since “recentness may be a sufficient condition for current relevance” (Comrie 1976: 60). Example (8) shows a use of the current relevance perfect with the TA recently.

(8) I have recently bought a new house.

The experiential perfect derives diachronically from the current relevance meaning (Lindstedt 2000: 370), and refers to situations that have held at some indefinite point in time at least once during the time leading up to the present (Comrie 1976: 58; Dahl 1985: 143). Two features are crucial in this type of perfect: indefiniteness and subjectivity. With respect to the former, experiential perfects are said to be predominantly temporal and to resemble past tenses in that a link with the
present tense is not a prerequisite (Mittwoch 1988: 210). Specifically, Brugger (1997: 62) claims that, just like a past tense, the experiential perfect can “refer to momentary states, express inchoative aspect (Suddenly he knew the answer) and focus on the internal stages of a situation” (italics in original). Experiential perfects can be formed with predicates of any Aktionsart (Iatridou et al. 2001: 191) since these perfects are aspectually unspecified (Brugger 1997: 61).

In terms of adverbial modification, experiential perfects are claimed to co-occur with frequency TAs (e.g. never, ever, sometime). Non-specific temporal modification is also common, since this type of perfect resembles an indefinite past (Lindstedt 2000: 370; 2006: 271). Lindstedt adds that the experiential perfect implies that the situation in question has occurred at least once in the period leading up to the present moment, signaling a past situation without mentioning a particular occasion. Dahl (1985: 141) suggests that the experiential refers to “generic activity, state etc., rather than an individual, or specific one”. In this respect, the experiential perfect agrees with the suggestion advanced in §2.2.4 that the perfect encodes indefinite past (Leech 2004: 41); or, in Dahl and Heidin’s (2000) proposal, “type-focusing event reference”. Dahl further points out that definite TAs (such as yesterday and this morning) disfavor experiential usage.

In terms of subjectivity, because experiential perfects usually involve narration of one own’s or other’s personal (subjective) experience, the agent tends to be animate (Bybee et al. 1994: 62). In fact, predicates including the experiential perfect can often be paraphrased as I have had the experience of doing X (Iatridou et al. 2001: 191). The experiential perfect has also been reported as occurring more frequently in interrogative and negative polarity contexts (Dahl 1985: 141 and 143). Example (9) illustrates this use.

(9) Have you ever been to Moscow?

A further perfect type not included in Comrie’s typology and originally brought to attention by McCawley (1971) is the so-called hot news perfect. Hot news perfects describe significant and novel events. They resemble resultatives in their focusing on the present outcome of the situation in question but, unlike resultatives, emphasize the recency of the event, rather than its resulting state (Schwenter 1994b: 995). Hot news perfects are thus similar to current relevance perfects in their encoding of recent situations (Binnick 1991: 99). These perfects tend to collocate with TAs
such as *already* and *just* while featuring in the media (e.g. newspaper headlines) and in relation to situations that involve exchange of novel and recent information in interaction, as in (10).

(10) Barrack Obama has won!

### 2.3.3 The perfect across languages

Although most of the perfect types described in §2.3.2 above are considered to apply cross-linguistically (Comrie 1976), the semantic and syntactic restrictions applicable to the perfect vary across different languages and dialects. Moreover, while the perfect’s form tends to remain constant (e.g. AUX + Past Participle), structural and functional restrictions differ. For example, in Portuguese the *pretérito perfeito* (formed with the auxiliary verb *tener* ‘to have’ plus a Past Participle) can only have a continuative reading (Brugger 1997: 54), and thus disallows a non-iterative interpretation (i.e. it is incompatible with specific TAs like *uma vez* ‘once’), as in (11).27

(11) O João tem chegado cedo recentemente/*uma vez*  
*PORTUGUESE*  
‘João has been arriving early recently/*once’.

The French *passé composé*, on the other hand, is used in spoken interaction to refer to past perfective situations (i.e. situations where the current relevance requirement associated with the perfect is absent), as shown in (12).

(12) Pierre est arrivé mais il n’est plus ici.  
*FRENCH*  
‘Pierre has arrived but he is no longer here.’

Other specific structural constraints apply to languages outside Romance phyla. For instance, Irish and Russian both have perfects that differ from the preterit only in the passive voice (Comrie 1976: 63, 84) while the canonical use of the English perfect with the adverb *lately* is unusual in Bulgarian, where the Preterit is preferred in continuative contexts (Iatridou et al. 2001: 198). Similarly, continuative perfect

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27 Examples (6) and (7) sourced from Howe (2006: 25).
readings are unavailable in Greek (Pancheva 2003: 288), a language that requires that the participle be perfective (2003: 296).

As with the past adverb constraint described in §2.2.5 above, a crucial diagnostic used in semantic analyses of the perfect is the test of whether the present perfect may occur with certain TAs. Moreover, different perfect readings become available through a combination of aspectual nuances and different adverbial particles (Pancheva 2003: 279). I now turn to a description of TAs.

2.4 Temporal adverbials

TAs serve to encode temporal and aspectual meaning. For example, Vlach (1993: 280) highlights the centrality of TAs in expressing temporality, suggesting that tense semantics is rather the semantics of TAs. In Spanish, the use of TAs is crucial not only as providers of extra information about the situation expressed by the verb, but also as actual encoders of basic aspectual notions such as result, completion, and current relevance, among others (Zandvoort: 16; Pancheva 2003: 279–280). Mackenzie (1995) provides an explanation of his own view of TAs (or, in his words, “clause-radicals”) as aspectual modifiers in a clause: “Since it is evident that any adverbial which co-occurs with a verb may modify the overall aspectual value of the clause, it seems reasonable to view clause-radicals as possessing a form of aspectual character in themselves” (1995: 57 ff.). Berman and Slobin (1994: 149) also suggest that perfect nuances may be “carried out by alternate means”. That is, TAs may accompany the verb in expressing meanings customarily associated with the perfect. For instance, they explain that – in their study of children’s narratives – one of their 3 year-old participants uttered I already said that! (instead of I have already said that!) in response to the investigator’s query about an object’s location. In this example, the TA already encodes the resultative nuance usually ascribed to the perfect.

In terms of co-occurrence constraints, the Preterit tends to canonically occur with perfectivity-boosting hesternal and pre-hesternal TAs like ayer ‘yesterday’, el mes pasado ‘last month’, en 1998 ‘in 1998’; while the Present Perfect shows a tendency to collocate with anteriority-related hodiernal TAs such as ya ‘already’, todavía ‘still/yet’, últimamente ‘lately’, and the like. Empirical support for these

28 Dowty (1979: 325 ff.) distinguishes “main tense” from “aspectual” TAs. The former, he claims, indicate reference time and have scope over aspect, while the latter are found within the scope of aspect and Aktionsart. TAs like today would be “main tense”, while durative TAs such as una hora ‘one hour’ would be “aspectual”.

27
tendencies was found by Dahl (2000) who showed that the change of the TA yesterday for this morning in his cross-linguistic “Perfect Questionnaire” disfavored the preterit on behalf of the present perfect (Dahl 2000: 800). Similarly, Schwenter (1994a: 88) has shown that speakers of Alicante Spanish (a Peninsular variety) favor the Present Perfect with “today” TAs, while the Preterit is found in the presence of “pre-today” TAs. Howe (2006: 46) suggests that ahora ‘now’, hasta ahora ‘until now’, recientemente ‘recently’, todavía no ‘not yet’, among others “occur with the present perfect but not with the simple past” [i.e. the Preterit]. I will later show that these TAs favor Preterit, rather than Present Perfect usage in ARPS.

TAs constitute a heterogeneous category, both formally and functionally. In the context of this thesis, the primary focus is on how TAs relate to the expression of perfectivity and present relevance typically assigned to the preterit and the present perfect cross-linguistically. Structurally, TAs can be “simple” such as the English already, now, first, etc. or “compound” such as this week (Klein 1994: 147–148). Functionally, TAs fulfill a variety of roles. Depending on their temporal point of reference, TAs may be classified into hesternal (referring to yesterday), hodiernal (referring to today), and pre-hodiernal (referring to before today). (Bybee et al. 1994; Schwenter 1994a). As noted above, certain TAs favor specific perfect readings. For example, continuative perfects tend to co-occur with TAs encoding proximity, such as the compound TA esta semana ‘this week’, while frequency TAs such as nunca ‘never’ are compatible with experiential meanings (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 15–16). These tendencies are mostly cross-linguistic and are deemed canonical in this work for the sake of comparison against ARPS usage further on in the analysis. I provide an extended classification of TAs in chapter 4 (§4.6.2).

2.5 Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have discussed temporality and tense and aspect and have presented several characteristics related to the perfect cross-linguistically. I have outlined the various semantic restrictions typical of perfect readings in different languages. The perfect types presented here and the semantic restrictions attached to the (canonical) perfect prove crucial in my data analysis.

Many of the observations advanced in this chapter are put to the test further on. In fact, I show later in chapter 7 that some of the theoretical positions reviewed here may be challenged as one looks at particular preterit and present perfect usage in
specific language varieties. In chapter 3, I deal with the evolution of the perfect in Romance and Spanish and introduce some relevant research on the Preterit and the Present Perfect in Peninsular, Peruvian, Salvadoran, Mexican, and Argentinian Spanish.
CHAPTER 3

Perfect evolution and usage across Spanish varieties

In this chapter I review what has been proposed to date concerning the distribution of the Preterit and the Present Perfect across Spanish varieties. Since many of the studies referred to in this chapter involve grammaticalization theory, I first introduce the main principles behind grammaticalization, with special reference to the grammaticalization of tense and aspect. The overarching aim of this chapter is to provide the theoretical foundations needed to explore ARPS data more closely in the following chapters.

Two observations will be highlighted here and later challenged in the ensuing chapters:

1. Latin American varieties represent earlier stages of development similar to medieval and Renaissance Peninsular Spanish. Specifically, Argentinian Spanish behaves like Mexican Spanish in that the Present Perfect is favored in continuative contexts (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972; Harris 1982; Fleischman 1983; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000).

2. The Argentinian Present Perfect is non-existent in informal interaction and is favored by older, university-educated speakers, and in formal styles (Donni de Mirande 1977: 46–49; Kubarth 1992a; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000).

I begin by introducing some basic notions related to grammaticalization, with special attention to the grammaticalization of tense and aspect and the evolution of the perfect from result to a past perfectivity across languages and in Romance. In §3.2 I describe the main research findings for Peninsular, Peruvian, Salvadoran, and Mexican Spanish – noting relevant areas that still need consideration. I introduce synchronic and diachronic observations on Preterit and Present Perfect use in Argentina in §3.2.5. I here motivate my labeling of the variety under study as Argentinian River Plate Spanish (ARPS) and highlight some research areas that still
need careful consideration. I summarize the outlined findings in §3.2.6 and end this chapter in §3.3, with a brief note on the research that lies ahead.

3.1 Grammaticalization essentials

Grammaticalization – the development of grammatical morphemes out of lexical morphemes – starts off from the position that any linguistic change originates from instances of actual language in use. Grammaticalization studies focus on both synchronic and diachronic aspects of language, with the former including studies on variation both of form and function. A clear example of how grammaticalization operates can be seen in the now grammaticalized English verb phrase to be going to (or the Spanish periphrasis ir a), which used to involve movement in space meaning ‘X is in motion toward a location Y’. However, this form evolved to encode futurity (i.e. metaphorical movement forward), and no longer requires the agent of the action (X) to physically approach a specific target (Y). Bybee et al. (1994) explain that once the to be going to construction is fully grammaticalized, it can be used with subjects that cannot move physically as in That tree is going to lose its leaves and situations that do not entail spatial movement, such as The milk is going to spoil if you leave it out (Bybee et al. 1994: 5–6). Grammaticalization processes are located on a cline and positioned in a relatively stable manner with respect to one another. Hopper and Traugott (2003: 7) suggest the following “cline of grammaticality”, which I present in Figure 3.1.

![Figure 3.1 Grammaticalization cline](Hopper & Traugott 2003: 7)

One should interpret the leftmost elements on the above cline as being less grammatical than their counterparts on the right. Hopper and Traugott (2003: 7) add that most of the clines found in language “involve a unidirectional progression in bondedness, that is, in the degree of cohesion of adjacent forms that goes from loosest (‘periphrasis’) to tightest (‘morphology’)”. Grammaticalization processes heavily rely on high token frequency (Bybee 2003), and usually involve change from pragmatic to syntactic function (Heine, Claudi & Hünnemeyer 1991: 213).
Grammaticalization theorists assume *unidirectionality* to be prototypical in the historical development of forms, although several scholars have presented arguments against the position that grammatical development proceeds necessarily in one direction. For example, Harris and Campbell (1995) and Newmeyer (1998) have claimed that, even though the strictest version of the grammaticalization approach supports the unidirectionality claim, “there are examples that proceed in the opposite direction” (Harris & Campbell 1995: 337). Some of these anti-unidirectionality proposals have dealt with processes known as lexicalization and degrammaticalization (e.g. Janda 2001; Norde 2001; Hopper & Traugott 2003: 133–134).

In the gradual process of grammaticalization, new layers emerge without replacing older layers such that new and old forms may co-exist to fulfill a certain function. This process is called *layering* (Heine et al. 1991: 20; Lichtenberk 1991: 37; Bybee et al. 1994: 21; Hopper & Traugott 2003: 124). Synchronically, layering motivates variation in specific functional domains. As grammaticalization advances, surviving forms specialize, adopting more general grammatical meanings (known as *specialization*) (Hopper & Traugott 2003: 116–117). Grammaticalizing constructions also retain meaning features of the source construction, known as *retention* (Bybee et al. 1994) or *persistence* (Hopper 1991). A common mechanism motivating semantic change and leading to further grammaticalization is known as *inference* or *conventionalization of implicature* (Dahl 1985; Bybee et al. 1994; Hopper & Traugott 2003). This process entails the absorption of the inference made in the context in which the form is used so that the structure itself may come to be associated with that inference; eventually, such inference may become part of the semantic content of the form – in line with the pragmatic>syntactic change mentioned earlier. I discuss how these processes relate to ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect usage in chapter 7.

3.1.1 Grammaticalization of tense and aspect

As stated above, grammaticalization theory is concerned with the study of the diachronic paths of similar source constructions in areally unrelated languages and the ways in which lexical or less grammatical elements evolve into grammatical material (Bybee et al. 1994: 4). More specifically, cross-linguistic grammaticalization studies of tense and aspect have analyzed the unidirectional diachronic semantic development from resultative (Latin and Old English), to anterior (English and Spanish), to perfective (standard spoken French, Northern Italian, standard Romanian), to past
This development involves a gradual change from a resultative periphrasis to an anterior (Bybee et al. 1994: 52). In the final stages of the proposed anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization the current relevance nuance usually attached to the perfect is lost and the focus remains with the past action itself. According to Schwenter, while perfectives “view the situation as having temporal boundaries and as an unanalyzable whole, without respect to its current relevance at utterance time” (1994a: 74), anteriors “are considered to represent a past action with current relevance, or an action which initiates in the past and continues into the present” (1994a: 73). Similarly, Bybee et al. (1994) explain that the function of an anterior is what they refer to as “relational”: “the goal of the utterance is not to locate a situation at some definite point in the past, but only to offer it as relevant to the current moment” (1994: 64). Bybee (1985: 159) also suggests that the anterior situation is relevant to the present moment. Figure 3.2 illustrates the developmental paths leading up to perfective and simple past meanings.

I refer back to Figure 3.2 as I address the historical development of Romance past tense systems in §3.1.2 below.

Bybee and Dahl (1989: 67–68) note that the perfect is expressed periphrastically in the majority of the languages they study and identify three diachronic sources:

29 Recall that the label perfective is used when other imperfective forms (such as the imperfect tense) co-exist in the verbal paradigm of the language in question; otherwise, simple past is used.
i. Copula + Past Participle of the main verb (e.g. Hindi, Bulgarian);
ii. Original possessive constructions comprising the auxiliary have + Past Participle of the main verb (e.g. Germanic and Romance languages);
iii. Main verb + particle originally meaning ‘already’ (e.g. Yoruba);
iv. Constructions with auxiliaries derived from verbs meaning ‘finish’, ‘throw away’, ‘come from’ (e.g. Sango, Ewe, Fore).

They also explain that in languages that have no grammatical category perfect – such as Russian – forms meaning already may be used to make up for the lack of perfect. In chapter 7 I argue that a similar process is underway in contemporary ARPS.

3.1.2 Evolution of Romance past systems

The Romance present perfect paradigm (e.g. HABEO FACTUM ‘I have made’) originated in Vulgar Latin out of the Classical Latin Preterit paradigm (e.g. FECI ‘I made’) (Harris 1982: 47; Bybee & Dahl 1989: 72). In those times, one form FECI had two clear temporal meanings: perfective (i.e. finished past) and “past with present relevance” (1982: 48, all caps in original).30

After the break-up of the Roman Empire, the notion of result started being expressed in Latin through the innovative HABERE ‘have’ plus Participle construction, such as HABEO FACTUM ‘I have done’ instead of the previously used form FECI ‘I did’. Let me exemplify the evolution of the compound perfect by looking at the development of the Spanish Present Perfect. According to Penny (1991: 141), at the beginning “such constructions [i.e. HABERE + Participle] retained a notion of possession, and were therefore only available in cases where the subject was personal and where there was an overt direct object” as in the phrase HABEO CULTELLUM COMPARATUM ‘I have the knife bought’. The notion of possession began to erode in spoken Latin to include examples such as HABEO ILLUD AUDITUM ‘I have heard it’, although its impact in the construction remained visible in the gender agreement of the Participle and the direct object until Old Spanish. The creation of the “compound perfect” is reflected in instances such as HABEO INTELLECTUM ‘I have understood’, where no direct object is required at all.

30 See Bybee and Dahl (1989: 71) for the evolution of the transitive resultative into perfect in Middle High German.
However, Penny (1991) suggests that in Old Spanish “the HABERE + participle construction remained for centuries in accordance with its origins appropriate only to transitive verbs”, whereas “perfective forms of intransitive verbs (e.g. VENI ‘I have come’) were replaced in spoken Latin by forms of ESSE + participle” (1991: 142, all caps in original).\footnote{Penny (1991: 142) contends that the use of ESSE + participle might have resulted from generalizing the structure found only in deponent verbs such as MORTUUS EST ‘he has died’ to other intransitives (e.g. *VENITUS EST ‘he has come’).}

In Spanish, the auxiliary \textit{ser} ‘to be’ was used in the perfective form of intransitives until the 16th century and disappeared by the 18th century, to be replaced by the HABERE + Participle form, whereas other Romance languages such as French and Italian retained the \textit{be} forms (Vincent 1987: 244–245). As Harris (1982: 45) points out, “it is the inherent instability of the present perfect category which everywhere underlies the evolution of this small part of the past tense system”.\footnote{Similarly, Bull (1963: 98) notes that the fact that the “retro-perfect” (i.e. the Preterit) is a potential free variant of the Present Perfect “is an inevitable product of the nature of the system”.
}

Regarding formal features of the Present Perfect in Spanish, while other Romance varieties like French and Italian have retained participle agreement under certain circumstances (Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 426 ff.), Spanish Present Perfect constructions no longer require subject/object agreement. For instance, standard Italian (just like some dialects of Catalan) requires that the Participle agree with the subject in \textit{Teresa è arrivata} ‘Teresa has arrived’ (where the gender of the subject determines that of the Participle); whereas Spanish (like English) does not have such a requirement (\textit{Teresa ha llegado} ‘Teresa has arrived’). Moreover, while the Spanish Present Perfect participle does not agree in gender and number with its VP complements, other complex constructions such as \textit{Tengo la carta escrita} ‘I have the letter written’ do require the resultative participle (\textit{escrita}) to agree with the VP complement (\textit{la carta}). Another important syntactic restriction that applies to the Spanish Present Perfect is the unavailability of intervening material between the auxiliary \textit{haber} and the Past Participle. That is, while a sentence such as \textit{He visto la película} ‘I have seen the movie’ is totally acceptable, \textit{*He la película visto} (and even \textit{*He la visto}) is ungrammatical. Cross-linguistically, English and French do not allow object complements to intervene between the auxiliary and the perfect Participle, although French licenses the negative particle \textit{pas} ‘step’ in between the auxiliary \textit{avoir} ‘have’ and the Participle as in \textit{Je n’ai pas mange} ‘I did not eat’ (Howe 2006: 60
Portuguese behaves differently in this respect as clitic pronouns may move freely and thus occur in various syntactic positions.

The different uses and stages of development of the present perfect in Latin-derived phyla have been described in detail by Harris (1982: 49) who proposes four stages in its development and use in Romance. In stage I, the present perfect is “restricted to present states resulting from past actions, and is not used to describe past actions themselves, however recent”. In stage II, the present perfect occurs “only in highly specific circumstances” such as contexts “aspectually marked as durative or repetitive” as in the English 

I have lived in Europe for 2 years.

Stage III “expresses the archetypal present perfect of past action with current relevance [i.e. anteriority]” while in stage IV the present perfect encodes “preterital […] functions”. Table 3.1 summarizes the distinct stages in the evolution of the preterit and the present perfect in the Romance languages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Preterit</th>
<th>Present Perfect</th>
<th>Current use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>All past functions</td>
<td>Present states resulting from past situations</td>
<td>Calabrian, Sicilian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Most past situations</td>
<td>Durative/repetitive situations extending into the present time</td>
<td>Portuguese, some varieties of Latin American Spanish (e.g. Mexican Spanish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Perfective situation without current relevance</td>
<td>Past situations with current relevance</td>
<td>Catalan, Peninsular Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Restricted to formal registers; written language</td>
<td>All past situations</td>
<td>French, Northern Italian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1 Evolution of past systems in Romance
(Adapted from Fleischman 1983: 195; Engel & Ritz 2000: 125)

Some observations on the semantic notions of result and pastness (which feature prominently in discussions on the evolution of the perfect across languages) are in order at this point. The recapitulation of resultatives (such as Spanish Tengo la

Note that, unlike English, Spanish does not allow temporal adverbial intervention between the auxiliary and the participle (e.g. Ana ha siempre estudiado en Viena ‘Ana has always studied in Vienna’).

Note that most Romance languages, including Spanish, prefer the Present Simple for this use; e.g. Hace dos años que vivo en Europa ‘I have lived in Europe for two years’ (Lit. ‘It makes two years that I live in Europe’).

More recently, Squartini and Bertinetto (2000) have challenged Harris’ proposal for distinct stages by claiming that these are not always discrete and isolated points in the resultative-to-perfective grammaticalization path for Romance (also see Hernández 2004: 80).

The stages suggested by Harris (1982) have also been documented for other European languages outside the Romance family. English and German are described as being located mid-way between stages II and III, while Russian is reported to behave like French, Italian, and Romanian in its use of the Present Perfect as a perfective form (cf. Fleischman 1983: 195; Engel & Ritz 2000: 125).
‘carta escrita ‘I have the letter written’) into perfects (e.g. *He escrito la carta* ‘I have written the letter’) is generally described as a shift in the semantic relevance of the notions of present result and pastness. In Detges’ (2000: 361) view, while resultatives focus on present result, perfects foreground the past event while maintaining present result as background. It has been suggested by Howe (2006) that this semantic analysis is applicable to the Spanish Preterit and the Present Perfect as well. Howe argues that in an example such as *Juan llegó* ‘Juan arrived’ (Preterit) the “event of Juan’s having arrived” comes to the foreground, while the boundedness of the event is backgrounded. Similarly, in *Juan ha llegado* ‘Juan has arrived’ (Present Perfect) the “event of Juan’s having arrived” is also foregrounded, while the backgrounded semantic components include (a) the nuance that Juan’s arrival occurred sometime in the recent past (contributed by the present tense) and (b) the fact that Juan’s arrival is relevant to the discourse structure (contributed by the Present Perfect) (2006: 196). In chapters 5 and 6 I show that current relevance considerations play no role in Present Perfect choice in contemporary ARPS.

Interestingly, certain meanings typically associated with the present perfect, like the continuative function (e.g. *I have now waited for them for one hour*), are expressed through a form of the present tense in languages such as French, German, and Polish (Comrie 1976: 60; Klein & Vater 1998: 219; Tommola 2000: 447). As previously mentioned, Spanish also uses the simple Present in the expression of continuative functions (Schwenter 1994b: 999). Example (1), extracted from my sociolinguistic interview data, illustrates the continuative use of the Present in the *hace* + time + Present construction.

(1)  \[ \textit{Hace 45 años que estamos casados. (SLI07MR54)} \]

‘It’s been 45 years since we’ve been married’ (Lit. ‘It makes 45 years that we are married’).

The semantic complexity, general instability, and “apparent ambiguity” of the present perfect (Binnick 1991: 100) have triggered a number of changes cross-linguistically. The general claim holds that grammatical development can be expected depending on whether the *pastness* of the situation encoded by the verb or the present result of such situation(s) are to be highlighted. As mentioned above, many Romance languages (e.g. French, Northern Italian, some varieties of Romanian) have for the
most part carried the anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization path to completion. For example, the French passé composé is employed to encode finished situations in the (recent and distant) past, representing the “endpoint of the attrition of the contribution of the present tense to a present perfect” (Howe 2006: 198).

The proposed evolution of the present perfect in Romance may be represented as a developmental cline originating with a resultative construction of the type to have X + Past Participle (i.e. the source gram), which gradually and cumulatively evolves into a perfective form to encode finished situations in the past (e.g. Harris 1982; Bybee & Dahl 1989: 56; Penny 1991: 141–144; Bybee et al. 1994: 69–105; Lindstedt 2000). This evolutionary cline is represented in Figure 3.3. Note that the perfect need not have developed all of these functions in a single language or dialect. Languages are located at different points on the cline. Finally, these functions may be expressed by forms other than the perfect, as I shall show in chapters 5 and 6.

RESULTATIVE > CONTINUATIVE > CURRENT RELEVANCE > EXPERIENTIAL > HOT NEWS > PAST PERFECTIVE

Figure 3.3 Perfect evolution across Romance

The cross-linguistic evolution of the perfect involves a generalization of meaning to encompass not only purely telic predicates (typical of the resultative construction), but also atelic verb types. Bybee et al. (1994: 69) explain that “the semantic change that takes place between resultative and anterior can perhaps be seen as a generalization of meaning in which some of the specificity associated with the resultative stage is eroded” and point to the expansion of “resultative grams” to encompass verbs of different lexical types. This expansion then “forces an interpretation not so much of a state resulting from an action but of an action with some lasting relevance” (1994: 69). It is at this point, then, that resultatives become anterior or perfects. The aforementioned generalization of meaning impacts different perfect types arising from the original resultative construction. For instance, while continuative perfects tend to remain aspectually durative and repetitive (thus imperfective in nature), current relevance, experiential, and hot news perfects display no such aspectual restrictions. The current relevance perfect presupposes a temporal bound in that it links a past occurrence with the moment of speech. Recentness becomes a component of the current relevance perfect at this stage, where it “may be a sufficient condition for current relevance” (Comrie 1976: 60). In turn, the
experiential perfect derives from the current relevance reading (Lindstedt 2000: 370; 2006: 271), and indicates that a situation occurred at least once in the period leading up to the present moment. As previously mentioned, the experiential perfect need not be connected to the present moment (Mittwoch 1988: 210). In this sense, the experiential perfect resembles an indefinite past tense in that linkage to the present moment is not obligatory. More importantly, experiential perfects must express a generic situation, rather than a specific individual occurrence (Dahl 1985: 141). Finally, the hot news perfect is resultative in its focus on a particular outcome (Pancheva 2003: 301 ff.), although its recentness and the specialized function of reporting novel situations in particular media remain central (Schwenter 1994b). According to Schwenter (1994b: 997), hot news perfects normally precede full anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization, as has been the case in languages like French. Once the present perfect is used extensively in the reporting of novel information, Schwenter suggests, the road is paved for it to take on perfective uses and thus encode finished situations in the past. We can thus see that this widely attested path for the evolution of the perfect serves as a starting point to analyze perfect constructions across languages and dialects. Acknowledging the several functions of the perfect remains crucial in a comparative analysis of form, as it has been suggested that previous definitions of highly idealized archetypal perfects do not consistently apply to the range of languages and dialects that feature this construction (see Howe 2006: 214). I reassess the central role of this developmental path as I analyze different data in chapters 5 and 6.

Returning to Spanish varieties, these are currently located at different stages in Harris’ (1982) proposal (Schwenter 1994a: 79; Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 5–8), and in relation to the evolutionary clines presented in Figures 3.1 and 3.3 above. The following section reviews what has been proposed with respect to Preterit and Present Perfect usage across several varieties of Spanish.

3.2 The Preterit and the Present Perfect across Spanish dialects

In what follows, I review the central findings concerning Preterit and Present Perfect usage in Spain, Peru, El Salvador, Mexico, and Argentina. As I show in chapters 5 and 6, my main focus is on how ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect usage compares against Mexican and Peninsular Spanish. I here review Peruvian and Salvadoran Spanish as well since this thesis questions previous descriptions of the
Preterit and the Present Perfect across Spanish varieties in Latin America. It should be noted that the methodologies employed in the various studies reviewed here are varied, ranging from raw counts and overall usage frequencies to multivariate analyses. I introduce all of these in this section since – to my knowledge – they represent the most influential and up-to-date analyses available on Preterit and Present Perfect usage across Spanish varieties.

3.2.1 Peninsular Spanish

By far, Peninsular Spanish displays the most pervasive use of the Present Perfect in the Spanish-speaking world. Comrie (1985: 85) suggests that “In Spanish the one form [perfect] has two meanings: current relevance of past situation and recent past”. In Comrie’s view, the Present Perfect is used to refer to situations that occurred before today, as long as they still have current relevance; and for situations that took place earlier on the same day, even if they appear as irrelevant to the time of speech. In his groundbreaking study on the uses and functions of the Present Perfect in Alicante Spanish, Schwenter (1994a) shows that in this dialect temporal distance determines the use of the Present Perfect as a hodiernal past perfective to refer to same day past situations and situations which are still currently ongoing such as Hoy me he despertado pronto ‘Today I have woken up early’. Brugger (2001: 247) contends that the Present Perfect may be modified by a TA in Peninsular Spanish as long as “the adverb denotes an interval that is part of TODAY” (caps in original). This restriction is known as the 24 hour rule. Schwenter suggests that because recent situations are consistently reported in the Present Perfect in this dialect, this somehow leads to the inference that the Present Perfect encodes recent past, which in turn triggers the erosion of the current relevance interpretation attached to this form. Further, given that most of the reported recent past occurs on the same day, a second inference arises, namely that the Present Perfect must be used to refer to same day situations. Schwenter also argues that the Present Perfect extends to encode hodiernal situations further removed from the recent past and that, once this form is established as a hodiernal past (rather than a current relevance form) it will extend beyond hodiernal contexts to encode perfective situations, thus replacing the Preterit. In fact,

37 In line with previous research in the field (e.g. Howe 2006; Schwenter & Torres Cacoulllos 2008), I use the term Peninsular Spanish throughout the thesis to refer to the Spanish spoken in Spain. However, I acknowledge that several different varieties – and uses of the Preterit and the Present Perfect – co-exist within Spain.

38 Like the Alicante variety, Madrid and Valencia Spanish are reported to be undergoing anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization (Howe 2006: 221).
Serrano (1994; 1995–1996) has suggested that the Present Perfect is used in Madrid Spanish to encode past perfectivity. She shows that the Present Perfect collocates with specific TAs such as ayer ‘yesterday’, as in Ayer hemos celebrado una reunión con todos los alumnos del colegio ‘Yesterday we (have) met up with all of the students in the school’ (1994: 49).

However, not all varieties of Peninsular Spanish display the same uses of the Present Perfect. For example, Canary Island Spanish (as well as the varieties spoken in the Spanish northwest, including Galicia, Leon, Asturias, and Cantabria; (Penny 2000: 159; Mackenzie 2001; Carter 2003: 25) have been reported not to follow the grammaticalization path proposed for continental Spain. Serrano (1998: 124) contends that in Canary Island Spanish “for all past events (regardless of the amount of time elapsed) the simple past [i.e. Preterit] is used”. She concludes that “[The present perfect] has not suffered an ‘erosion’ of its meaning, nor has it been grammaticalized to perform perfective functions, as has happened in other varieties on the mainland [i.e. continental Spain]” (1998: 125). In this respect, Canary Island Spanish seems to follow the “Latin American norm”, favoring the Preterit in settings where Madrid, Alicante, and Valencia Spanish would prefer the Present Perfect.

As already mentioned, the grammaticalization of the Present Perfect in Peninsular Spanish has recently been viewed as resulting from the erosion of the temporal presupposition of relevance prototypically attached to the Present Perfect (Schwenter 1994a). In Bybee et al.’s words: “frequent reporting of recent past events as currently relevant leads to the inference that the Present Perfect refers to the recent past, with the concurrent erosion of the current relevance meaning” (1994: 87). Schwenter (1994a: 89) claims that frequent co-occurrence with specific adverbs referring to hodiernal situations has led to the Present Perfect absorbing the temporal context that accompanies these adverbs. As a result, the contemporary Peninsular Present Perfect expresses hodiernal past without the need of TAs. Likewise, Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 8) suggest that Peninsular hodiernal Present Perfects tend to occur with no TA modification so that the “contextual meaning of a today-past event has been incorporated into the PP [Present Perfect] form itself”.

### 3.2.2 Peruvian Spanish

In contrast to dialects of Peninsular Spanish, most Latin American varieties show a preference for the Preterit in contexts where other dialects favor the Present...
The use of the Present Perfect in Peruvian Spanish (especially the varieties spoken in the cities of Lima and Cusco) has traditionally been studied vis-à-vis the influence of Quechua and Aymara on the structural properties of the Spanish spoken by bilinguals (e.g. Fleischman 1989: 27–31; Stratford 1991; Klee & Ocampo 1995; Escobar 1997; Sánchez 2004; Hintz 2008). As far as Spanish in contact with Quechua is concerned, Escobar (1997) analyzes the oral production of Peruvian rural migrants in Lima and suggests that the Present Perfect is used in this variety to signal (a) spatial relevance and (b) evidentiality. In terms of spatial relevance, Escobar notes that her participants use “either the preterite or the present perfect to refer to past events depending on whether the event took place in their place of origin [i.e. away from Lima] or in Lima respectively” (1997: 862). She then suggests that, in this contact variety, spatial considerations override temporal issues as far as Present Perfect usage is concerned. Regarding (b) above, Escobar claims that the Present Perfect is also used in contact Spanish to encode events occurring away from Lima which have nevertheless been witnessed by the speaker in question. The Present Perfect is thus claimed to express “direct participation by the speaker” (1997: 864). A related finding points to the use of the Past Perfect (e.g. Había visto a Juan ‘He/She had seen Juan’) as an evidential marker for reported information (in line with Quechua reportative suffixes). The main distinction between the Present Perfect and the Past Perfect, Escobar argues, lies in the perspective adopted by the language user: “present and participation” for the former, and “past and non-participation” for the latter; thus the perfect encodes first-hand information and the Past Perfect is used to report events.

More recently, research has compared Peruvian Spanish against the Peninsular variety (e.g. Howe 2006; Jara Yupanqui 2006) along a set of linguistic variables including co-occurrence with temporal adverbials (TAs), different clause types, polarity, and in narrative sequencing and hot news contexts, among others. Howe (2006: 145) typologizes Peruvian Spanish as a “pretérito-favoring” dialect. However, he acknowledges that the rate of usage of the Present Perfect in this variety is much

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39 For example, De Kock (1989: 489) suggests that the most prominent difference in Present Perfect/Preterit usage between Spain and Latin America concerns literary corpora (Peninsular Spanish uses 30% more Present Perfects than American varieties). De Kock also points out that the Present Perfect is slightly more frequent in the written medium across Hispanic dialects. I later challenge these claims on the basis of my oral and newspaper data analysis in chapters 5 and 6.

40 Stratford notes a similar use in Spanish in contact with Aymara in Altiplano Spanish where “the present perfect is often used to indicate a punctuated or concluded event, or even one which may have occurred a long time ago” (Stratford 1991: 171). He also argues that the Preterit is considered prestigious and “more correct”, and is more widely used by wealthy urban dwellers (while the Present Perfect is favored by lower class campesinos in rural areas). Similar trends are noted for Altiplano Spanish in Bolivia (e.g. Laprade 1976; Godenzzi 1986).
higher than in other Hispanic dialects such as Mexican or Argentinian Spanish (see Figure 3.5 in §3.2.6). Based on data obtained through interviews in Cusco and Lima, a sentence judgment task and a questionnaire, Howe concludes that the extended use of the Present Perfect in pre-today situations is motivated by pragmatic factors, more specifically, by epistemic processes resulting from an extension of the presupposition of discourse relevance. Howe suggests that spatial, temporal, and discourse nuances play a role in the notion of relevance adopted by Peruvian Spanish speakers. In line with Escobar (1997), he argues that the Present Perfect is used in this dialect not only to encode temporal relevance, but also to indicate spatial relevance of situations occurring in the distant past. He describes the process of development of the Peruvian Present Perfect as one of “subjectification” and concludes that, unlike the perfective uses of the Present Perfect in Peninsular Spanish, “the increased perfectivity noted in the Peruvian case results from the widening of the relevance requirement to include notions like spatial location or source or information” (2006: 210). He further argues that beyond these subjective uses, the Preterit and the Present Perfect “maintain their own spaces” in Peruvian Spanish (2006: 221). This variety is thus not considered to be undergoing the anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization proposed for Peninsular Spanish given that the Present Perfect is pervasive in hodiernal past contexts. The question remains, however, whether Peruvian Present Perfect usage is undergoing a different type of development (cf. Howe 2006: 223).

In a similar vein, Jara Yupanqui (2006) shows that the Preterit is used more frequently than the Present Perfect in (monolingual) Limeño Spanish (i.e. the Spanish spoken in Lima). Jara Yupanqui administered a fill-in-the-blank questionnaire containing a variety of verb types, TAs, and speech types (i.e. direct/indirect speech) to 64 speakers of Peruvian Spanish. She provides a statistical analysis of linguistic and sociolinguistic factors. Structurally, telic verbs favor the Preterit, while durative predicates select the Present Perfect and are likely to co-occur with TAs of duration, both in current and remote situations. Jara Yupanqui highlights the importance of TAs in determining use of the Preterit or the Present Perfect in Lima. She claims that “temporal adverbials that lack present relevance have more impact on the selection of the preterite, while adverbials with present relevance have a greater influence on the selection of the present perfect” (2006: 210). Jara Yupanqui concludes by suggesting that, while the Peninsular Present Perfect emphasizes temporal nuances, the use of the Present Perfect in Limeño Spanish (and presumably other Latin American varieties)
remains essentially aspectual (cf. Company 2002). I challenge this proposal in chapter 5, showing that the ARPS Present Perfect is not aspectually restricted.

3.2.3 Salvadoran Spanish

Hernández (2004; 2006) suggests that, in Salvadoran Spanish, the Present Perfect is used to express many of the canonical perfect functions (i.e. result, continuity, current relevance, experience, and hot news) and is unique in its occurrence in narratives to express “high affective content” such as experiences close to the speaker’s personal life. More specifically, Hernández uses Labovian narrative structure analysis (Labov 1972a: 363–370) to claim that “while the Pret[erite] predominates in the complicating action, the PP [Present Perfect] occurs primarily outside the boundaries of the complicating action, as internal and external evaluation” (2006: 302). However, he further suggests that the Present Perfect seems to be increasingly pushing into the complicating action itself and that this very fact “could undoubtedly mean complete encroachment on the semantic spaces of the Pret[erite]” (2006: 307). That is, like Peninsular and Peruvian Spanish, the Salvadoran Present Perfect is used to encode perfectivity (e.g. in instances when the temporal frame occurs within a week or even a year). However, contrary to Peninsular Spanish, the past perfective use of the Present Perfect does not begin in hodiernal (i.e. ‘today’) narratives but rather features heavily in the evaluation section of the Labovian narrative. This, Hernández suggests, may be due to the lack of temporal reference and the highly subjective content typical of narrative evaluation (2004: 186).

3.2.4 Mexican Spanish

Lope Blanch (1972) notes that *Una de las diferencias más acusadas entre el uso español de los pretéritos y el mexicano es el distinto valor temporal de ambas formas* ‘one of the most noticeable differences between (Peninsular) Spanish and Mexican use of the Preterit is the distinct temporal value of the two forms’ (1972: 137, my translation). He adds that in Mexico the Present Perfect is crucially not used to express recent past (e.g. *Llegó hace un momento* ‘(She/he/you) arrived a moment ago’) and that the meaning of the Present Perfect is not perfective but rather, continuative, in line with mediaeval and pre-Renaissance uses of this form. Lope Blanch concludes that Mexican Spanish retains the older usage of the Middle Ages, where the Present Perfect was preferred to express *acción continuada* (*durativa o*
iterativa) que ha producido un estado presente ‘continuative action (durative or iterative) that has brought about a present state’ (1972: 138).\textsuperscript{41}

Moreno de Alba (1978: 57) argues that the main difference between the Preterit and the Present Perfect in Mexico is essentially aspectual: situations viewed perfectly favor the Preterit, while unfinished situations (or those “in progress”) are encoded through the Present Perfect. He offers two examples to illustrate these claims. In Pedro estudió toda su vida ‘Pedro studied all his life’ the meanings of the Preterit is that Pedro is no longer alive, or that he has ceased to study and will never take it up again. On the other hand, the use of the Present Perfect in Pedro ha estudiado toda su vida ‘Pedro has studied all his life’ implies that Pedro is currently studying and will continue to do so in the future. In this respect, Moreno de Alba suggests that el antepresente mexicano es aspectualmente imperfectivo y temporalmente no pretérito sino aun presente ‘the Mexican antepresente (i.e. Present Perfect) is aspectually imperfective and temporally non-Preterit, but rather still present’ (1978: 57, my translation).\textsuperscript{42}

Mexican Spanish has more recently been described as located at an earlier grammaticalization stage, with “imperfective aspect and pragmatic considerations of current relevance” at the core of the change (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2005). Company (2002) suggests that in Peninsular Spanish the Present Perfect is used to encode temporality, whereas in Mexican Spanish aspect-related concerns (such as the present relevance of a situation with relation to the moment of speech) guide the choice of Present Perfect over other tenses. Specifically, while Mexican Spanish highlights the relevance of the (past) situation as viewed by the language user, Peninsular Spanish emphasizes the antepresente ‘ante-present’ value of the Present Perfect and its use to refer to a past situation that occurs near the speech time. In this respect, the Mexican Present Perfect shares the semantic space of the simple Present (or Present tense as in Figure 3.4 below), while the Peninsular Present Perfect overlaps semantically with the Preterit in its expression of past perfectivity. The semantic relationships between the Preterit, the Present Perfect, and the simple Present are a crucial element of Howe’s (2006) classification of Spanish varieties as belonging to two different groups: “Group I”, which includes the “Latin American

\textsuperscript{41} Lope Blanch’s description of the Mexican Present Perfect matches Harris’ (1982) definition of stage II in the evolution of the perfect across Romance languages (see Table 3.1 in §3.1.2).
\textsuperscript{42} See Mackenzie (1995) for a detailed counter-argument to Moreno de Alba’s (1978) proposal.
dialects” of Mexico and – possibly, Howe suggests – Argentinian Spanish, and “Group II” encompassing the varieties undergoing grammaticalization (e.g. Madrid, Valencia and Alicante Spanish – here labeled *Peninsular Spanish*) (2006: 221–222). I offer an adapted version of Howe’s illustration of these relationships in Figure 3.4. Note that here I eschew the use of Howe’s classification into groups and focus instead on Mexican and Peninsular Spanish.

![Figure 3.4 Tense semantic overlap in Mexican and Peninsular Spanish](image)

The Mexican Present Perfect maintains its semantic overlap with the Present tense, while the Peninsular Present Perfect overlaps with the Preterit in its expression of past perfectivity (visually represented as the area where the ovals intersect). In line with Howe (2006), the dotted line linking the intersecting ovals with the single oval indicates “gradual displacement”. That is, the fact that the Preterit and the Present Perfect in the Mexican case, and the Present tense and the Present Perfect in the Peninsular case “have completely shed themselves of [semantic] overlap” (2006: 222). In chapter 5 I show that Howe’s characterization of Argentinian Spanish as equivalent to Mexican Spanish does not reflect the usage noted in my data. I discuss this issue in the light of my findings and offer a similar visual representation of ARPS tense semantic overlap chapter 7 (§7.4.1).

Returning to Mexican Spanish, in a pivotal variationist analysis of the Present Perfect in both Peninsular and Mexican Spanish, Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008) investigate the extent to which a set of linguistic variables (including verb Aktionsart, temporal adverbials, noun number, clause type, temporal reference, polarity, subject/object, and presence of *ya* ‘already’) constrain Present Perfect usage in these dialects. They find the Mexican Present Perfect to occur more frequently in

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43 The research design used in this thesis partly replicates that in Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008). See chapter 4 for details.
irrelevant temporal reference contexts (i.e. contexts where it is impossible to ask ‘when?’ and mostly accompanied by frequency TAs) and less so with specific temporal modification. This, they contend, is in line with experiential and continuative uses of the perfect. Likewise, the Peninsular Present Perfect is found pervasively with irrelevant temporal reference, although specific hodiernal situations also trigger its use. Peninsular instances of the Present Perfect indicate both canonical anterior and hodiernal perfective uses of this form (2008: 29). Based on their “empirical characterization of the default” in both Peninsular and Mexican Spanish, the authors conclude that the forms that occur more frequently in the least specified contexts in language in use are the Preterit in Mexican Spanish and the Present Perfect in Spain (2008: 33). I compare my findings against Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008) observations in chapter 7 (§7.1.1).

3.2.5 Argentinian Spanish

In comparison to Mexican and Peninsular Spanish, work on the Preterit and the Present Perfect in Argentinian Spanish (as well as other South American varieties) remains minimal (Penny 2000: 160). It has generally been observed that the Preterit is more frequently used than the Present Perfect in the Spanish of Argentina (Vidal de Battini 1966; Donni de Mirande 1967; Martorell de Laconi 2000). I should note, however, that it is River Plate Spanish that displays widespread use of the Preterit, while northwestern Argentina employs the Present Perfect much more frequently and in line with other Andean varieties (Donni de Mirande 1992: 655–670; De Granda 2003: 203; Kempas 2008: 255–268). As noted in chapter 1, the entirety of the River Plate dialect includes the province of Buenos Aires and coastal zones of Uruguay. The variety spoken in the River Plate area of Uruguay may actually display uses of the Preterit and the Present Perfect similar to those of its Argentinian counterpart. I show in chapter 5 that ARPS uses of the experiential Present Perfect support Henderson’s (2008) claims for Chilean, Paraguayan, and Uruguyan Spanish in that the Present Perfect is preferred in these dialects to encode generic reference. Notwithstanding possible usage overlap, I here focus on Argentinian River Plate Spanish (ARPS).

With regard to ARPS, both Vidal de Battini (1966) and Donni de Mirande (1967) suggest that the Preterit is preferred over the Present Perfect. Martorell de Laconi (2000: 112) observes that the Preterit form va ocupando gradualmente el espacio del compuesto ‘is gradually occupying the space of the compound [Present
Perfect]’ in the linguistic uses of Buenos Aires and surrounding areas. Squartini and Bertinetto (2000: 413) also indicate that the Preterit statistically prevails over the Present Perfect, and add that in Buenos Aires Spanish the Present Perfect “denotes durative or iterative situations encompassing the Speech Time”. In this respect, Buenos Aires Spanish is claimed to behave like Mexican Spanish, with the Present Perfect appearing for the most part in resultative and continuative contexts (Howe 2006: 76). Specifically, the overall frequency of the Argentinian Present Perfect has been set at 13% (Kubarth 1992a; Burgos 2004), a percentage comparable to that of Mexican Spanish (Howe 2006: 98). In chapter 5 I challenge this position based on the disparate usage arising from my oral and questionnaire corpora.

Some scholars have noted the existence of stylistic restrictions in Preterit and Present Perfect usage in Latin America. For example, Squartini and Bertinetto (2000: 413) view the Present Perfect as prestigious and suggest that “all over Spanish America the CP [Compound Past or Present Perfect] occurs more frequently in formal style, under the influence of the peninsular norm”. In their study of children’s narratives, Berman and Slobin (1994: 250, 283) observe that, while Madrid preschoolers use the Present Perfect widely, this form is completely absent in Argentinian and Chilean children’s narratives. This finding further leads them to the conclusion that the Present Perfect is “marginal” and restricted to literary usage in Latin American varieties. The schism between oral and written language has also been highlighted by De Kock (1989: 491), who asks the question of whether – when it comes to investigating Present Perfect usage – the written language is adapting to the spoken language, or vice versa.44 I return to these issues in chapters 4 and 7.

Schwenter argues that the decision to use the Preterit or the Present Perfect (PP) in “American Spanish” is made on aspectual grounds: “those situations which are not bounded use the PP form, e.g. situations begun in the past which continue into the present. Meanwhile, (past) bounded events are represented by the Preterite, regardless of their degree of recency at utterance time” (1994a: 79). Fleischman (1983: 196) explains that the Present Perfect in some varieties of “American Spanish” displays aspectual restrictions such that “appropriate use of the form requires a durative or repetitive situation” (English would use the progressive Present Perfect in

44 A similar distinction is noted by Vanneck for American English (1958: 239). He suggests that “the many educated Americans who use the colloquial preterite [e.g. I just saw John] nearly always replace it with the perfect when writing or when delivering a formal speech”.

48
this instance). In this respect, Latin American varieties have been compared to Portuguese in their use of the Present Perfect in continuative contexts encompassing the speech time (Camus Bergareche 2008: 98; Martínez Atienza 2008: 219).

Regarding Buenos Aires Spanish, Kubarth (1992a) analyzes oral interviews with Buenos Aires participants belonging to three social strata and three different age groups (13–30, 31–49, and 49–75). He concludes that, although limited to a few instances of use, the Present Perfect is still found in Buenos Aires Spanish. He shows that this form is specially favored by older (upper-middle class) participants (usage at 92%), while younger speakers disfavor the use of the Present Perfect (13%). Kubarth offers three main findings for Buenos Aires Spanish: (a) all finished actions in the past are expressed through the Preterit; (b) the use of the Present Perfect is limited to refer to actions that continue up to the present (i.e. continuative uses), as well as when the finished action bears no relation with the present moment. These uses, which Kubarth classifies as *usos al azar* ‘random uses’ are, he contends, innovative uses in Argentinian Spanish; (c) older speakers significantly use the Present Perfect more readily, which indicates that this form may well be on its way to eventual extinction (1992a: 565). Donni de Mirande (1980) also explains that the Argentinian Present Perfect generally follows the “American norm” – that is, it is used to express situations that extend into speech time.

A more recent study on the expression of anteriority as an essentially temporal-aspectual component was conducted by Burgos (2004). Burgos looks at Standard German, British English, and Argentinian Spanish and analyzes the various forms used to encode the function of anteriority or, as he puts it, E-S, R (Event-Situation, Reference) meaning (following Reichenbach 1948). He draws on three main corpora, each containing written and spoken data:

- the British National Corpus (BNC);
- the German Cosmas I Korpus (approximately 5.7 million words);
- newspaper articles sourced from the daily internet publication of *La Nación* (an Argentine daily) and historical documents from Fontanella de Weinberg (1993);
- 60 interviews by Argentinian reporters with politicians comprising about 100,000 words.
Burgos notes that in Argentinian Spanish “the Perfect is rare” and thus “other verbal forms make up for this absence” (2004: 6). He concludes that the Present Perfect is disfavored both in written and spoken language “which confirms that this construction is falling into disuse” (2004: 103). Burgos also claims that “verbs inflected for the Present or the Past in a current-relevance context, or in combination with adverbials (…), fulfill the function of the Spanish Perfect” (2004: 104). The most interesting idea advanced by Burgos is the proposal that past or present tense forms (such as the Preterit or the Present Simple in Spanish) can express anteriority by collocating with TAs which possess an inherent E-S, R (Event-Situation, Reference) nuance. This tense + TA combination is, he suggests, commonly found in German and Spanish, although English is more restricted in this respect (2004: 104). I argue in chapters 5 and 7 that Burgos’ proposal is consistent with my own observations for ARPS.

Overall, the general consensus among scholars thus far is that Argentinian Spanish is comparable to Mexican Spanish, with the Present Perfect appearing for the most part in resultative and continuative contexts (Howe 2006: 76). However, I show in chapters 5 and 6 that the ARPS Present Perfect is distinct from the Mexican Spanish Present Perfect and that the ‘random’ usage suggested by Kubarth is actually patterned and predictable – in line with the principle of orderly heterogeneity so vital in variationist sociolinguistics (Tagliamonte 2006: 6).45

As far as the diachronic development of the Preterit and the Present Perfect is concerned, according to Martorell de Laconi (2000) both the Preterit and the Present Perfect evolucionan en forma diferente en la Península y en Hispanoamérica ‘evolve differently in the Spanish Peninsula and in Hispanic America’. She proposes that in Latin America these forms se confunden o bien se pierde la forma compuesta (Buenos Aires y litoral argentino, México) ‘are confused or the compound form is lost (Buenos Aires, Argentinian coastal areas, and Mexico)’. In addition, Penny (1991) describes the state of Peninsular and Latin American Spanish synchronically by claiming that “many speakers of American Spanish use canté not only as a past perfective (= ‘preterit’), but also as a present perfective (i.e. as a ‘perfect’, in preference to he cantado)”. Penny explains that “such varieties of Spanish therefore maintain, in canté, the dual function of its ancestor CANTAVI” (1991: 144).

45 Recall that the principle of orderly heterogeneity disregards free variation as the reason for non-categorical realizations in language, and supports the position that sociolinguistic variation, although non-categorical, shows certain significant statistical regularities and is thus quantifiable (cf. Tagliamonte 2006: 5–6).
A recent illustration of Preterit and Present Perfect usage throughout time is offered by Burgos (2004: 4), who provides a diachronic analysis based on written texts. His analysis rests on corpora collected and transcribed by Fontanella de Weinberg (1993) (for the 16th–18th centuries) and the Martín Fierro (as representative of the late 19th century). Howe (2006: 85) summarizes these findings in a table, the essence of which I reproduce in Table 3.2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Century</th>
<th>Present Perfect</th>
<th>Preterit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15th (La Celestina)</td>
<td>26.6% (N=34)</td>
<td>74.4% (N=99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th–19th</td>
<td>64.5% (N=149)</td>
<td>35.5% (N=82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20th (Kubarth 1992a)</td>
<td>13% (N=232)</td>
<td>87% (N=1602)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$X^2=364.278; p<0.01$

Table 3.2 Relative frequencies of Preterit and Present Perfect usage in pre- and post-colonial Argentina
(Adapted from Howe 2006: 85)

Howe (2006) describes the sharp increase in Present Perfect usage in the period between the 16th and the 19th centuries as enigmatic. However, the mysterious character of these usage frequencies is likely to be due to two main problematic issues. First, while La Celestina is a canon of Peninsular literature, the documents compiled in Fontanella de Weinberg (1993) are for the most part letters composed by criollos living in newly settled Argentina (cf. Rodríguez Louro 2006). As mentioned in chapter 1, Argentinian Spanish became standarized in the 19th century (Fontanella de Weinberg 1992: 425–426). Therefore, comparing the 16th–18th centuries against 19th century usage trends seems highly suspect. As I argue in chapter 6, data prior to the 19th century are not representative of Argentinian Spanish but rather reflect the writing of Spanish officials living in the colony at the time. Secondly, Kubarth’s (1992a; 1992b) corpora consist of oral interviews, rather than written texts. Thus, the degree to which these corpora can be compared remains questionable, especially in the light of suggestions that the Present Perfect is pervasive in formal styles (e.g. De Kock 1989: 489; Berman & Slobin 1994: 250, 283; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413) and that language use fluctuates across different genres (Travis 2007: 103, 131).

46The Martín Fierro – published in 1872 – is an epic poem by Argentine author José Hernández. The poem partly originated in opposition to the Europeanizing and modernizing tendencies of Argentinian president Domingo F. Sarmiento. It is widely seen as the prototype of “gauchesque” literature (dealing with gauchos, rural dwellers who greatly contributed to Argentinian independence) and is a hallmark of Argentinian national identity.

47 The 16th–18th century data are from Fontanella de Weinberg (1993), while the 19th century data stem from the Martín Fierro.
The two issues discussed above indicate that studies on language change must be carried out in concert with sociolinguistic methods for analyzing language variation. These methods must take into account both genre and social variables. In fact, I show in chapters 5 and 6 that genre plays a crucial role not only in the linguistic analysis offered but also – and most crucially – in speakers’ own usage.

Returning to our previous discussion, the review presented in this section can be summarized as follows. In Argentinian Spanish:

(i) The Preterit statistically prevails over the Present Perfect (e.g. Kubarth 1992a; 1992b; Martorell de Laconi 2000; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000; Howe 2006);

(ii) The Present Perfect refers to actions that continue up to the present (i.e. continuative uses), as well as when the finished action bears no relation with the present moment (Kubarth 1992a);

(iii) Older and highly educated speakers use the Present Perfect more frequently (Kubarth 1992a);

(iv) The prevalence of the Preterit does not seem to be conditioned by the medium (oral or written) involved (Burgos 2004) – which opposes the claim that, in Latin America, the Present Perfect occurs more frequently in the written (and formal) media (De Kock 1989; Berman & Slobin 1994; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000);

(v) The restricted use of the Present Perfect is linguistically resolved by using other tenses (Preterit, simple Present, etc.) in combination with TAs such as recién ‘just’, últimamente ‘lately’, etc. (Burgos 2004);

(vi) The decrease in the use of the Present Perfect in Argentinian Spanish appears to be a 20th century phenomenon, since earlier data show a marked preference for the Present Perfect (see Table 3.2 above) (Burgos 2004);

(vii) The Present Perfect is used in the 16th–19th centuries to fulfill all canonical Present Perfect functions (i.e. resultative, continuative, current relevance, experiential, and hot news) (Burgos 2004: 272).

It should be mentioned that, as pointed out by Howe (2006: 76), studies on the use of the Preterit and the Present Perfect in Argentinian Spanish lack both descriptive
and theoretical scrutiny. In addition, most of the data utilized are either out-of-date or lacking in spontaneous, casual interaction. In this thesis I address these weaknesses by looking at, on the one hand, contemporary data stemming from casual conversation, participant observation, sociolinguistic interviews and written questionnaires; and, on the other, analyzing media publications across different times (including 19th, 20th, and 21st century publications). The section that follows summarizes the main findings regarding Preterit and Present Perfect usage across Spanish varieties, as outlined thus far.

### 3.2.6 Summary of Preterit and Present Perfect usage across Spanish varieties

Before turning to a summary of the positions reviewed above, let me illustrate some of the observed trends with overall usage frequencies for the Present Perfect across seven Spanish dialects. The figures are based on De Oliveira’s (2007) study of the Preterit and the Present Perfect in online newspapers across Peninsular (PEN), Peruvian (PER), Mexican (MEX), Cuban (CUB), Chilean (CHI), Bolivian (BOL), and Argentinian (ARG) Spanish. Figure 3.5 displays the usage noted by De Oliveira (2007: 62).

![Figure 3.5 Overall usage frequency of the Present Perfect in seven Spanish varieties, based on De Oliveira (2007: 62)](image)

Note that De Oliveira’s data fully support the earlier contention that the Present Perfect is used less frequently in Latin America than in Spain. Moreover, as compared to the rest of the Spanish-speaking varieties, Argentinian newspapers utilize this form
the least. It remains to be seen what the uses of the ARPS Present Perfect are outside the context of (online) newspaper publications.

Table 3.3 outlines the principal findings for each of the national varieties discussed in §3.2 above. I refer to the different dialects using the name of the national variety (e.g. Mexican Spanish), although I acknowledge that various differing uses of the Preterit and the Present Perfect are likely to coexist within each country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Preterit</th>
<th>Present Perfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peninsular Spanish</td>
<td>Past perfective uses</td>
<td>All perfect functions; hodiernal uses (e.g. Schwenter 1994a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peruvian Spanish</td>
<td>Past perfective uses</td>
<td>Perfect functions (Jara Yupanqui 2006) and some past perfective uses encoding spatial/locative/source/discourse relevance and evidentiality (e.g. Escobar 1997; Howe 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvadoran Spanish</td>
<td>Past perfective uses</td>
<td>All perfect functions and past perfective uses (in narrative sequence) (e.g. Hernández 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican Spanish</td>
<td>Past perfective uses; recent past uses</td>
<td>Continuative uses (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972) and in unspecified contexts (Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentinian Spanish (River Plate variety)</td>
<td>Past perfective uses; encodes recency of situation in combination with TAs (e.g. Burgos 2004)</td>
<td>Highly restricted to some resultative and continuative uses Favored by older speakers (e.g. Kubarth 1992a), and in formal styles (Squartini &amp; Bertinetto 2000: 413)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3 Summary of Preterit and Present Perfect research findings across Spanish varieties

I later assess the robustness of the claims advanced for Argentinian Spanish in the light of my empirical findings and offer a revised version of Table 3.3 in chapter 7 (§7.4.2).

3.3 Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have introduced some of the basic tenets of grammaticalization theory. I have looked at the diachronic development of resultative constructions and their eventual evolution into fully-fledged present perfects in Romance. I have also reviewed relevant literature on Preterit and Present Perfect usage in Peninsular, Peruvian, Salvadoran, Mexican, and Argentinian Spanish. The general claim has been that, while (some varieties of) Peninsular Spanish are currently undergoing anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization (such that the Present Perfect
may be used to refer to hodiernal and past situations), most Latin American varieties (especially Mexican and Argentinian Spanish) display a widespread preference for the Preterit. Further, in these Latin American varieties the Present Perfect is described as being aspectually contrived to perform various highly specific functions, such as encoding continuity – a claim I challenge in the ensuing chapters.

I have also outlined the various claims advanced with respect to the use of the Preterit and the Present Perfect in Argentinian Spanish, and have noted that a clear statement of which constraints apply to ARPS, and which particular functions the Present Perfect is restricted to, remains to be offered. In this thesis, I set out to empirically establish the functions and linguistic conditioning of the Preterit and the Present Perfect through quantitative and qualitative analyses of a spoken and written data set representative of contemporary and earlier usage. The specifics of the methodology, data, coding decisions, and hypotheses posed are presented in chapter 4.
CHAPTER 4

Research design

In this chapter I describe the research design used in the present study, focusing on the research questions posed, the data analyzed, and the hypotheses tested. As mentioned earlier, one of the major strengths of this thesis is the use of a varied data set including both oral and written corpora, across historical time. A second important contribution is the empirical testing of a variety of linguistic and sociolinguistic hypotheses derived from the literature and enabled through quantitative and qualitative analyses of the different data.

In §4.1 through §4.3 I describe the rationale, research questions, and methods used in the work proposed here. In §4.4 I present the various contemporary and earlier data employed, with reference to the casual conversation, participant observation, sociolinguistic interview, questionnaire, and newspaper corpora. In §4.5 I introduce the basics of multivariate analysis. I then describe data coding and pose the hypotheses to be tested in §4.6 (for the internal independent variables), and §4.7 (for the external independent variables). I conclude the chapter in §4.8, where I lay out the three main questions to be empirically tested in chapters 5 and 6.

4.1 Rationale

This thesis rests on the assumption that only rarely does form encode a particular function neatly and straightforwardly. I concur with Bull (1963: 1) that linguistic knowledge cannot be increased by only isolating and describing the physical features of the categories under study; but rather, by providing a radically different description of the function of these forms in the system of communication. Three research design issues are worth considering: form and function, frequency of use, and comparability of data across media and historical time.

First, as stated in §2.3.2, the present perfect has been described in the literature as performing a variety of functions, including result, continuity, current relevance, experience, and hot news. However, the seemingly flawless one-to-one correspondence between form and function assumed in such typology does not
necessarily hold true in actual usage. As Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 7) put it “there is no one-to-one isomorphism between (...) meaning (...) and form”. For example, in many language varieties perfect functions may be carried out by forms other than the present perfect. As I show in chapter 6, hot news contexts call for the Preterit in ARPS such that Ganó Argentina ‘Argentina won’ is the default reporting style for novel and recent news in contemporary written media (rather than the Present Perfect Ha ganado Argentina ‘Argentina has won’). Conversely, a certain form may express more than the proposed prototypical functions. In this thesis I show that the ARPS Preterit expresses both canonical perfective and perfect functions.

Second, most research on the use of the preterit and the present perfect in Romance and Hispanic varieties deals with general frequencies (e.g. De Kock 1989; Kubarth 1992a; Schwenter 1994a; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000; Burgos 2004; Hernández 2006; Howe 2006). While overall frequency may help understand general usage patterns, it is doubtful whether these provide insights into the impact of different constraints on the realization of a specific variable (cf. Tagliamonte 2002: 736–737). Instead, the research reported here adopts a variationist approach to the study of linguistic choices and thus assumes that a certain function may be realized through different linguistic forms (Poplack & Tagliamonte 2001: 7). The data analysis approach taken in this thesis is along the lines of Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008). Because of the low usage frequency of the Present Perfect in ARPS, the multivariate analyses offered are primarily exploratory and further supported by distributional and qualitative analyses of the different data.

Finally, in this thesis I analyze two sets of corpora including both contemporary and earlier data. Contemporary data consist of casual conversation, participant observation, sociolinguistic interviews (as per Labov 1972b; 2001b), questionnaires, and newspaper articles. Earlier data, on the other hand, encompass official government documents and newspaper and magazine articles. I acknowledge the lack of oral historical data to be a challenge in this research, since contemporary oral speech and speaker intuition (as expressed in the questionnaire) are qualitatively distinct from media-based historical data. This is especially relevant in the light of recent research which has noted the crucial effect of genre in language use patterns (Travis 2007: 103, 131). In order to reflect these important differences, I structure my analysis to account for Preterit and Present Perfect usage across media and historical time.
4.2 Research questions

In this thesis I address the following research questions:

I. What are the uses and functions of the Preterit and the Present Perfect in contemporary ARPS? Which internal and external variables constrain usage of these forms?
   i. More specifically, does the Present Perfect encode any of the prototypical perfect functions of result, continuity, current relevance, experience and hot news in present-day ARPS?
   ii. How do the Preterit and the Present Perfect interact in actual usage? What, if any, are the main areas of semantic overlap?
   iii. Is the anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization path attested for other varieties of Spanish present in ARPS?
   iv. What is the role of temporal adverbials (TAs) in encoding perfectivity and anteriority?

II. What were the uses and functions of the Preterit and the Present Perfect in earlier ARPS?

III. Do the sociolinguistic variables of style, gender, age, and educational background influence Preterit and Present Perfect usage in contemporary ARPS?

4.3 Methods

In order to address the research questions posed above, I make use of data collected exclusively for the purposes of this research. The data involve a variety of oral and written genres and include casual conversation, participant observation, sociolinguistic interviews, questionnaires, and written (newspaper and magazine) corpora. Data are seen to represent various degrees of naturalness. I use the term naturalness to refer to the likelihood of occurrence of the data in everyday life. In this respect, casual conversation, participant observation, and the sociolinguistic interview both involve oral interaction and allow for differing types of access to the speakers’ vernacular (à la Labov). The newspapers involve planned and edited language, while the oral nature of the sociolinguistic interview does not allow for planning to the same extent. Moreover, the newspaper data is deemed more naturally occurring than the questionnaire data, since newspapers represent real-life instances of language in use,
rather than research instruments designed purely for experimental purposes. As mentioned in chapter 3, analyzing a variety of data remains crucial since genre has been shown to influence language usage and change (Biber 2001; Travis 2007).

The notion of *naturalness* relates to formality levels as well as to previous observations that formal styles favor Present Perfect usage in Latin American varieties (De Kock 1989; Kubarth 1992a; Berman & Slobin 1994; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000). In this respect, the present research adopts an innovative methodology to account for style differences by analyzing data of differing genres and factoring in stylistic differentiation in the questionnaire itself. The questionnaire was designed for the purposes of this research and used with one hundred speakers of ARPS. The aim was to obtain information about speakers’ knowledge of language and thus gain some access to areas that may well not be represented in the more naturally-occurring language corpora. (I shall say more about the questionnaire in §4.4.2). As Howe (2006: 17) points out, the apparent absence of a form in a specific corpus “does not equate to absence in the internal grammar of the native speaker”. In chapters 5 and 7 I argue that, in sociolinguistic research, questionnaires may actually fail to provide insights into intra-speaker grammatical competence, but are crucial in revealing the sort of linguistic usage speakers deem more *correct* in contexts where monitoring of linguistic production is high.

### 4.4 Data

Cross-linguistic research on preterit and present perfect usage can be categorized as belonging to separate groups with respect to the types of data considered. The majority of the research remains mostly theoretical (e.g. Comrie 1976; Harris 1982; Fleischman 1983), with other studies based on empirical observations drawn from: a pool of pre-existing corpora (e.g. Schwenter & Torres Cacoulls 2008), written literature (e.g. Company 2002), or a combination of corpora, literature, and media such as newspapers and TV programs (e.g. Burgos 2004). While some of these studies include naturally-occurring data collected exclusively for the purposes of the research (e.g. Schwenter 1994a; Escobar 1997; Howe 2006), to my knowledge, none of the reviewed literature has accounted for uses of these forms as they occur in a variety of different settings, including casual conversation, participant observation, and sociolinguistic interviews. Table 4.1 outlines the types of data used in this study, together with word counts for each type.
The contemporary data encompass oral and written material collected between 2005 and 2008 in Buenos Aires and the surrounding areas. A total of 223 speakers participated in the various data collection procedures. The age range of participants was 17 to 80. Participants were randomly selected from middle-class areas in Buenos Aires and Mar del Plata (a coastal city on the Atlantic, south of Buenos Aires). Sometimes the “friend of a friend” (Milroy 1980: 47) technique was used to gain access to speakers who would not be total strangers to the interviewer or to the person providing them with the recording equipment. This proved crucial in reducing the Observer’s Paradox (Labov 1972b: 61). Participants received no compensation; participation remained voluntary at all times. All oral data were recorded using both

Table 4.1 Corpora of Argentinian River Plate Spanish used in this thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of data</th>
<th>Earlier data</th>
<th>Contemporary data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19th century</td>
<td>20th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual conversation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociolinguistic interview</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>30,775 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant observation</td>
<td>1,000 words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1,800 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper and magazine articles</td>
<td>30,340 words</td>
<td>57,594 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical documents</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1,800 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30,340 words</td>
<td>59,394 words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All data used in the current study were collected in Argentina between 2006 and 2008. Most of the oral data were gathered during two fieldwork trips to Buenos Aires in January–February 2007 and August–September 2008. Three research proxies in Argentina further collaborated in securing contacts for participation in the questionnaire in 2006 and in the recording of casual conversation throughout 2007 and in 2008. The entirety of the historical and newspaper data used in this study were also gathered during my first fieldwork trip to Argentina. These were obtained at the Biblioteca Nacional ‘National Library’, the Academia Argentina de Letras ‘Argentinian Academy of Letters’, the Archivo General de la Nación ‘General National Archives’, and Biblioteca del Congreso ‘Library of Congress’ where they were made available to photocopy on site.

4.4.1 The oral data

The contemporary data encompass oral and written material collected between 2005 and 2008 in Buenos Aires and the surrounding areas. A total of 223 speakers participated in the various data collection procedures. The age range of participants was 17 to 80. Participants were randomly selected from middle-class areas in Buenos Aires and Mar del Plata (a coastal city on the Atlantic, south of Buenos Aires). Sometimes the “friend of a friend” (Milroy 1980: 47) technique was used to gain access to speakers who would not be total strangers to the interviewer or to the person providing them with the recording equipment. This proved crucial in reducing the Observer’s Paradox (Labov 1972b: 61). Participants received no compensation; participation remained voluntary at all times. All oral data were recorded using both

1 The research received ethics clearance by The University of Melbourne Human Ethics Committee (ID: 0607418).
2 The observer’s paradox involves the sociolinguist’s goal of observing “the way people use language when they are not being observed” (Labov 1972b: 61).
an Olympus Digital Voice Recorder (W–10) and a Panasonic Tape Recorder and the recorded conversations and sociolinguistic interviews were fully transcribed. Table 4.2 outlines the socio-demographic distribution of the participants by gender, age, and educational background.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Younger (17–35)</td>
<td>Old (36–77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual conversation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observational data</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociolinguistic interview</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL N</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Participant demographics for the oral and questionnaire data

Participants had initially been subdivided into three age groups (younger 17–35; middle aged 36–55; older 56–80) but these were later collapsed into two main groups, as described in §4.7.2 below. I now turn to the specifics of each of the data collection techniques.

The main aim of recording *casual conversation* was to obtain, as much as possible, a pool of data stemming from spontaneous interaction. A total of 30 speakers (13 men and 17 women) were recorded while conversing. From these, 26 speakers were recorded interacting in pairs and 4 speakers held conversations in groups of 3 to 5 participants. The age range of these speakers was 22 to 68. Regarding educational background, 9 speakers have a secondary education and 21 speakers have a post-secondary education. A total of 10 hours, 44 minutes and 76 seconds were recorded. The speakers were provided with a digital voice recorder and a tape recorder and were instructed to record their interaction for 10 to 20 minutes. Conversation topics were not pre-determined; participants’ interaction remained spontaneous at all times. The average length of conversations was 14 minutes and 23 seconds, and the length of participant interaction mostly depended on the level of comfort among the speakers in terms of the topic being discussed, time available in their daily routine, familiarity with one another, etc. A minority of the speakers (N=2) showed some concern about being recorded at the outset of the interaction, with most participants disregarding the tape recorder after the first few minutes. The fact that the research proxies involved in setting up the tape recording equipment were close to the participants further helped in establishing a comfortable context for speakers to converse.
In addition to the recorded conversations, I collected Preterit and Present Perfect tokens as participant observation notes during my second fieldwork trip to Argentina in August–September 2008. The technique used here is in line with Dayton’s (1996) collection of participant observation data in a Black West Philadelphia community. This was done primarily to register further Present Perfect tokens in several different interactional contexts representing a variety of perfect functions (see Macaulay 2002: 288 on participant observation). Both men and women were involved. Age of speakers ranged from 20 to 80. A total of 126 tokens (31 Preterit and 95 Present Perfect tokens) were recorded for analysis. These tokens were extracted from casual conversation amongst family and friends, from interactions close to the researcher and from TV programs, such as soccer games, prime time dance shows, soap operas, and informal interviews. The protocols used in taking down the observational data were as follows: relevant Preterit and Present Perfect tokens were written down together with accompanying linguistic material such as TAs, direct objects, grammatical subjects and the like. Speaker’s age, gender and educational background were also noted down. Age and educational background were mostly known to the researcher as the observed conversations were among family and friends. To exemplify, in conversation among three female friends a speaker expresses her belief that some women feel guilty if they stay at home instead of going out to work. She then adds *Yo lo he escuchado de más de una* ‘I have heard it from more than one [woman]’ (FW08F03). The Present Perfect token *lo he escuchado* ‘I have heard it’ was noted down as *Yo lo he escuchado de más de una* together with the topic discussed (i.e. women’s feelings of guilt arising from not being employed) and the speaker’s age, gender, and educational background.

To control for noting bias, I cross-checked the observational data against the digitally recorded oral data (including the casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview). Table 4.3 below shows a comparison of these two corpora in terms of temporal adverbial, grammatical person, Aktionsart, and Present Perfect function. The cross-check suggests that the digitally recorded data are commensurate with the observational data (note that none of these differences reach significance at the .01 level in chi-square tests). The specifics of these independent variables are introduced

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3 I take the term *token* to indicate “an instance of a linguistic variable, an example” (Tagliamonte 2006: 266).
4 Dayton (1996) recorded 490 uses of stressed *been* in writing, with the contextual details of the situation involved.
5 Note, however, that age, gender, and educational background remain unimportant here as these corpora are not submitted to multivariate analysis (see chapter 5).
in §4.6. Here I note the overall usage percentage of the Present Perfect in the casual conversation data and sociolinguistic interview corpora (recording) and participant observation notes (notes).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Recording</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% N</td>
<td>% N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temporal adverbial</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>67 45</td>
<td>78 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>33 22</td>
<td>22 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>X^2=2.32; p=.128</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammatical person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>51 34</td>
<td>50.5 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second and third</td>
<td>49 33</td>
<td>49.5 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>X^2=0.760; p=.97</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Present Perfect function</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result</td>
<td>30 20</td>
<td>27 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity</td>
<td>15 10</td>
<td>7 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current relevance</td>
<td>6 4</td>
<td>4 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential</td>
<td>48 32</td>
<td>60 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot news</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past perfectivity</td>
<td>1 1</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 Comparison of Present Perfect usage in the digitally recorded and observational data

Note that the two corpora are similar in terms of the three independent variables considered at this point. In chapter 5 I enlarge the oral corpora by adding these participant observation notes to it, thus creating an extended oral data file.

The aim of the sociolinguistic interview (loosely in the sense of Labov 1972b) was to collect data containing both vernacular (i.e. naturalistic) and more formal instances of language use. A second relevant aim was to obtain information about language use and attitudes to language use in Argentina. Thirty-eight speakers (19 men and 19 women) were interviewed. The age range of these participants was 23 to 77. Regarding educational background, 13 speakers have a secondary education and 25 speakers completed post-secondary education. A total of 8 hours and 38 minutes were recorded. Average length was 18 minutes 24 seconds. The interview consisted of two sections (see Appendix A). In the first section, participants were encouraged to talk about their family, place of residence, and educational background and were then asked to re-tell any personal experience living overseas or with foreigners visiting Argentina. The overseas-related experience question had both a social and a linguistic aim: namely (a) to provide speakers with a familiar topic

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6 I use the expressions independent variable and factor group interchangeably throughout the thesis (Tagliamonte 2006: 264).

7 I offer some examples from the attitudinal data in chapters 5 and 7.
involving personal experience so as to facilitate interaction; and (b) to test verb usage against the aforementioned experiential function of the present perfect. In addition, the participants interviewed in January 2007 were asked about Christmas and New Year celebrations (relatively current at the time of the interview). Some participants (N=22) were also asked to describe their day on the day of the interview (in line with Schwenter 1994a; Howe 2006). The second section of the interview asked opinion-based questions on language usage in Argentina. To control for possible priming effects (cf. Szmrecsanyi 2006), all interviewer questions were carefully phrased not to include any Preterit or Present Perfect forms. Following Labov (2001a: 90) and Tagliamonte (2006: 39) this section on language was placed at the end of the interview after the participant “has exhausted all the more personal topics”. In order to control for “interviewer effects” (Bailey & Tillery 2004: 13), 9 participants were interviewed by an older research assistant (61 years old) in February–March 2008.8

In addition to the sociolinguistic interview described above, while in Barcelona in March 2008, I conducted four informal short interviews with three Peninsular Spanish speakers (two from Barcelona and one from Bilbao) and one ARPS speaker who had lived in Barcelona for about 3 years at the time (age range was 18 to 28). These participants were asked to re-tell their day on the day of the recording. The purpose of these interviews was to find out how Peninsular Spanish and ARPS may differ with respect to verb usage in hodiernal (i.e. today) narratives. All interviews were fully transcribed and instances of Preterit and Present Perfect usage extracted for further analysis.

4.4.2 The questionnaire data

The main aim of the questionnaire was to tap into speakers’ unconscious linguistic knowledge and thus account for certain areas of linguistic behavior that may not be evident in the casual conversation and the sociolinguistic interview (Schütze 1996: 212). A second important aim was to investigate the influence of linguistic and sociolinguistic variables (such as presence of TAs, Present Perfect function, style, gender, age, and educational background) in ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect usage. As shown in Table 4.2, fifty men and fifty women were recruited for this study. The

8 As it turned out, the presence of an older interviewer did not affect participants’ use of the Present Perfect to any significant extent.
The age range of these participants was 17–59. Two educational backgrounds, secondary (N=33) and post-secondary (N=67), were represented.

The questionnaire was inspired in Dahl’s (1985) “Perfect Questionnaire” although the instrument used in this study did not involve any translation.9 Rather, my questionnaire consisted of 30 randomized items (including 6 distractors) which participants were required to complete using a form of the verb given in parentheses (see Appendix B).10 Crucially, instructions specified that each blank could potentially be filled in with more than one word, and no indication as to which verb form (i.e. Preterit, Present Perfect, simple Present, etc.) should be used was provided at any time. Each item consisted of an introductory utterance by Speaker A (aimed at setting the context) and was immediately followed by B’s contribution, which systematically contained the blank to be completed. Utterances by Speaker A featured neither Preterit nor Present Perfect forms, to control for priming effects (as per Szmrecsanyi 2006). The first questionnaire item (accompanied by a translation into English) appears in example (1).

(1) A: ¿Querés que te preste el Código Da Vinci para leer?
B: No, gracias ya lo (leer).
‘Would you like to borrow my copy of The Da Vinci Code? No, thanks I already (read) it.’

The expected response for all target items (on the basis of canonical use) was either a Preterit (leí) or Present Perfect form (he leído), although verbs in the simple Present and complex verb clusters of the type acabar de ‘to finish doing’ were also sometimes provided. The influence of TAs was tested by creating an equal number of items accompanied by TAs such as todo el día ‘all day long’, el año pasado ‘last year’, ya ‘already’, recién ‘just’, etc. and items without any adverbial complementation, as shown in examples (2) and (3). TAs have been underscored for illustration purposes.

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9 Dahl’s (1985) “Perfect Questionnaire” presented participants (who were for the most part professional linguists) with a sentence in English which they were to translate into their native language.

10 A similar instrument (a “sentence judgment task”) was utilized by Howe (2006). His instrument consisted of two parts. In the first part, participants were asked to select from a set of two choices (including the same finite verb phrase provided in the Preterit and Present Perfect form). The second part consisted of two dialogs where participants were expected to conjugate a verb in the infinitive using an appropriate tense.
(2) A: ¿Qué le pasa a Mariana?
B: Está muy triste. (Estar) sentada ahí todo el día, sin decir nada.
‘What’s up with Mariana?
She’s very sad. She (be) sitting there all day, without saying a word.’

(3) A: Las repúblicas de Chile y Argentina tienen tanto en común...
B: Sí, ambas (sufrir) muerte y tristeza con sus dictaduras militares.
‘The Republics of Chile and Argentina have so much in common…
Yes, both (suffer) death and sadness with their military dictatorships.’

An important innovative feature of my questionnaire is the inclusion of both formal and informal target items. In order to assess the role of style-shifting, the target items in the questionnaire were designed to represent 12 formal and 12 informal situations. Grammatical, lexical, and pragmatic means were used to create differing degrees of formality (cf. Labov 1978: 8; Clark 2003: 7–8; Coulmas 2005: 100–102). Table 4.4 exemplifies some of these means.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal language</th>
<th>Formal language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>2SG subject/object pronouns vos ‘you’ and te ‘to you’ and associated verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forms of address</td>
<td>Use of first names such as Mariana and direct reference to speaker as ‘you’ (i.e. without title/address term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical items</td>
<td>Use of every-day lexical items such as muerto ‘dead’ morir ‘to die’ las dos ‘the two of them’ querer/gustar ‘to want/to like’ para ‘for’ pasar ‘to happen’ preocupada ‘worried’ todo el día ‘all day long’ mal ‘wrong’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politeness formulas</td>
<td>Use of direct language in making (and responding to) requests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 Linguistic means used to construct formality in the questionnaire

Formality was cross-checked with 25 native speakers of ARPS prior to using the questionnaire. These speakers were asked to rate the formality level of the situations presented in the dialogs to be later included in the instrument. They were also encouraged to provide suggestions. Following their suggestions, problematic
situations were removed and replaced with more clearly formal or informal ones. The final version of the questionnaire presented participants with a total of 24 target items. The propositional content of the 24 exchanges (in terms of presence of TAs, perfect function, verb predication, etc.) was kept constant, although 12 items were manipulated to increase formality. These protocols resulted in 12 formal and 12 informal items. In addition, each variable (both linguistic and sociolinguistic) was tested against the prototypical perfect uses (i.e. resultative, continuative, current relevance, experiential, and past perfective functions). All of the items were designed in line with prototypical and innovative examples found in the literature (e.g. Comrie 1976; Schwenter 1994a) and actual usage as seen in a small email corpora collected in 2003 (with minor changes to protect speakers’ identities). Table 4.5 shows how the different tokens included in the questionnaire were classified according to these perfect functions.

11 The 2003 email corpora consist of informal narratives including 68 e-mails by sixteen female speakers of ARPS (14,626 words). The participants were aged 20–40 and 50–70 (cf. Rodríguez Louro 2006).
Table 4.5 Present Perfect tokens by perfect function in the questionnaire

**4.4.3 The written data**

Contemporary written data were analyzed with two main objectives in mind. The first aim was to obtain samples of Preterit and Present Perfect usage from a medium involving less naturally occurring language than, for instance, oral production in casual conversation or the sociolinguistic interview since, as mentioned in chapter 3, the Latin American Present Perfect has been found to be more frequent in formal styles (e.g. Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413). This claim motivates an analysis of formal language as used in widely accessible media. The second aim was
to compare contemporary newspaper corpora against earlier written media so as to study the evolution of the ARPS Present Perfect across historical time within the same genre (see chapter 6).

The written data were originally divided into contemporary (21st century) and earlier data (19th and 20th century), although this division was later replaced by a classification into three different periods: Period I (1810–1898), Period II (1910–1970), and Period III (1982–2007). The new classification was empirically established based on Preterit and Present Perfect usage in the corpora analyzed (see §6.1). The original division into contemporary and earlier data is maintained in the following sections for illustration purposes.

The contemporary newspaper data were extracted from paper and online versions of Clarín and La Nación (two major Buenos Aires-based dailies), and from online versions of La Capital (a smaller daily based in Mar del Plata). These data comprise 48,604 words. The contemporary newspaper editions were randomly chosen, with arbitrary five-year intervals between editions. Further, most of the newspaper material selected included news reported on the second day of January of the (new) year in question, as it was expected that these would contain several references to recent past events (e.g. New Year celebrations in Argentina and around the world, the beginning of the summer holidays, road congestion in highways, etc.). Headlines in each selected issue were isolated and two or three articles expanding on these headlines randomly chosen.

Earlier data were used in this work so as to account for how Preterit and Present Perfect usage (and their associated functions) have evolved throughout time. Bybee et al. (1994: 3) suggest that “demonstrating that a given form or construction has a certain function does not constitute an explanation for the existence of one form or construction, it must also be shown how that form or construction came to have that function”. The earlier data used here stem from two main sources: newspapers and magazines, and a 1910 book preface. Newspapers and magazines (published between 1810 and 1997) were selected to represent editions covering historically representative events (e.g. the revolution of May 25th 1810, Independence Day on 9th July 1816, World War I, migration from Europe to Argentina, etc.). Data for the years 1810 to 1977 were randomly selected to represent publications issued approximately every ten years. From 1982 onwards, newspapers were collected to represent
publications produced every five years (e.g. 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, etc.). A list of all written data sources appears in Table 4.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of media publication</th>
<th>Type of media</th>
<th>Date of publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>La Gaceta de Buenos Aires (GZ)</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>June 1810; January 1815; July 1816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Mosquito (EM)</td>
<td>Satirical periodical</td>
<td>July 1863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Nacional (EN)</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>May 1852; August 1873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Censor (EC)</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>December 1885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caras y Caretas (CC)</td>
<td>Art magazine</td>
<td>October 1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefacio 13 (PR)</td>
<td>Book preface</td>
<td>May 1910</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 Written data sources by publication date

4.5 Multivariate analysis

The main aim of this research is to provide an in-depth analysis of Preterit and Present Perfect usage so as to account for both relative frequencies and independent variables or factors that constrain speakers’ choice of these forms. To this end, most of the data are analyzed with Golvarb X (Sankoff, Tagliamonte & Smith 2005), a tool for statistical modeling used in variationist sociolinguistic studies. Multivariate analysis available through this application appears as the most appropriate method to analyze naturalistic data that displays variance across a range of different contexts (Sankoff 1988). Within this statistical model, variable rules involve “probabilistic modeling and statistical treatment of discrete choices of their conditioning” (1988: 984). In other words, multivariate analysis allows for the systematic study of how a set of factor groups (or independent variables) constrain the behavior of a specific set of variants of the dependent variable (cf. Paolillo 2002: 23).

12 Newspaper data spanning 1810–1910 are stored on microfilm at the Buenos Aires Library of Congress and can be printed out on site upon payment of a small fee. Data from 1940 onwards are kept in carton boxes at the same venue and are manually retrieved by a single employee. These data can also be photocopied on site.

13 This is the preface to a compiled edition of La Gaceta de Buenos Aires, the first daily newspaper in newly independent Argentina.

14 Multivariate analysis (also known as Varbrul analysis) has become the preferred statistical program in sociolinguistic studies. Paolillo (2002: 16) explains that part of Varbrul’s popularity stems from its creation at a time when logistic regression was not available in statistical packages. Moreover, Varbrul allowed for recoding – which is central to repeated trials of different analyses. Other salient features of Varbrul include the easy-to-read factor weights (reported as proportion-like probabilities from 0 to 1), and the fact that it can be downloaded from the Internet at no cost.

15 The multivariate approach in sociolinguistics was first introduced in the form of a variable rule program by Rand and Sankoff (Rand & Sankoff 1990). It was motivated by the need to deal with language-internal constraints on variation, rather than to analyze external social factors (Labov 2001b).
Multivariate analysis views all the variables in unison and provides significance levels and patterns of variability for each category across different variables or factors (Tagliamonte 2000: 139). In the context of this research, Preterit and the Present Perfect tokens were analyzed against a set of factor groups so as to identify the degree to which these constrain variant occurrence. A factor group (or independent variable) is “some aspect of the context (either internal linguistic or external social) which affects whether or not a variant occurs” (Tagliamonte 2006: 104). This method is useful in the case of ARPS since the Present Perfect tends to display variance (and semantic overlap) with the Preterit. Specific information regarding number of tokens analyzed, excluded items, treatment of ambiguous tokens and the like is provided in chapter 5. Here I introduce the various independent variables or factor groups used in the research. I describe the linguistic-internal variables in §4.6 and deal with the linguistic-external variables in §4.7. The examples provided in the sections that follow stem from my contemporary and earlier corpora (sources appear in brackets).

4.6 Linguistic-internal variables

This research partly replicates the comprehensive analysis of the Present Perfect presented in Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008) in order to render results comparable across different Spanish varieties. I use most of the linguistic variables considered in their study and propose hypotheses along the lines of the ones offered for Mexican Spanish, since Argentinian Spanish has for the most part been claimed to behave like its Mexican counterpart – a claim I put to the test. My research also focuses on linguistic-external variables (e.g. perfect function, style) not included in their analysis. In line with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos, the internal variables used in this research encompass verb Aktionsart, temporal adverbial, object number, polarity, clause type, grammatical person, and presence of *ya* ‘already’. In addition to these, I offer a qualitative analysis of Present Perfect function and study the influence of style, age, gender, educational background, and historical time on the use

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16 For critical views on variationist methods and approaches see Coupland (2007: 7–8) and Singh (1996: 11-17). For differences between multivariate and other statistical analyses used in linguistic research see Paolillo (2002).

17 Temporal reference was ultimately not used in my analysis as most of the tokens in the so-called irrelevant temporal contexts (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 18) were found to interact with frequency TAs. Specifically, 76% of Present Perfect tokens in irrelevant temporal contexts in the contemporary oral data included frequency TAs. This may be due to the fact that the ARPS Present Perfect is almost negligible in yes-no interrogative contexts (which represented 11% of Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos’ irrelevant temporal reference data).
of the Preterit and the Present Perfect. These independent variables or factor groups are introduced in what follows.\textsuperscript{18}

4.6.1 Aktionsart

In line with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 14–15), all Preterit and Present Perfect tokens in the corpora were coded for Vendlerian lexical classes (Vendler 1967). As stated in chapter 2, Vendlerian categories involve telic predicates, including achievements and accomplishments and atelic predicates, encompassing activities and states. Furthermore, states are inherently stative, and achievements are non-durational and punctual. As already mentioned, Vendler’s classification is not always straightforward since noun number, adverbial presence, and morphological aspect play a crucial role in identifying predicate telicity as well. In Bertinetto and Delfitto’s words, there exist examples that are “lexically telic but contextually atelic” (Bertinetto & Delfitto 2000: 193). Where noun complements were available, these were considered in concert with the predicate in question so as to determine telicity. To illustrate the importance of noun complements in determining telicity, in the utterance \textit{dormí una siesta} (CC07MM18) ‘Then I took a nap (lit. I slept a nap)’ the predicate \textit{dormir} ‘to sleep’ was coded as an achievement (telic), but in ¿\textit{Dormiste}? (SLI07FK41) ‘Did you (2SG) sleep?’ the same predicate was coded as an activity (atelic). Further assistance in coding for Aktionsart was found in Vendler (1967: 107–108) and by following guidelines set out in Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008). Table 4.7 outlines some lexical verb types (excerpted from different data types) as coded in this research.

\textsuperscript{18} The analysis offered in Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008) aims at a characterization of the default in Peninsular and Mexican Spanish. Their main concern is with the various conditioning factors constraining the use of the Present Perfect. The hypotheses advanced in their study, and replicated in the present research, thus focus to a large extent on Present Perfect usage, although the Preterit is analyzed and presented in the examples as well.
Atelic predicates | Telic predicates
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**Activities**
- ayudar ‘to help’,
- cocinar ‘to cook’,
- hablar ‘to talk’,
- limpiar ‘to clean’,
- ordenar ‘to tidy up’,
- viajar ‘to travel’,
- visitar ‘to visit’,
- vivir ‘to live’

**States** (stative)
- encantar ‘to like a lot’,
- estar ‘to be’,
- disfrutar ‘to enjoy’,
- gustar ‘to like’,
- haber ‘to be/to exist’,
- ser ‘to be’,
- sufrir ‘to suffer’,
- tener ‘to have’

**Accomplishments**
- comprar un abrigo ‘to buy a coat’,
- crecer ‘to grow up’,
- decir algo ‘to say something’,
- hacer algo ‘to do something’,
- leer un libro ‘to read a book’

**Achievements** (punctual)
- cambiar ‘to change’,
- comenzar ‘to begin’,
- darse cuenta ‘to realize’,
- ganar ‘to win’,
- irse ‘to leave’,
- llegar ‘to arrive’,
- morir ‘to die’,
- nacer ‘to be born’,
- pasar ‘to happen’,
- salir ‘to leave/to be released’

Table 4.7 Sample verbs coded for the four Vendlerian categories

Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008) look at Aktionsart in order to identify whether the Peninsular Spanish Present Perfect displays fewer Aktionsart restrictions than its Mexican counterpart. They claim that, because the grammaticalization of the perfect typically requires that original resultative constructions extend to include more verb classes, Present Perfects undergoing anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization should display fewer Aktionsart restrictions. Likewise, it is here hypothesized that if the ARPS Present Perfect behaves like its Mexican counterpart (encoding durative and iterative situations including the speech time), we should find that bounded, non-durative predicates (i.e. achievements) should disfavor the Present Perfect (Iatridou et al. 2001: 191). These four Aktionsart categories were collapsed into two broader categories: telic (accomplishments and achievements) and atelic predicates (activities and states) in the multivariate analysis.19

### 4.6.2 Temporal adverbial

If, like Mexican Spanish, ARPS uses the Present Perfect to encode durative, repetitive and continutive situations, TAs that highlight duration, repetition and continuation should extensively collocate with the Present Perfect in this dialect. More specifically, proximate TAs such as ahora ‘now’, últimamente ‘lately’, etc. should trigger Present Perfect usage. Frequency TAs such as a veces ‘sometimes’, todos los años ‘every year’, siempre/toda la vida ‘always’, nunca ‘never’, jamás ‘ever’, tend to encode experience and continutive situations and so should also favor Present Perfect usage (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 15). By the same token, if

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19 Where theoretically viable, collapsing of categories across different factor groups was motivated by the low number of Present Perfect tokens in the corpora (see chapters 5 and 6).
the ARPS Present Perfect is used like its Mexican counterpart to encode continuity into speech time it should disfavor specific adverbial modification by, on the one hand, (pre-hesternal and hesternal) forms such as ayer ‘yesterday’ and, on the other, connective adverbials such as cuando ‘when’, después ‘afterward’, etc. (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 15–16). This is related to what has been explained in chapter 2, namely the fact that the so-called past-adverb constraint restricts temporal modification by specific adverbs in English (Comrie 1976: 54; Fleischman 1983: 197, among others). In line with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008), I coded for the following TAs.  

- Specific/TAs: ayer ‘yesterday’, el mes pasado ‘last month’, el 3 de marzo de 2004 ‘the 3rd of March 2004’, etc.
- ‘General’ TAs: el otro día ‘the other day’, la otra vez ‘the other time’, la vez pasada ‘the last time, un día ‘one day’, which offer less-than-specific information about the exact temporal location of the situation in question, but nevertheless provide an indication that the situation did indeed occur (perfectively) in the past.
- Connective TAs: primero ‘first’, antes ‘before’, después ‘after’, entonces ‘then’, cuando ‘when’, enseguida/apenas ‘as soon as’, ahí ‘at this point in time’ (lit. ‘there’)  
- Proximate TAs: ahora ‘now’, últimamente ‘lately’, esta mañana ‘this morning’, este año ‘this year’, recién ‘recently’, esta vez/vuelta ‘this time around’, etc.
- Ya ‘already’ – coded separately as it tends to co-occur with other TAs (see below).
- Other TAs: including the ‘miscellaneous’ aun and todavía ‘still/yet’, and durational adverbials such as por una semana ‘for/during one week’, un rato

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20 It should be noted that time reference is not solely encoded through TAs; different syntactic functions may express temporal meaning. For example, in Las reuniones del GRIC de ayer se llevaron a cabo en el salón real del hotel Costa Galana ‘Yesterday’s GRC meetings were held in the royal meeting room at the Costa Galana Hotel’ (BAN2005LC14) time reference is embedded in the subject of the sentence, rather than presented as a separate adverbial complement.

21 The category general TA was created for the purposes of this research.  

22 The originally locational adverb ahí ‘there’ is claimed to be grammaticalizing into a non-spatial form to encode non-situational and temporal meanings (Curnow & Travis 2008). My own data present numerous tokens of ahí used as a non-spatial form, hence my decision to include it in the connective TA category. I return to this issue in chapters 5 and 7.
‘(for) a while’, *durante 8 años* ‘for/during 8 years’, *mucho tiempo* ‘a long time’, *mientras* ‘meanwhile’

Examples (4a) through (4f) illustrate these TAs (which have been *underscored* for illustration purposes).

(4)  

a. Specific TA

*No es nuevo, me lo he comprado el año pasado con motivo de mi cumpleaños.* (QUST06FS90)

‘No, it’s not new; I (have) bought it last year on the occasion of my birthday.’

b. General TA

*Un día leí que había una expectativa re buena.* (CC08MM29)

‘One day I read that the expectation was super high.’

c. Connective TA

*La seguridad que después he tenido.* (SLI07FC37)

‘The sense of security that I have had afterwards.’

d. Proximate TA

¡*Lo que me he peleado con ese chabón este año!* (CC08MA28)

‘How I have fought with that guy this year!’

e. Frequency TA

*No he vivido en el exterior nunca.* (SLI07MJ51)

‘I have never lived overseas.’

f. Other TA

*No he ido todavía.* (SLI07FS39)

‘I still have not been [to the coast].’

Where no TA was used the token was coded as “no TA”, as shown in (5).
(5) Nosotros *hemos aportado* lo nuestro, como otros pueblos de América *Latina han aportado* lo suyo. (SLI07FM46)

‘We have supplied our own [language traits], just like other Latin American nations have supplied their own.’

Following Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 16), presence of the TA *ya* ‘already’ was coded separately due to its tendency to co-occur with other TAs, as in (6).

(6) *Tengo* [un hijo] *de 28 años que ya ha cumplido en diciembre*. (SLI07MQ55)

‘I have a son who has already turned 28 in December.’

Because of the low number of Present Perfect tokens in the ARPS data, these categories were later collapsed into three groups, encompassing proximate/frequency TA, no TA (*none*), and *other* TA (including the specific, general, connective, and other TA categories described above).

4.6.3 Object number

As mentioned above, a predicate’s aspectual value (i.e. its telicity) may be calculated by taking into account various other features included in the predication (Verkuyl 2004). For example, NP quantification helps determine whether a verb bears a [+telic] or [-telic] reading. In Mittwoch’s (2008: 326) words “quantified D(eterminer) P(hrase)s […] suggest plurality of events or at least the possibility of plurality”. According to Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 16–17) plural object complements usually co-occur with continuative (7a) and experiential (7b) readings of the Present Perfect, and should thus favor Present Perfect occurrence.

(7) a. *Un país que lamentablemente ha tenido* muchas crisis a través de los años. (SLI07MG52)

‘A country that, unfortunately, has had many crises throughout the years.’
b. *Yo me me he enamorado de tipos.* (CC07MS15)

‘I have fallen in love with guys.’

I thus hypothesize that plural objects should trigger continuative and experiential Present Perfect usage in ARPS.

4.6.4 Polarity

Negation has an *atelicizing* effect on telic predicates (Dowty 1979; Smith 1991; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000). Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 19) suggest that negation is expected to atelicize predicates, thus “yielding a continuative meaning”. Their hypothesis, also taken up here, is that the Present Perfect should co-occur more readily in negative polarity contexts as these tend to favor continuative readings. Example (8) shows the Present Perfect in a negative polarity context.

(8)  *Yo no he ido a la costa. No he ido todavía.* (SLI07FS39)

‘I haven’t been to the coast. (I) haven’t been yet.’

In this vein, the Mexican Present Perfect and, as suggested, its Argentinian equivalent should more readily favor Present Perfect usage in negative polarity contexts. This factor group was ultimately left out of the multivariate analysis due to the low overall frequency of the Present Perfect in negative polarity contexts in the corpora (at 19% [45/233]) in the entire oral and written corpora).

4.6.5 Clause type

As mentioned above, the perfect has been deemed incapable of encoding definite past situations, since anterior forms are not tailored to express discrete, narrative events (Givón 1982). Instead, true to its spirit as a relational category, the perfect is used to situate an eventuality as occurring before another (whereas perfective forms locate definite situations in the past). In this study, all Preterit and Present Perfect tokens were coded for clause type, including main clause, relative clause, other subordinate clause (e.g. adverbial or noun clause), yes-no question, and WH question (who, what, when, where, why). These were later collapsed into two main categories in the multivariate analysis: (a) (declarative) main clause and
questions, and (b) subordinate clause (including nominal, relative, and adverbial clauses), as shown in (9a) through (9c).

(9)  

a. Main clause

\[ A \text{ mí me ha pasado eso.} \]  (CC07FC16)

‘That has happened to me.’

b. Question

\[ ¿\text{Lo que hemos comido ahora?} \]  (SLI07FJ13)

‘What (we) have eaten now?’

c. Relative clause

\[ \text{He atendido personas que han venido del extranjero.} \]  (SLI07MO53)

‘I have seen people who have come from abroad.’

Relative clauses offer “retrospective” information about a state of affairs that brings to life the situation described in the main clause. In this respect, relative clauses signal a situation that is prior to the one referred to in the main clause (Sebastián & Slobin 1994: 279–280). Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008) hypothesize that the Present Perfect should be found more readily in relative clauses, “which encode background information” (2008: 17). The same hypothesis is put forward in the present study: relative clause types should favor Present Perfect usage in ARPS.

4.6.6 Grammatical person

In line with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 19), grammatical person was coded to “investigate the role of subjectivity in the speaker’s internal belief or attitude”. The three grammatical persons were collapsed into two groups for the purposes of the multivariate analysis: first person and other person (including second and third). I hypothesize that, if the Present Perfect is more subjective than the Preterit in encoding the speaker’s attitudes or beliefs (e.g. Company 2002: 63), first person subjects (both singular and plural) should favor the Present Perfect, especially in experiential contexts. Examples (10a) and (10b) illustrate these uses.23

23 Example (10b) was excerpted from a 1852 publication and thus shows the orthographic conventions of the time.
(10) a. Yo he hecho linda cerámica. (CC07MS15)
‘I have made beautiful ceramics.’

b. Siempre plagiando a instituciones extrangeras sin consideración á las costumbres y educación de los pueblos hemos tenido que tolerar á las páginas inmorales, escritos anarquicos de tribunas que predicaban con palabras muy claras la desorganización completa de la Republica. (BAN1852EN4)
‘Always plagiarizing foreign institutions without regard for the customs and education of the nations we have had to stand the immoral pages, anarchic writings of tribunes who predicated with very clear words the complete disorganization of the Republic.’

4.6.7 Present perfect function

Preterit and Present Perfect tokens were coded for perfect function (including resultative, continuative, current relevance, experiential, hot news, and past perfective readings) (cf. Winford 1993; Hernández 2004). Perfect function was not included in the multivariate analysis due to the possible interaction of the various perfect types with other factor groups (such as Aktionsart and temporal adverbial). Coding for perfect function allowed for the identification of certain uses whose structural features would not have qualified them as such in the multivariate analysis. To exemplify, as stated in chapter 2 (§2.3.2), experiential perfects tend to co-occur with verbs of any Aktionsart, with frequency TAs like nunca ‘never’ (or in the absence of TAs), and with first person subjects. However, there are instances where the expected structural correlations do not hold. Coded as an experiential token, (11) involves an atelic predicate (pasar ‘to happen’). Note, however, that the experiencer of the happening is other than the third person singular noun phrase (i.e. eso ‘that’) functioning as grammatical subject. Nevertheless, this perfect token is clearly experiential – referring as it does to the transpiring of an indefinite situation in the past.24

24 Note that this example would be classified as indeterminate temporal reference in Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008: 19) typology (indeterminate temporal reference is clearly contextually past-referring but specific temporal anchoring is left unspecified by the speaker. Temporal location may nevertheless be queried by ¿cuándo? ‘when’). Because here I eschew the use of this category, analyzing tokens by perfect function allows for a fuller description of ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect usage in cases where purely structural features (such as presence of a TA) are unavailable.
A mí me ha pasado eso. (CC07FC16)
‘That has happened to me.’

The coding of verb usage by perfect function has been seen as problematic since “attribution [of a certain motivation] to speakers may be an a posteriori artifact of theoretical bias” (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 11). To address this issue, 41% of the Present Perfects in the entire oral data (67/162) were submitted to inter-rater coding, and a Cohen Kappa inter-rater reliability coefficient was obtained. This was 0.8791.25

Three raters were involved in the cross-coding: an English native speaker; a Spanish native speaker; and an English-Spanish bilingual. All coders were university-educated (two linguists and a psychologist). The coders were provided with a coder kit, which included instructions in English or Spanish (depending on the native language of the coder), and a table displaying the 67 Present Perfect tokens to be analyzed (see Appendix C for the English coding instructions).

The majority of Present Perfect tokens (73% [49/67]) were coded unanimously by the three coders, as shown in (12) and (13) (coded as continuative and resultative, respectively).

(12) CONTINUATIVE
Siempre hemos tenido una buena relación. (SLI08MC60)
‘We have always had a good relationship.’

(13) RESULTATIVE
Porque es algo que se ha creado aquí. (SLI08MG65)
‘Because it is something that has been created here.’

Next, 24% (16/67) of the Present Perfects were analyzed similarly by two of the coders. In such instances a majority principle was used such that the two similar coding decisions prevailed. Example (14) was coded twice as experiential and once as resultative, while (15) was coded twice as experiential and once as past perfective.

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25 The QUST Present Perfect tokens were not submitted to inter-rater coding as the contexts in which these featured had been previously established as part of the research design (see §4.4.2).
A mí hay profesores que me han fomentado el hablar bien. (SI07FM162)
‘There are teachers who have instilled in me the value of speaking properly.’

A mi me han dicho en el extranjero que los argentinos somos re nacionalistas. (SLI07FJ13)
‘[People] overseas have told me that we Argentinians are super nationalistic.’

A minority of tokens (3% [2/67]) were coded differently by the three raters. Example (16) was coded as a continuative, resultative, and current relevance perfect, while (17) was coded as a continuative, experiential, and current relevance token.

Hoy en día es imposible: los precios han subido muchísimo. (SLI07MG52)
‘Today it is impossible; prices have increased a lot.’

Yo lo que me he peleado con ese chabón este año. (CC08MA28)
‘How I have fought with that guy this year!’

For these instances, the coding that agreed most strongly with prototypical perfect uses (see §2.3.2) or with other suggestions based on the literature was preferred. To illustrate, (16) was finally coded as a currently relevant perfect due to the presence of the TA hoy en día ‘today’. Also, note that the subir ‘to increase’ is a telic predicate (an achievement) and continuatives are generally precluded from occurring with achievements (Rothstein 2008: 161). However, (16) could reasonably have been coded as resultative. Similarly, (17) was coded as an experiential perfect because of the presence of the first person singular subject yo ‘I’ and the iterative character of the
situation. This token may also be said to be a continuative or current relevance token – as suggested by two of the coders – although the experiential reading was preferred.

Based on the coding of these 67 tokens, I then proceeded to code the 95 Present Perfect tokens extracted from the observational data (see §4.4.1). Preterit tokens were also coded for resultative, continuative, current relevance, experiential, hot news, and past perfective functions – although these were not cross-coded due to their sheer number (N=1367). Preterits coded for perfect function relied on TA presence, verb Aktionsart, and the conversational context for their interpretation. For instance, in example (18) the Preterit was coded as a resultative although the predicate *quedar* ‘to remain’ is stative and there is no clear modification by TAs. However, note that the utterance refers to a resulting state, namely the fact that only two social classes have remained after the Argentinian financial collapse. This is a clear instance of the value of coding for perfect function independently of structural features indirectly signaling such functions.

(18) [De] *las tres clases que teníamos* solamente *quedaron* dos.

(SLI07MG52)

‘[Of] the three classes that we had only two remain.’

The Preterit was also coded for past perfectivity – its prototypical function as an encoder of finished past. Example (19) illustrates four Preterits coded as past perfectives (i.e. clearly finished situations in the past – here accompanied by specific past TAs such as *en mayo* ‘in May’, *en el invierno* ‘in the winter’, and *en el verano* ‘in the summer’). Note that the last Preterit token was not coded as a past perfective but as resultative (due to the presence of the TA *todavía* ‘still’ and reference to present time via the simple Present form *queremos* ‘we want’). Interestingly, the utterance was produced in the summer (February 2008). TAs have been underscored for illustration purposes.
(19)  *Mirá, nos armamos en mayo y en el invierno fue una fecha por año, así, no tocamos nada, y el verano se puso bueno pero, queremos hacer temas propios pero no nos dio el tiempo todavía.* (CC08MA28)

‘Look, we got together in May and in the winter it was a show a year, something like that, we didn’t play at all, and in the summer it improved, we want to make our own songs but we still didn’t have the time.’

Finally, the coding described here is based on the perfect type categories described below (also see §2.3.2).

**Resultative** perfects signal a present state brought about by a past occurrence or event, and usually carry with them the implicature that a result obtains as a consequence of a past action (Schwenter 1994b: 998). Resultative predicates are mostly telic (i.e. achievements and accomplishments), with the end-point of the predication generally representing the outcome of the situation encoded by the verb. Most importantly, the resulting eventuality must obtain at utterance time (Pancheva 2003: 278), as shown in (20).

(20)  *Han cambiado mucho las cosas.* (FW08F58)

‘Things have changed a lot’ (i.e. they are presently different).

**Continuative** perfects are more frequent in English (e.g. *Carla has lived in Chicago for 5 years*) than in Spanish, where the equivalent of the previous example takes the simple Present (e.g. *Hace cinco años que Carla vive en Chicago*), rather than the Present Perfect (cf. Comrie 1976: 60). The continuative perfect describes an event “that began somewhere in the past but continues up until present time” (Schwenter 1994b: 999). Continuative perfects may co-occur with specific TAs as long as these include the present time in their temporal makeup. In fact, continuatives almost invariably require that a TA of some sort accompany the predication (Brugger 1997: 53 ff.), as shown in (21).
Porque mi vinculación al tema laboral en los últimos años **ha sido** con personas extranjeras. (SLI07MQ55)

‘As my work experience in the last couple of years has been with foreigners.’

**Current relevance** perfects are used to highlight the relationship between the past situation in question and the time of speech (Comrie 1976: 60; Schwenter 1994b: 999–1000). As mentioned before, current relevance is an essentially subjective notion which appears to overlap with all other perfect functions (since the present perfect is canonically said to encode present relevance). Example (22), uttered at lunch time on the day of the recording, illustrates a current relevance use of the perfect.

(22)  **Y tu día, ¿cómo ha sido, María Fernanda?** (CC07ML22)

‘How has your day been, Maria Fernanda?’

In this thesis, Preterit and Present Perfect tokens were coded as currently relevant if they are recent with relation to the moment of speech (e.g. accompanied by proximate TAs). This is justified since, as stated above, the notion of current relevance is controversial and to some extent may be said to feature in all perfect types (Portner 2003). In Howe’s words, all perfect readings “are subject to a contextual restriction requiring relevance to the discourse context” (2006: 35). The so-called current relevance perfect is thus reminiscent of Comrie’s (1976) perfect of recent past in the analysis offered here.

**Experiential** perfects are non-specific in their time reference and encode situations having occurred at least once during the time leading up to the present. They resemble past tenses in that relation with the speech time is not obligatory (cf. Comrie 1976: 59; Brugger 1997: 61; Pancheva 2003: 279). Further, experiential perfects encode an (animate) agent’s qualities or knowledge stemming from past experience (Bybee et al. 1994: 62; Lindstedt 2000: 369), and tend to occur with ever type TAs and disfavor specific temporal modification (Dahl 1985: 142). Example (23) illustrates an experiential use of the perfect.
(23) *Yo me he enamorado de tipos; me enamoro de tipos.* (CC07MS15)
‘I have fallen in love with guys; I do fall in love with guys.’

Hot news perfects usually describe immediate events that speakers deem both significant and novel at speech time. They highlight the recency of the event itself, rather than its results (although researchers such as Pancheva (2003: 301 ff.) view these as variants of the resultative construction). Hot news perfects tend to interact with genre in that they appear in media where the reporting of news is expected (such as TV or radio programs, and (online) newspapers and magazines). TAs such as recién ‘just’ and ya ‘already’ are common (Schwenter 1994b: 997). Example (24), from the 20th century newspaper data, illustrates the use of the hot news perfect in a temporal context where the exact temporal reference of the past situation is left unspecified.

(24) *Un millón de refugiados han encontrado ya patria y hogar.* (BAN1960LN)
‘A million refugees have already found nation and home.’

Both Preterit and Present Perfect tokens were coded for past perfectivity. This category encompasses situations that are clearly finished at speech time. Note that – canonically – the Preterit refers to situations that show no temporal relation with the present moment (Comrie 1985: 41). Such uses may be expressed – prototypically – through the Preterit and – innovatively – through the Present Perfect (as is the case in French and German). Example (25) shows various Preterit tokens used to refer to the different activities the speaker completed on the previous day (i.e. ayer ‘yesterday’). Example (26) – from my 19th century data – portrays a Present Perfect used to refer to the intervention of the real estate office in the sales completed ayer ‘yesterday’. TAs have been underscored for illustration purposes.26

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26 In (23) the Preterit token *viste* ‘you know’ (lit. ‘did you [informal] see?’) was treated as a fixed expression (Ocampo 2008) and thus excluded from the analysis. The spelling in (24) reflects the usage of the time (i.e. 1885). See chapters 5 and 6 for more details.
Based on the descriptions provided above, I hypothesize that, if the ARPS Present Perfect behaves like its Mexican counterpart, it should be favored mostly in continuative contexts.

4.7 Linguistic-external variables

Variationist sociolinguistics is concerned with the study of the interaction between “variation, social meaning and the evolution and development of the linguistic system itself” (Tagliamonte 2006: 5). Exclusive attention to linguistic-internal variables alone has been criticized for offering merely a partial view of the variation in question (e.g. Cameron 1990; Eckert 2000; Milroy 2001, 2003). For this reason, the research presented here also analyzes the extent to which linguistic-external variables such as style, age, gender, and education constrain Preterit and Present Perfect usage in ARPS. Style applies to the questionnaire, while age, gender, and education are used with the oral and questionnaire data. In each of the sections that follow, I briefly outline some crucial principles involved in the study of language change insomuch as these relate to the linguistic-external categories analyzed here.

4.7.1 Style

Labov has famously advocated for the study of speakers’ vernacular, “the style in which the minimum attention is given to the monitoring of speech” (Labov 1972a:
208), as the ideal ground for sociolinguistic studies. The vernacular is desirable in
that: (a) it is the variety acquired first and thus free from stylistic re-organization; (b)
it is ideally free from hypercorrection; and (c) it stands as the obverse of prescribed
linguistic usage. More recently, sociolinguists have endorsed working with naturally-
occuring language data, rather than attempting to obtain vernacular or spontaneous
language in the context of the carefully crafted sociolinguistic interview (e.g. Milroy
1992; Poplack 1993). In addition, schematic analyses on style predictability
(including Labov’s (1972a; 2001a) “narrative”, “soapbox”, and language module units
in the sociolinguistic interview) have come under scrutiny and have been revisited to
include a creative component (Schilling-Estes 2004: 45). For instance, Schilling-Estes
(2008) argues that the sociolinguistic interview “is actually a rich site for the
investigation of how speakers really use stylistic variation in displaying and shaping
personal, interpersonal, and larger group identities”. The proposal that language may
be stylized to display certain identities is reminiscent of Bakhtin’s (1986) concept of
stylization, that is, “an artistic image of another’s language” (see Coupland 2007:
149–150). Other relevant criticism to the Labovian notion of style involves the
variationist concern for style, rather than “styling” as “genre making” and “genre-
breaking” (Coupland 2007: 7–16), and the need to account for the fact that speakers
may shift stylistically as a token of audience design (Bell 1984; 2001).

Eckert (2008: 454) defines style as “not precise or fixed but rather [as] a field
of potential meanings – an indexical field, or constellation of ideological related
meanings”. She claims that stylistic moves are ideological and that noticing the style
and the group of people who use that particular style are mutually reinforcing (2008:
257). In light of Squartini and Bertinetto’s (2000: 413) comments that the Present
Perfect is more readily used in Latin America “under the influence of the peninsular
norm”, the question that arises is what ideologies may be involved in the use of the
Present Perfect in the Latin American variety studied in this research.

Style shifting allows for the systematic study of dynamic sociolinguistic
patterns, revealing both explicit speech behavior and social values arising from
normative usage in the more careful styles, as I argue in chapters 5 and 7. This reflects
the contention that “within a society a variety of competing norm orientations is likely
to exist, including the difference between a written standard and a spoken vernacular”
(Schneider 2007: 314). In the context of the present study, it is hypothesized that if the
Spanish Present Perfect occurs more frequently in formal styles (De Kock 1989: 489;
Berman & Slobin 1994: 250; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413), formal corpora should offer more frequent Present Perfect usage. Likewise, the least naturally occurring contexts, where maximum attention is paid to linguistic production (e.g. the questionnaire), should favor Present Perfect use more readily, especially with the formal target items. In addition, if the ARPS Present Perfect is a prestigious sociolinguistic variable, we should expect to find it more frequently in those styles furthest removed from vernacular usage. Overall, it seems reasonable to suggest a gradual increase in Present Perfect use, as we move from the more naturally occurring to the least naturally occurring data. Further, if the ARPS Present Perfect is indeed more widely preferred in the carefully monitored styles, the question that arises is what motivates such a preference.

4.7.2 Age

It is an axiom of Labovian sociolinguistics that analyzing the linguistic behavior of speakers of various ages allows for the study of generational shifts that may be representative of linguistic change at the social level. That is, linguistic variation found in apparent time (i.e. across generations) may reflect stages of diffusion in real time (Coulmas 2005: 73), thus helping link synchronic and diachronic linguistics.

As mentioned in chapter 3, Kubarth (1992a: 565) suggests that in Buenos Aires Spanish the Present Perfect is especially favored by older participants, while younger speakers disfavor Present Perfect usage. In light of this, in the current research all tokens were coded for participant age. Three groups were originally identified: younger (17–35), middle aged (36–55), and older (56–77). These were later collapsed into two age groups: younger (17–35) and older (36–77). Based on the aforementioned findings, I hypothesize that the older speakers should use the Present Perfect more frequently than the younger participants.

4.7.3 Gender

In this study gender is considered (in conjunction with age and educational background) to investigate the extent to which Present Perfect usage may represent a stable linguistic variable (or an innovation) in ARPS. As mentioned before, the Present Perfect is claimed to be more frequent in the written media in Latin American Spanish varieties “under the influence of the Peninsular norm” (Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413).
If this is the case in ARPS, it would be reasonable to view the Present Perfect as prestigious and desirable, which would account for its hypothesized frequency in the carefully monitored styles. Gender relates to these proposals since it has been claimed that women “conform more closely than men to sociolinguistic norms that are overtly prescribed, but conform less than men when they are not”, known as the “gender paradox” (Labov 2001b: 293). It thus seems reasonable to hypothesize that, if the Present Perfect is a prestige variant in this dialect, women should favor it more, and this preference should be especially evident in the formal styles.

4.7.4 Education

Kubarth (1992a: 565) argues that in Buenos Aires educated, upper-middle class participants tend to use the Present Perfect more readily than speakers from lower socioeconomic classes. In the tradition of Latin American sociolinguistics and studies on Argentinian Spanish in particular (e.g. Fontanella de Weinberg 1979; Lavandera 1984; Martorell de Laconi 2000), I use educational background as a social variable possibly constraining Preterit and Present Perfect usage. More specifically, in line with previous findings for ARPS, I hypothesize that post-secondary educated participants (i.e. speakers with a university training, whether complete or in progress) should use the Present Perfect more frequently than speakers who have only received primary or secondary schooling (i.e. the secondary educated).

4.7.5 Historical time

Earlier data were analyzed and submitted to multivariate analyses to identify internal constraints on Preterit and Present Perfect usage and thus identify the locus and time of change, if any (cf. Elsig & Poplack 2006: 2). Studying historical corpora is crucial in this type of research as it has been suggested that Latin American varieties represent earlier stages in the grammaticalization of the Present Perfect (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972: 138), a claim that still needs to be evaluated empirically. In relation to Argentinian Spanish in particular, Burgos (2004: 272) contends that the Present Perfect was used in the 16th–19th centuries to express resultative, continuative, current relevance, experiential and hot news functions. This observation has broad implications regarding the evolution of this form in Latin America – where the Present Perfect has been claimed to be restricted to expressing continuity (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972; Harris 1982; Fleischman 1983; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000). This claim
is supported by Burgos’ view that the observed systematic decrease in the use of the Present Perfect in Argentina should be seen as “a 20th century phenomenon” (2004: 272). Further, because the use of certain forms in historical data are “often distinct from the vernacular of the writers, […] , reflect efforts to capture a normative dialect that never was any speaker’s native language, [and are] riddled with the effects of hypercorrection, dialect mixture, and scribal error” (Labov 1994: 11), the overall distribution of the Present Perfect in earlier ARPS should be higher than in contemporary usage (see chapter 6).

In line with the above proposals, I hypothesize that Present Perfect usage in earlier ARPS should be more prominent than contemporary usage. Moreover, in these data the Present Perfect should show an incremental decrease in overall frequency coupled with a steady reduction in the number of Present Perfect functions expressed.

The hypotheses posed above in §4.6 and §4.7 are summarized in Table 4.8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aktionsart</td>
<td>Unbounded, durative predicates should favor Present Perfect usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal adverbial</td>
<td>TAs that highlight duration, repetition, and continuation should favor Present Perfect usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object number</td>
<td>Plural objects should favor Present Perfect usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polarity</td>
<td>Negative polarity should favor Present Perfect usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause type</td>
<td>Relative clauses should favor Present Perfect usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical person</td>
<td>First person (singular and plural) subjects should favor Present Perfect usage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Perfect function        | The Present Perfect should be favored in resultative and continuative contexts  
                          | It should be disfavored in current relevance, experiential, and hot news contexts                                                        |
| Style                   | The Present Perfect should be favored in formal styles                                                                                     |
| Age                     | Older participants should use the Present Perfect more frequently than young participants                                               |
| Gender                  | Women should favor the Present Perfect (especially in formal styles)                                                                         |
| Education               | Post-secondary educated participants should use the Present Perfect more frequently                                                      |
| Historical time         | The Present Perfect should be more frequent in earlier ARPS; a reduction in the number of perfect functions should be evident when moving from the earlier to the contemporary corpora |

Table 4.8 Summary of proposed hypotheses

4.8 Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have outlined the methods, research questions, and data used in the current work. I have also introduced a set of hypotheses to be empirically tested vis-à-vis a variety of oral and written data across historical time in chapters 5 and 6. I
have further suggested both linguistic-internal and linguistic-external motivations for these hypotheses.

Three major questions surrounding the ARPS Present Perfect arise from the review and research design presented above, namely (a) whether the use of the ARPS Present Perfect resembles that of Mexican Spanish (where the Present Perfect is preferred in continuative contexts) – thus supporting Harris’ (1982) claim that Latin American Spanish is located at stage II in his model; (b) whether the ARPS Present Perfect is favored by older educated speakers and women, and in formal styles; (c) whether the Present Perfect was used differently (and if so, how) in earlier written ARPS. I set out to answer these questions through multivariate and qualitative analyses of contemporary (chapter 5) and earlier (chapter 6) corpora in the ensuing chapters.
CHAPTER 5

Contemporary oral and questionnaire usage

In this chapter I offer a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the oral and questionnaire (QUST) contemporary corpora (including the casual conversation, participant observation, sociolinguistic interview, and QUST data). The goal of the multivariate analysis is to explore the role of linguistic-internal and linguistic-external factors on Present Perfect use in the casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview; the focus is on the ranking of constraints obtained for the oral data in the different analyses (cf. Tagliamonte 2000: 339). In the present chapter, I make three central claims regarding Preterit and Present Perfect usage in contemporary ARPS:

i. The Preterit is more widespread than the Present Perfect across data types. It is used to express prototypical past perfective functions and in combination with temporal adverbials (TAs) to perform functions canonically encoded through the Present Perfect.

ii. Despite a low overall frequency, the Present Perfect is pervasive in experiential contexts where it expresses indefinite past reference (in line with Rodríguez Louro 2008b) and occurs both with frequency TAs and in adverbial-less contexts. Although to a limited degree, the Present Perfect also occurs in resultative and continuative contexts, evidencing retention of meaning features of the source construction (Bybee et al. 1994: 15; Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 23). Crucially, the ARPS Present Perfect does not feature in current relevance, hot news, and past perfective contexts, which confirms this form is not grammaticalizing as an encoder of perfectivity (Schwenter 1994a).

iii. Style – as seen in the QUST formal target items – triggers Present Perfect usage in a variety of different perfect contexts, but crucially not in experiential settings.

I begin in §5.1, where I offer general results for the contemporary data and outline the data exclusion protocols. In §5.2 I explain some issues related to the
variationist principle of accountability and introduce two individual multivariate analyses (for linguistic-internal and linguistic-external factors) of the casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview corpora. I discuss the linguistic-internal variables in §5.3 and the linguistic-external factors in §5.4. Next, I offer a qualitative analysis of perfect function and style based on the extended oral corpora (i.e. the oral corpora including the observational data described in chapter 4) and the QUST data (§5.5 and §5.6). The main hypotheses are revisited in §5.7. I then deal with Preterit usage in the company of TAs in §5.8. I here provide a qualitative analysis of the several Preterit uses in canonical perfect contexts. In §5.9 I summarize the main findings and provide an outline of crucial discussion issues to be taken up again in chapter 7.

5.1 General results

A total of 3253 Preterit and 372 Present Perfect tokens (N=3625) were extracted from the casual conversation, sociolinguistic interview, and QUST corpora. The findings appear in Table 5.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Casual conversation</th>
<th>Sociolinguistic interview</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1 Overall frequency distributions of Preterit and Present Perfect forms in the casual conversation, sociolinguistic interview, and questionnaire data

The Preterit clearly features much more strongly than the Present Perfect throughout data types, although this prevalence weakens as we approach the QUST data. Most striking is the noticeable rise in Present Perfect usage as we move from the oral data to the QUST data ($X^2=80.5; p=.000$).

As stated in chapter 3, Present Perfect usage in Argentina has been set at the rate of 13% (Kubarth 1992a; Burgos 2004). However, the Present Perfect features at a mere 5% (67/1434) in my casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview data (i.e. the oral data), while it reaches 14% (305/2191) in the QUST. Moreover, with respect to the suggestion that Argentinian Spanish prefers the Present Perfect at the same rate than Mexican Spanish (Howe 2006: 79), my results indicate otherwise. In fact, the
ARPS oral data display a remarkably lower usage frequency when compared to Mexican and Peninsular Spanish (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 13). Let us consider Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ analysis of the conversational portion of the COREC Peninsular Spanish corpus (Marcos Marín 1992), and of samples of the *Habla culta* and *Habla popular* corpus for Mexican Spanish (Lope Blanch 1971, 1976). Figure 5.1 shows a comparison of Preterit and Present Perfect usage as noted in Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ study (on Peninsular [PEN] and Mexican [MEX] Spanish) and the ARPS corpora analyzed here. Both the QUST and the oral ARPS corpora are plotted (separately) for illustration purposes.

![Figure 5.1 Comparison of Preterit and Present Perfect usage percentage in Peninsular, Mexican, and Argentinian River Plate Spanish](image)

Peninsular Spanish displays the most frequent use of the Present Perfect (at 54% [956/1783]), and is followed by Mexican Spanish (with a Present Perfect usage frequency of 15% [331/2234]). Interestingly, the ARPS QUST results and the Mexican trends are virtually identical. However, Present Perfect usage wanes radically in the ARPS oral corpora, where it occurs at only 5% (67/1434). These discrepancies across data types in the ARPS data suggest important genre effects for this variety. I return to this issue in §5.6. Note, too, that the Preterit is more widely used in Mexican Spanish and ARPS – although the overall frequency of the ARPS Preterit (at 95% [1367/1434]) dwarfs that of Mexican Spanish (at 85% [1903/2234]). I

27 The difference in Preterit and Present Perfect usage between Mexican Spanish and oral ARPS is statistically significant ($X^2=92.9; p=.000$).
say more about Peninsular and Mexican Spanish vis-à-vis my findings for ARPS in chapter 7.

While the results of the distributional analysis account for general frequencies associated with the variables under study, this treatment alone does not specify the patterns of variability that determine choice of these forms and possible routes to grammaticalization, since layering of forms may represent change in the direction of grammaticalization paths (Tagliamonte 2000: 340). A multivariate analysis is thus needed to account for the factors that play a role in the choice of the dependent variables analyzed. However, not all the data types used in this study lend themselves to multivariate analysis. The QUST is one such type. In Labov’s (1997: 147) words, methods such as introspection and elicitation “have little value for the study of variable behavior”. In cases where a multivariate analysis is not appropriate (as with the QUST data) a combination of cross-tabulations and chi-square tests may help elucidate the issues at stake (see, for example, Leroux & Jarmasz 2006).28

5.1.1 Data extraction and exclusion

A total of 237 tokens from the casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview data were excluded from the analysis in line with the data exclusion protocols outlined below (cf. Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 13).

- **Copula/Intransitive verb + gerund**: All combinations consisting of a copula or intransitive verb (such as *estar* ‘to be’ or *andar* ‘to go, to walk, to function’) plus a gerundial form were excluded to eschew data analysis problems (such as the issue of whether the copula/intransitive conjugated form or the gerund should be coded for Aktionsart, the role of the gerund in adding any extra aspectual nuances such as progression and imperfectivity, etc.). Examples of these include *quedarse charlando* ‘to continue to chat’ (lit. ‘to stay chatting’), *estar mirando* ‘to be looking’, *ir preguntando* ‘to ask around’, *terminar siendo* ‘end up being’, etc. (see De Kock 1989: 489 for further issues concerning phrasal Preterits).29

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28 A cross-tabulation involves an analysis showing how two factors are interrelated (Tagliamonte 2006: 264).
29 Note that the excluded copula/intransitive verbs were all conjugated Preterit/ Present Perfect forms; infinitives are used here for illustration purposes.
- **Ambiguous morphology**: Cases where the 1PL forms of the Preterit and the simple Present indicative show overlapping morphology, as in (1) where the conjugation of *pesar* ‘to weigh’ is identical in the Preterit and the simple Present (i.e. *pesamos*).

(1) *Se los pesamos, son de nueve kilos cada uno.* (CC06FG6)  
‘We weighed them, they are nine kilos each.’

- **False starts**: False starts were excluded from the analysis, as in the bolded elements in (2).

(2) *Gente que a través del oficio ha hecho-, ha hecho-… no ha hecho, ha descubierto un lenguaje y a través del lenguaje ha hecho formas.* (CC06MS15)  
‘People who, through their jobs, have done-, have done-, no, have not done, have discovered a language and through language have made shapes.’

- **Repetitions**: When a token was repeated two or more times in a row, and the general predication remained identical, the iterated items were excluded, as in (3).

(3) *Todos los cereales aumentaron de esa manera en el mundo, todos. Todos aumentaron de esa manera.* (CC08MJ26)  
‘All cereal prices increased like that around the world. They all increased like that.’

- **Fixed expressions**: The highly frequent Argentinian colloquial conversational filler ¿(Vos) viste? ‘You know?’ (Lit. did you (2SG informal) see?), as in (4), was not analyzed as a Preterit token (see Ocampo 2008). This was the only fixed expression noted and excluded in these data.

(4) *Y es verdad, viste, fue mucho despelote.* (CC06FA4)  
‘And it’s true, you know, it was a real mess.’
Table 5.2 displays the total number of excluded tokens for the oral data in line with the aforementioned criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Copula/Intransitive + Gerund</th>
<th>Ambiguous morphology</th>
<th>False starts</th>
<th>Repetitions</th>
<th>Fixed expressions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>84(^{30})</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2 Number of excluded tokens in the oral data

5.2 Multivariate analysis

In order to test the hypotheses introduced in §4.6 and §4.7 above, the casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview data were submitted to multivariate analysis. Multivariate analysis calculates which factors significantly favor the realization of a specific variant (in this case the Present Perfect) when a group of factors are considered in unison. Two lines of evidence are crucial in this analysis: statistical significance (at the .05 level) and constraint hierarchy, or direction of effect, as seen in the ordering of factor weights inside a factor group. Constraint ranking remains crucial in comparing Preterit and Present Perfect usage across historical times, as I shall demonstrate further on.

The QUST data were not submitted to multivariate analysis since the main goal of variationist analysis is to access naturally occurring data (or the speaker’s vernacular) (Tagliamonte 2006: 8).\(^{31}\) However, the oral data and the QUST data were compared on the basis of general overall frequencies, chi-square results, and cross-tabulations. As suggested earlier, the goal of this comparison is to study the potential effects of genre on Preterit and Present Perfect usage.

Style was left out of the analysis in the oral data sample since determining which tokens are formal and which are informal in the sociolinguistic interview remains highly subjective and problematic. Although in the Labovian sociolinguistic interview the language-related module presupposes a more careful style (cf. Labov 2001a: 94), the amount of Present Perfect tokens in these contexts was not high

\(^{30}\) The casual conversation data yielded 21 morphologically ambiguous tokens, while the sociolinguistic interview offered 63 tokens.

\(^{31}\) Note that QUST data is not suitable for multivariate analysis since the inventory of responses is pre-determined by the possible contexts offered in the instrument by the researcher.
enough for multivariate analysis. Thus, I maintain that style should be seen here to differ across the different data types and within the QUST, where formality was artificially created by providing an equal number of formal and informal items (see §4.4.2). Before moving on to the multivariate analysis, let me address two crucial variationist considerations: accountability and variability.

5.2.1 Accountability and circumscription of the variable context

In this research, both Preterit and Present Perfect forms are extracted and analyzed in line with Labov’s (1972a: 72; 1982: 10) “principle of accountability”. Given that the Preterit has been shown to prevail in ARPS, it is imperative to “look at the Preterit in Present Perfect contexts” (Torres Cacoullos, p.c.) so as to identify areas of functional overlap.

Because the principle of accountability calls for an analysis of both occurrences and non-occurrences of the variables in question, circumscription of the variable context is a vital step in variationist analysis (Labov 1969; 1972a; 1978). Labov (1978: 6) explains that all contexts in which the (syntactic) variables analyzed contrast (i.e. “do not say the same thing”) should be excluded. Similarly, Tagliamonte (2006: 13) suggests that the first step in circumscribing the variable context involves the identification of “the total population of utterances in which the feature varies”, which is then followed by the exclusion of those environments in which the variable is categorical. The second step involves identifying the variables that can be “reliably identified” and discarding contexts that display indeterminacy, neutralization, and the like. These procedures are entirely empirical and based on observation of language usage patterns as they occur in interaction.

In the current research, both Present Perfects used in Preterit contexts (as described for Peninsular Spanish in §3.2.1) and Preterits used in Present Perfect contexts (as described for Mexican Spanish in §3.2.4) should be accounted for and analyzed. Recall that, as stated in chapter 3, Spanish varieties are located at different stages in the anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization cline. Moreover, given the paucity of systematic investigation on these forms in ARPS, circumscribing the envelope of variation is in itself an open question.

The most sensible step in this regard is to analyze the full spectrum of Preterit and Present Perfect occurrences so as to obtain a view of the dynamics of these forms both synchronically (this chapter) and diachronically (chapter 6) (cf. Aaron 2006: 50).
For this reason, and following Schwenter and Torres Caucollos (2008: 11–12), the entirety of the Preterit and Present Perfect tokens (minus the relevant exclusions outlined above) were submitted to multivariate analysis. In line with these authors, the criterion utilized here is purely structural – that is, all Preterit and Present Perfect tokens should be analyzed, independently of their temporal reference.

Circumscribing the variable context in this way raises the question of whether the observational data may be submitted to multivariate analysis. Recall that these data were noted down as relevant Preterit and Present Perfect tokens were overheard or seen in the researcher’s proximity. Because clearly perfective Preterits encoding finished situations in the past and in the company of specific TAs such as ayer ‘yesterday’ (e.g. Ayer fui al cine ayer ‘Yesterday I went to the movies’) were not the focus of the observational data, these corpora are skewed in terms of overall frequencies. In fact, the Present Perfect represents 75% (95/126) while the Preterit accounts for only 25% (31/126) of the data – a distribution that is clearly not representative of contemporary ARPS (see §5.1). Consequently, the observational data were left out of the multivariate analysis and are instead analyzed qualitatively and presented together with relevant cross-tabulations in §5.5 and §5.6 below. The multivariate analyses provided in §5.2.2 are thus based on the digitally recorded casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview data (i.e. the oral data).

In the next section, I introduce the results of the multivariate analysis carried out with the oral corpora. A brief explanation of the results is offered immediately after the table, while the specifics of the findings – together with a comparison of QUST usage trends – are introduced further on.

5.2.2 The oral data

A total of 1434 tokens were extracted from the casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview data. The Preterit represents 95% (1367/1434) of the data, while the Present Perfect appears 5% of the time (67/1434). Tables 5.3 and 5.4 display the results of two variable rule analyses of the contribution of internal and external factors on Present Perfect (PP) usage in the oral data. Presence of ya ‘already’ was

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32 Thanks to Catherine Travis for this suggestion.

33 I acknowledge the overall number of Present Perfect tokens in both the oral (this chapter) and written data (chapter 6) to be low. However, the aim of offering a multivariate analysis of the different data is mainly exploratory; important trends (both as a result of the multivariate analysis and in terms of overall frequencies) are noted here as indicators of general usage patterns in ARPS. My focus on the patterns and ranking of constraints emerging from the different analyses should further help reliably describe ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect variable use. This is in line with Tagliamonte’s (2006: 240) contention that “even
excluded from the multivariate analysis presented in Table 5.3 since the Present Perfect occurred only three times in the presence of this TA.

### Table 5.3 Contribution of internal factors on the use of the Present Perfect over the Preterit in the oral data (non-significant factor groups within brackets)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor groups</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% PP</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temporal adverbial</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximate and frequency</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clause type</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate clause</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main clause and questions</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1251</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Object number</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1318</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aktionsart</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atelic predicate</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telic predicate</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>863</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammatical person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>781</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second and third persons</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Total N = 67/1434, \(p = .010\) \((p < .05)\), corrected mean = .04, Log-likelihood – 255.071, chi-square/cell 0.7817

### Table 5.4 Contribution of external factors on the use of the Present Perfect over the Preterit in the oral data (non-significant factor groups within brackets)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor groups</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% PP</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Total N = 67/1434, \(p = .000\) \((p < .05)\), corrected mean = .04, Log-likelihood – 263.522, chi-square/cell 2.1540

In both analyses, the oral data show a corrected mean of .04, which indicates a remarkably low tendency of occurrence of the Present Perfect. Most striking about the data presented in Table 5.3 is the selection as significant \((p = .010)\) of only two out of the five factor groups analyzed. As expected, the Present Perfect is favored in restricted contexts in ARPS. Temporal adverbial displays the highest range (range=33), and is immediately followed by clause type (range=32). The range – calculated “by subtracting the lowest factor weight from the highest factor weight” when contrasting data sets of different sizes, with varying frequencies of forms, the patterns of use, even in the smaller data set, will tend to be relatively stable”.

100
(Tagliamonte 2006: 242) – is vital in variationist analysis as it shows the magnitude of effect of each specific factor group. That is, it indicates to what extent the factor group is involved in the occurrence of the variable under study. (The range is only specified for the statistically significant factors). As for the ranking of constraints, proximate and frequency TAs and subordinate clauses motivate Present Perfect usage in the oral interaction. On the other hand, object number, Aktionsart, and grammatical person play no statistically significant role in motivating Present Perfect usage. Note that first and second/other grammatical persons determine Present Perfect usage almost to the same rate (hence the inverted percentages in the last two rows in Table 5.3).

With regard to the linguistic-external factors shown in Table 5.4, only gender is statistically significant ($p=0.000$). This factor group displays the highest range (range=23). On the other hand, age and education play no statistically significant role in motivating Present Perfect usage in the ARPS oral corpora.

In the following sections I address each factor group separately, providing overall frequencies and cross-tabulations from both the oral data and the QUST. The goal of this analysis is to compare findings across different genres. As mentioned in §5.1, the Present Perfect features most frequently in the QUST (at 14%). It remains to be seen whether this trend is especially evident in certain linguistic-internal and linguistic-external contexts.

5.3 Linguistic-internal factors

5.3.1 Temporal adverbial

Temporal adverbial displays the highest constraint ranking (range=33) in the multivariate analysis. Proximate and frequency TAs favor the Present Perfect with a factor weight of .70. The favoring effect of proximate/frequency TAs on Present Perfect use (at 10% [12/122]) may be interpreted as evidence for the continuative and experiential use of the ARPS Present Perfect, as I discuss in §5.5.

Marginal results for the temporal adverbial factor group reveal that – in terms of overall frequencies – the Preterit is more frequent than the Present Perfect with: other TAs (at 97% [338/348]) including specific (e.g. *el año pasado* ‘last year’), general (e.g. *el otro día* ‘the other day’), connective (e.g. *después* ‘afterwards’), and

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34 The complete distributional analysis for the QUST data is as follows: Preterit 79%; Present Perfect 13%; Present (both Simple and Continuous) 6%; complex constructions (e.g. *acabar de*, *terminar de* ‘to finish’) 1%; other (including synthetic and periphrastic future past subjunctive conditionals and Pluperfects) 1%. 

101
other (e.g. ya ‘already’, todavía ‘still/yet’) TAs; in the absence of TAs (at 95% [919/964]); and with proximate/frequency TAs (at 90% [110/122]). Moreover, contrary to the suggestion that proximate TAs co-occur with the Present Perfect (Schwenter 1994a: 88; Dahl 2000: 800), TAs such as ahora ‘now’, recién ‘just’, esta mañana ‘this morning’, among others, feature very strongly with the Preterit (at 96% [47/49] in the oral data and at 87% [331/383] in the QUST). The question remains what the function of these TAs is when they occur in conjunction with the Preterit. I address this issue further in §5.8.

In the QUST, the Present Perfect occurs without TAs at the rate of 56% (170/305) and with TAs at 44% (135/305). A cross-tabulation of the temporal adverbial and style factor groups reveals that it is style, rather than presence of TA, which motivates Present Perfect usage in the QUST. To illustrate, around the TA ya ‘already’ the Present Perfect appears at the rate of 5% (5/99) in informal style and 28% (28/99) when formality increases. Proximate and frequency TAs behave similarly. Proximate TAs trigger 8% Present Perfect usage (15/190) in informal style versus 19% (37/193) in formal style. Frequency TAs call for Present Perfect use at the rate of 10% (15/156) in informal style and 17% (28/166) in formal settings. Note that the two items including frequency TAs in the QUST targeted the experiential function. The schism between informal and formal usage is not as large with these frequency TAs as it is with other TAs. This may be due to the widespread use of the experiential Present Perfect in ARPS, as I explain in §5.5.1. Finally, the seven Present Perfect tokens appearing in perfective contexts occur in formal settings. That is, no Present Perfect is used in the company of the specific TA el año pasado ‘last year’ when the setting is informal (and outside the QUST in contemporary ARPS). This shows that some particular uses may be best explained by resorting to stylistic, rather than purely linguistic concerns. Figure 5.2 illustrates Present Perfect use and the interrelationship between (presence and absence of) TAs and style in the QUST.

Recall that general TAs offer less-than-specific information about the exact temporal location of the situation in question, but nevertheless provide an indication that the situation did indeed occur (perfectively) in the past.
The trend for the Present Perfect to occur more frequently in formal settings is maintained throughout, even with adverbial-less items. The biggest difference in Present Perfect usage across styles is with the TA *ya* ‘already’ (from 5% in informal style to 28% in formal settings). This is followed by proximate (from 8% to 19%), frequency (from 10% to 17%), and specific TAs (from 0% to 7%). Note that the Present Perfect does not occur at all in the company of specific TAs in informal settings. Only when formality increases is the Present Perfect found in such contexts. This is in line with the lack of use of the Present Perfect in situations involving specific temporal reference, which indicates that the ARPS Present Perfect is not following the grammaticalization trend of its Peninsular Spanish counterpart. However, the fact that these uses exist in formal settings, albeit to a lower extent, raises the question of what role the situational context plays in choice of verb tense. In the data analyzed here, the Present Perfect shows higher usage frequency in formal styles. This highlights the importance of style in triggering Present Perfect use in ARPS. I return to this issue in §5.5 and §5.6 below.

As stated earlier, presence of *ya* ‘already’ was coded separately and excluded from the multivariate analysis of the oral data due to low Present Perfect usage with this TA (N=3). The Present Perfect occurred more readily in the absence of *ya* (at 95% [64/67] in the oral data and at 89% [272/305] in the QUST). Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 25) interpret the favoring effect of *ya* in their Peninsular Spanish data as indicating that the Present Perfect is becoming the default expression
of perfectivity. They suggest that this TA does not encode past reference in itself but does signal that the past situation took place at an unspecified time before the speech time. Conversely, Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008: 26) findings for Mexican Spanish – namely that in hodiernal contexts presence of *ya* favors the Preterit – are in line with my own observations for ARPS, i.e. *ya* favors Preterit, rather than Present Perfect usage. I discuss the value of *ya* ‘already’ in combination with the Preterit in §5.8.

### 5.3.2 Clause type

Clause type displays the second highest constraint ranking (range=32) in the multivariate analysis (*p*=.010). Subordinate clauses (including relative, nominal, and adverbial clauses) favor the Present Perfect with a factor weight of .77. Main clauses and questions follow suit, with a weight of .45.

Marginal results for the oral data indicate that the Present Perfect is readily used in relative clauses (at 22% 19/87) and features only minimally in adverbial and nominal clauses (at 4% [4/96]), main clauses (3.5% [41/1173]), and questions (4% [3/78]). The tendency for the ARPS Present Perfect to occur in relative clauses is in line with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008: 22) observations for Mexican Spanish. Examples (5) and (6) show Present Perfect uses in relative clauses.

(5)  *Gente que a través del oficio ha descubierto un lenguaje y a través del lenguaje ha hecho formas, ha hecho* [contactos como] Emilio.  
(CC07MS15)  
‘People who, through their occupation, have discovered a language and through that language have made shapes, have [made contacts like] Emilio.’

(6)  *Contacto con gente que viajó, o yo misma que he viajado, pero fundamentalmente contacto con los demás que han viajado.*  
(SLI07FC34)  
‘Contact with people who traveled, or with myself since (lit. that) I have traveled, but basically contact with others who have traveled.’
Note that here the Present Perfect co-occurs with indefinite mass noun subjects (e.g. *gente* ‘people’, *los demás* ‘others’). As I shall note in §5.5.1, this use of the Present Perfect is highly frequent in ARPS and highlights the indefiniteness and unspecific character of the situation encoded by the verb.

Contrary to Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008: 22) findings for Mexican Spanish, questions do not favor Present Perfect usage in ARPS. A look at marginal results for the casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview data shows that the Present Perfect occurs with yes-no questions at the rate of 4% (2/45), while WH questions represent only 3% of the data (1/33).

The QUST data display similar results. The Present Perfect is favored in relative clauses (at 25% [46/183]). Subordinate and main clauses follow, with usage frequencies of 15% (29/191) and 12% (230/1817), respectively. The use of the Present Perfect in a relative clause is shown in example (7).

(7) A: ¿No hay fotos de tu difunto hijo en esta casa?
B: No, no quiero poner fotos de personas que han muerto en esta casa. (QUST06ML154)

‘Aren’t there any photos of your late son in this house?’

No, I don’t want to put up photos of people who have died in this house.’

I later show in §5.5.1 that Present Perfect occurrence in relative clauses is closely linked to the indefinite character of the experiential Present Perfect – a perfect type readily used in vernacular ARPS.

### 5.3.3 Aktionsart

Contrary to what has been noted for Mexican Spanish (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 22), the ARPS Present Perfect is not subject to Aktionsart restrictions. This is evident in the statistical non-significance of the Aktionsart group in the multivariate analysis. Marginal results for the oral data indicate that the Present Perfect occurs virtually at the same rate with achievements (3.5% [21/594]), accomplishments (5% [13/269]), activities (8% [22/269]), and states (4% [11/302]). Likewise, the Present Perfect features at the same rate with telic and atelic predicates.
(at 14% [234/1681] and [71/510], respectively) in the QUST. (None of these differences are significant at the .01 level in chi-square tests).

The lack of Aktionsart effects in ARPS Present Perfect usage is antithetical to the claim that in Buenos Aires Spanish the Present Perfect “denotes durative or iterative situations encompassing the Speech Time” (2000: 413). This finding also challenges the contention that Mexican and Argentinian Spanish are alike in their use of the Present Perfect in continuative settings (Howe 2006: 76). In fact, the lack of aspectual restrictions in ARPS Present Perfect usage accords with the frequent occurrence of this form in experiential settings, as I show in §5.5.

5.3.4 Grammatical person

Grammatical person does not significantly favor the Present Perfect in the oral data, where this form is preferred almost to the same extent in first person (4% [34/781]) and second and third person settings (5% [33/653]). The same trend is observed in the QUST, where the Present Perfect features at 16% [246/1563] with second and third grammatical subjects and at 9% [59/628] with first person subjects. However, the latter trends are partly conditioned by the QUST design (i.e. most of the target items focused on second and third person subjects).

An important caveat regarding the coding of grammatical person is in order. Specifically, many Present Perfects which feature a second/third person grammatical subject (and are thus coded accordingly) actually involve clear first person experiencers and beneficiaries (object clitics), as in (8).

(8)  
Me ha pasado de ponerme a charlar y me ha contado el tipo de pieza que hace. (CC07FC16)

‘It has happened to me to start chatting with someone who has told me about the kind of ceramic pieces they make.’

Note that while the subject of the first clause is the third person construction ponerse a charlar ‘to start chatting’, the experiencer of this happening is the speaker herself. In the second clause, the beneficiary of the telling is certainly other than the teller themselves. This issue remains crucial in an analysis of perfect function since the Present Perfect in the first clause in example (8) was coded as experiential and does indeed refer to a first person experiencer, independently of any correspondence with
its grammatical subject. This indicates that a complex combination of perfect function, grammatical subject, and Theta roles may reveal crucial tendencies in an analysis of subjectivity vis-à-vis the perfect.

5.4 Linguistic-external factors

5.4.1 Gender

In the oral data, men favor the Present Perfect significantly more than women \((p=.000)\), with factor weights of .63 and .40, respectively. This factor group offers the highest magnitude of effect (range=23). Marginal results indicate that men favor Present Perfect usage at 7\% (42/578), while women prefer the Present Perfect at 3\% (25/856). Unlike the oral data, it is women who utilize the Present Perfect more readily in the QUST. Specifically, women use the Present Perfect at 15\% (160/1086), while men do so at 13\% (145/1105).\(^{36}\)

The more frequent use of the Present Perfect by women in the QUST agrees with Labov’s “Gender Paradox” – namely the observation that “women conform more closely than men to sociolinguistic norms that are overtly prescribed, but conform less than men when they are not” (Labov 2001b: 293). These results uphold the hypothesis advanced in §4.7.3 that, if the ARPS Present Perfect is a prestigious sociolinguistic variable, women should use this form more readily than men. It should be noted, however, that women’s preference for the Present Perfect is evident in the experimental QUST setting, while men significantly prefer the Present Perfect in oral interaction. These usage patterns point out the disparate behavior of ARPS speakers – or the existence of what I have termed double standards (Rodríguez Louro 2008a). I return to a discussion of this issue in §5.6.

5.4.2 Age

Age was not significant in the multivariate analysis of the oral data, although some interesting tendencies are worth noting. Figure 5.3 illustrates the generational usage patterns noted in the QUST. The original age group division into younger (17–35), middle aged (36–55), and older (56–77) has been kept for illustration purposes.

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\(^{36}\) Both genders use the Present Perfect more readily in the QUST \((X^2=77.5; p=.000 \text{ for women}, \text{ and } X^2=13.2; p=.000 \text{ for men})\).
In the QUST, older participants favor the Present Perfect in the majority of perfect contexts. Middle aged participants use the Present Perfect the least frequently, while the younger group shows moderate Present Perfect usage. Older speakers show a special preference for the Present Perfect in past perfective contexts (at the rate of 33% [14/42]), which suggests hypercorrect usage. Most striking about these results is the younger participants’ preference for the experiential Present Perfect (at 11.5% [13/113]), while middle aged and older participants prefer the Present Perfect less readily in these settings (at 6% [4/69] and 7% [1/14], respectively).

Although statistically not significant in the multivariate analysis, Present Perfect usage across generational groups in the oral and QUST data is reminiscent of the (statistically significant) differences noted for gender. Recall that, in the oral data, it was men who significantly preferred the Present Perfect over the Preterit, while women used the Present Perfect more readily in the QUST. These trends challenge Kubarth’s (1992a: 565) position that the Present Perfect is favored exclusively by older speakers. The usage described here also agrees with Chamber’s (2002: 355) contention that “if an incoming variant truly represents a linguistic change […] it will be marked by increasing frequency down the age scale”. My results thus far suggest two uses of the Present Perfect for ARPS: a vernacular (or innovative) use favored by men and younger speakers in oral interaction, and a normative (or conservative) use

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37 Here I take hypercorrection to mean “the overuse of an item considered to be socially or stylistically salient” (Hopper & Traugott 2003: 137). I later argue that hypercorrection occurs as a result of speakers’ perception of their own variety as lacking in a form heavily featured in Peninsular Spanish (see §7.3.1).
preferred by women and older speakers in monitored settings such as the QUST. I return to this issue in §5.6.

5.5 Present Perfect function

As noted in §4.6.7, the Present Perfect tokens found in the oral data were cross-coded for present perfect function, so as to investigate the extent to which the ARPS Present Perfect features in the settings canonically ascribed to this form (including resultative, continuative, current relevance, experiential, hot news, and past perfective readings). In the ensuing sections, I illustrate the various usage frequencies and trends drawing on the oral and QUST data introduced above. I also use observational data: an additional 95 Present Perfect and 31 Preterit tokens (N=126) collected as participant observation notes during my second fieldwork trip to Argentina. Recall that a comparison of the different oral data sets suggested that the digitally recorded data are commensurate with the observational data (see §4.4.1).

The goal of this extended analysis is to offer a variety of examples noted in casual interaction between native speakers of ARPS beyond the digitally recorded oral data. The overall frequencies provided in what follows are thus drawn from a combination of casual conversation, sociolinguistic interview, and observational data examples (henceforth the extended oral data). Just as in §5.2 through §5.4 above, the QUST data are compared against the extended oral data. Table 5.5 displays the overall frequency distribution of the extended oral data used in the ensuing sections. As mentioned in §5.2.1, the skewed nature of the observational data (i.e. in favor of the Present Perfect) renders it unsuitable for multivariate analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Casual conversation</th>
<th>Sociolinguistic interview</th>
<th>Observational data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5 Overall frequency distributions of Preterit and Present Perfect forms in the extended oral data
5.5.1 Experience

The Present Perfect occurs most frequently in experiential contexts in the extended oral data (at 60% [89/148]) and at 9% (18/196) in the QUST. However, the QUST tokens are qualitatively different from the extended oral data tokens. Let us see why.

The QUST included two items targeting the experiential perfect. These were presented in an informal and a formal setting (examples 9 and 10) and included the frequency TA *nunca* ‘never’. TAs have been underscored for illustration purposes (the original QUST items were not underscored).

(9) A: ¿*Y España, te gusta*?
B: No sé, *nunca* (visitar) Europa.
‘So do you (informal) like Spain?’
I don’t know. I (have) never visited Europe.’

(10) A: *Y España, ¿qué le parece*?
B: No sé, *nunca* (visitar) Europa.
‘So, does Spain appeal to you (formal)?
I don’t know. I (have) never visited Europe.’

Overall, QUST participants selected the Present Perfect at 9% (18/196), while the Preterit was much more widely preferred, at 91% (178/196). This tendency was also maintained across different styles within the QUST, as illustrated in Table 5.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Informal</th>
<th></th>
<th>Formal</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[X^2=0.202; p=.653\]

Table 5.6 Present Perfect usage across style in questionnaire experiential settings

Note that the difference in Present Perfect usage in the QUST experiential settings across styles is almost negligible and statistically non-significant. I later show in §5.6 that style plays a crucial role in Present Perfect usage in the QUST. However, as displayed in Table 5.6, the experiential Present Perfect is not subject to stylistic
constraints. Moreover, the high frequency of Preterit tokens in experiential settings may stem from the presence of the frequency TA *nunca* ‘never’, an issue I discuss further on.

The experiential Present Perfect does not necessarily always co-occur with TAs (and for that matter, with the frequency TA *nunca*), but also features across different contexts. These are widely represented in the extended oral data, as shown below.

**Experiential Present Perfects without adverbial modification:** In line with Dahl’s (1985: 142) suggestion that the experiential Present Perfect tends not to occur in the presence of specific TAs, of the 89 experiential Present Perfects found in the extended oral data, 82% of the tokens (73/89) occur without any TA whatsoever ($X^2 = 16.3; p=.000$), as in (11), (12), and (13).

(11) *Me he quedado en lo de Graciela.* (FW08F29)
    ‘I have stayed at Graciela’s.’

(12) *Yo he tenido clases públicas.* (FW08F60)
    ‘I have had public lectures.’

(13) *He vivido tantas cosas difíciles.* (FW08F115)
    ‘I have lived through so many difficult things.’

**Experiential Present Perfects with temporal modification:** the remaining 18% perfect experiential tokens (16/89) are variously modified by connective (2/16), frequency (9/16), general (4/16), and other (1/16) TAs, as in examples (14) and (15).

(14) *No he vivido en el exterior nunca.* (SLI07MJ51)
    ‘I have never lived overseas.’

(15) *He estado [mal] alguna vez.* (CC07FC16)
    ‘I have been [depressed] sometime.’
Furthermore, a cross-tabulation of experiential perfect function and presence of TA in the extended oral data revealed that – as noted above – the Preterit tends to co-occur with frequency TAs. Specifically, out of the 34 tokens of experiential function plus frequency TA, 74% (25/34) are Preterit and 26% (9/34) are Present Perfect tokens. Once again, the presence of frequency TAs such as nunca ‘never’, jamás ‘ever’, and alguna vez ‘sometime/ever’ motivates Preterit usage. This trend may explain the low usage frequency of the Present Perfect in the QUST experiential contexts, since these were accompanied by the frequency TA nunca. Note, also, that proximate and frequency TAs favor the Present Perfect at only 10% (12/122) in the multivariate analysis of the oral data.

**Experiential Present Perfects and grammatical person:** As predicted, a large number of experiential Present Perfects occur with first person (singular and plural) subjects. In the extended oral data, 62% (55/89) co-occur with first person subjects, 2% (2/89) with second person subjects, and 36% (32/89) with third person subjects, as in examples (16), (17), and (18).

(16) *Yo lo he visto* (a Mariano) en congresos de la Sociedad Argentina de Lingüística. (FW08M23)

‘I have seen Mariano at Argentinian Linguistic Society conferences.’

(17) ¿*Vos has ido* (a ese restaurante)? (FW08F19)

‘Have you been to that restaurant?’

(18) *Carla lo ha visto* al perro en el subte. (FW08F36)

‘Carla has seen the dog on the train.’

Recall that grammatical person was not statistically significant in the multivariate analysis presented above. The prevalence of the Present Perfect in the extended oral data agrees with the observation that first person singular subjects tend to be most commonly used in casual conversation (Travis 2007: 130) – whether with the Present Perfect or other tenses (cf. Silva Corvalán 2001: 163). The majority of experiential Present Perfects with a third person grammatical subject occur with clear first person experiencers. As mentioned earlier, the contention that experientials tend to collocate
with first person subjects in encoding subjectivity (cf. Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 19) should thus be revisited to include the notion of experiencer. Examples (19) and (20) illustrate these uses.

(19)  *Me ha ocurrido que no funciona la máquina.* (FW08F124)

‘The credit card machine not working has happened to me.’

(20)  *A mí me ha pasado eso.* (CC07FC16)

‘That has happened to me.’

It is thus clear that, in the context of the present analysis, focusing on grammatical person of the subject alone does not, in and of itself, determine whether tokens encode a person’s subjective experience. Besides the predicted occurrence of experiential perfects with first person subjects and in non-assertive contexts (cf. Dahl 1985: 141 and 143), some of the Present Perfects found in the extended oral data (N=24) collocate with the verbs *ver* ‘to see’ (examples (16) and (18) above and (21) below) and *pasar/ocurrir* ‘to happen/to occur’ (examples (19) and (20) above) in combination with a (preferably) first person subject or experiencer.

(21)  *Yo he visto cortos de esa escuela bien hechos.* (FW08M34)

‘I have seen short movies from that school that were well made.’

**Experiential Present Perfects with plural objects and generic reference:** The most striking finding by far is the several experiential perfect tokens displaying some form of generic reference, either in that there is a lack of specific temporal modification by TAs, the temporal anchoring is left unspecified by the interlocutors, the object of the verb is plural or indefinite, in the use of mass nouns like *gente* ‘people’, and quantifiers such as *tanto* ‘so much’, *mucho* ‘much’, *poco* ‘little’, etc. This trend accords with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008: 21) observation that, in Mexican Spanish, the co-occurrence of indefinite full noun phrases with the Present Perfect is consonant with the experiential interpretation. Recall that experiential perfects serve to encode a past situation without mentioning a particular occasion, are quite general and unspecific in character (Lindstedt 2000: 369), and display “type-focusing event reference” (Dahl & Hedin 2000). Moreover, according to Pancheva,
there exists a distinction between resultative and experiential perfects in that the resulting state of a resultative “must hold at utterance time” (2003: 277), while such is not the case in experiential contexts. Pancheva explains that while a sentence such as *I have built a sandcastle* calls for a resultative interpretation (crucially if the sandcastle in question is still standing), the addition of a plural object (i.e. *I have built sandcastles*), and the fact that the sandcastle no longer exists is consonant with the experiential reading. Examples (22) through (29) exemplify these uses (elements contributing to plurality and generality have been underscored).

38 Note that the presence of the plural NP *sandcastles* does not, in and of itself, determine the experiential reading. A resultative reading may obtain if two sandcastles are still standing at utterance time.

(22) *Nunca hemos juntado tanto.* (CC06FG6)
‘We have never picked so much (fruit).’

(23) *He viajado mucho pero en viajes de turismo.* (SL108MP66)
‘I have traveled much but as a tourist.’

(24) *Hemos tratado poco con gente de afuera.* (SL107MJ57)
‘We have had little contact with people from overseas.’

(25) *No a todo el mundo se le han dado las cosas con se me dieron a mí.* (CC06FC16)
‘Things have not turned out for everyone as well as they did for me.’

(26) *He atendido personas que han venido del extranjero.* (SL107MO53)
‘I have seen customers who have come from overseas.’

(27) *He visto embarazadas en cursos de pre-parto.* (FW08F28)
‘I have seen pregnant women in childbirth classes.’

(28) *Yo he visto situaciones en las prácticas.* (FW08F80)
‘I have seen situations in the hands-on tutorials.’
(29) *Yo he tenido alumnos conocidos.* (FW08F112)
    ‘I have had students that I knew from before.’

As suggested by Hernández (2004: 49), a number of the experiential tokens in the extended oral data involve iteration and repetition (cf. Comrie 1976: 58), as in examples (30) through (32).

(30) *Ahí me lo he encontrado un par de veces.* (FW08F21)
    ‘I have bumped into him a couple of times there.’

(31) *Yo he ido a tu casa montones de veces.* (FW08M62)
    ‘I have been to your place lots of times.’

(32) *He llorado un montón.* (FW08F117)
    ‘I have cried a lot.’

Moreover, in line with the proposed emphatic nature of the perfect (Bybee et al. 1994: 62), iteration and emphasis are sometimes encoded through the emphatic NP + Present Perfect construction (roughly equal to the English ‘How I have done X!’). Examples (33) through (35) show this emphatic use of the Present Perfect of experience. NP have been underscored for illustration purposes.

(33) ¡*Vos sabés las veces que la he llevado al hospital!* (FW08F107)
    ‘You know how many times I have taken her to hospital!’

(34) ¡*En esa casa lo que Ustedes se han divertido!* (FW08F9)
    ‘How you guys have enjoyed yourselves in that house!’

(35) ¡*Yo lo que me he peleado con ese chabón este año!* (CC08MA28)\(^{39}\)
    ‘How I have fought with that guy this year!’

\(^{39}\) As mentioned earlier in §4.6.7, this instance was also coded as continuative and current relevance by two of the three coders. I consider the third coder’s suggestion that the token refers to the speaker’s subjectivity and here take it to express iterative personal experience.
The examples given in (9) through (35) above illustrate the proposed missing link between the past and the present moment typical of experientials (cf. Comrie 1976: 59; Brugger 1997: 61; Lindstedt 2000: 370; Pancheva 2003: 279). The disconnection between past and present is further made explicit in (36) through (38).

(36)  *No lo ve [al padre] ahora, pero lo ha visto.* (FW08F121)
     ‘She doesn’t see her father now, but she has seen him.’

(37)  *¿Te ha costado crecer?*
      *Sí, y me sigue costando.* (CC07MS15/FC16)
      ‘Has it been difficult growing up?’
      Yes, it has and it still is.’

(38)  *Yo me he enamorado de tipos; me enamoro de tipos.* (CC07MS15)
     ‘I have fallen in love with guys; I do fall in love with guys.’

In (36), the simple Present is used to refer to the person’s lack of contact with her father as opposed to their previous contact in the past. The experiential perfect highlights the indefiniteness of these previous visits, since the focus is on the lack of contact in the present. Examples (37) and (38) feature the simple Present to clarify, as it were, that the past experience encoded through the Present Perfect is actually true of the present moment as well. These examples illustrate the past value of the experiential perfect and its expected disconnection with the present moment. In this respect, the ARPS experiential Present Perfect is a type of indefinite past (cf. Leech 2004: 42–43).

Finally, the prevalence of the Present Perfect in experiential contexts is antithetical to previous claims for ARPS and “Latin American Spanish”; namely the proposals that: (i) the Present Perfect is almost nonexistent in informal styles (e.g. Donni de Mirande 1977: 46–49; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413); and (ii) the Present Perfect is restricted to continuative settings (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972; Harris 1982; Fleischman 1983; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000). I return to these issues in chapter 7.
5.5.2 Result

Overall, the resultative function represents 24% (112/467) of the total Present Perfect data analyzed in this section (i.e. extended oral and QUST corpora). As previously stated, resultatives co-occur with telic predicates and tend to collocate with TAs such as ya ‘already’ and todavía ‘still/yet’. Examples (39) through (43) show some canonical resultative Present Perfects from the extended oral data, TAs have been underscored.

(39) Nosotros **hemos aportado** lo nuestro como otros pueblos de América Latina han aportado lo suyo. (SLI07FM46)
‘We have contributed our own [cultural traits] just like other Latin American nations have contributed their own traits.’ (i.e. the outcome of these special traits is now visible in Latin American languages and cultures).

(40) Muchos vecinos **ya han muerto**. (FW08F30)
‘Many neighbors have already died’ (i.e. are presently dead).

(41) Ya lo **hemos hablado** [el tema de hacer nuevos amigos]. (CC07MM18)
‘We have already discussed making new friends’ (i.e. we are through discussing new friendships).

(42) **Todavía no he hecho** amigos. (SLI07FS39)
‘I still have not made any friends’ (i.e. I presently have no new friends).

(43) Todavía no nos **hemos sentado** a mirar cuadernos. (FW08M108)
‘We still have not sat down to look at the business books’ (i.e. the work is still not done).

A straightforward example of the Present Perfect to encode an irreversible resulting state is its occurrence with the verb **cambiar** ‘to change’, as in (44) and (45).
(44) **Han cambiado mucho las cosas.** (FW08F58)
‘Things have changed a lot’ (i.e. they are presently different).

(45) **La patada de rugby ha cambiado.** (FW08M63)
‘The rugby kick has changed’ (i.e. it is different now to what it was before).

In the QUST, the resultative function was tested through four target items (two formal and two informal). The target items included the accomplishment **leer un libro** ‘read a book’ (targeting **Ya lo he leído**/**Ya lo lei**) and the achievement **llegar** ‘to arrive’ (targeting **Ha llegado Juan/Llegó Juan**). Unlike the experiential function, in the QUST the resultative Present Perfect features more frequently in the formal target items. Specifically, while in informal contexts it appears at the rate of 5% (9/187), this figure increases to 32% (57/180) in formal settings. As a consequence of this cross-stylistic flux in Present Perfect choice, the Preterit is used more readily in informal contexts (at 95% [178/187]), and less so in formal contexts (at 68% [123/180]). These trends suggest that style plays a statistically significant role in the use of resultative Present Perfects, as displayed in Table 5.7.

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
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$X^2=44.8; p=0.000$

Table 5.7 Present Perfect usage across style in questionnaire resultative settings

Finally, the high overall frequency of the Preterit in resultative contexts appears to be a consequence of the presence of the TAs **ya** ‘already’ and **todavía** ‘still/yet’. A cross-tabulation of the temporal adverbial and perfect function groups with the complete contemporary corpora (extended oral and QUST corpora) shows that the Preterit is more frequent than the Present Perfect in the presence of the TAs **ya** and **todavía** (Preterit at 83% [194/234] and Present Perfect at 17% [40/234]).

These results agree with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008: 26) observations for

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40 Interestingly, a number of participants added the TA **ya** to the Preterit form of their choice in the QUST. Specifically, in the item **En el último mes (cambiar) de pareja como cuatro veces** ‘In the last month (you-he/she/change) partners like four times’ some participants decided on **En el último mes ya cambiaste de pareja como cuatro veces** ‘In the last month you already changed partners like four times’ (QUST06FM110).
Mexican Spanish in that presence of *ya* favors the Preterit. Examples (46) through (50) illustrate the use of the Preterit with the TAs *ya* and *todavía*.

(46)  *Ya se enteró todo el mundo de mis amores.* (CC07MS15)
     ‘Everyone already heard about my love stories’ (i.e. people now know).

(47)  ¿*Abrieron ya la persiana?* (FW08F90)
     ‘Did you lift the blinds already’ (i.e. are the blinds now open?).

(48)  *Uno ya formó su propia familia.* (SLI07FN44)
     ‘One already formed their own family’ (i.e. one now has a family).

(49)  *Pero no nos dio el tiempo todavía.* (CC08MA28)
     ‘But we still didn’t have the time’ (i.e. the work is still undone).

(50)  *Creo que no llegaron todavía.* (FW08F11)
     ‘I think they didn’t arrive yet’ (i.e. they are presently not here).

5.5.3 Continuity

The continuative Present Perfect occurs at the rate of 28% (17/61) in the extended oral data, and at 17.5% (57/326) in the QUST. Examples (51) through (53) illustrate some of the canonical continuative Present Perfects found in the extended oral data. TAs have been underscored.

(51)  *En los últimos 6 meses no me he dado piquitos con nadie.* (FW08M71)
     ‘In the last 6 months I have not kissed anyone.’

(52)  *Hay algunas cositas que le he marcado hasta ahora y no lo puede remontar.* (FW08M119)
     ‘There are a few things that I have pointed out to him until now but he cannot improve.’

119
Con el nivel de educación que siempre ha tenido acá Argentina.

‘With the level of education that Argentina here has always had.’

The above examples illustrate the canonical view that continuative perfects must establish an explicit relationship with the present moment and that proximate and frequency TAs commonly accompany their predication (Iatridou et al. 2001: 196). However, some examples appear to comply with only one of these requirements (namely, presence of TAs), as in (54).

Este mes ha sido – y sigue siendo – agitado.

‘This month has been, and still is, hectic.’

The use of the simple Present in the English translation offered in (54) may seem redundant, since the English continuative Present Perfect must include the speech time – known as “perfect time span” (cf. Rothstein 2008: 55 and 125). In (54) the participant uses the simple Present to render the connection to the present moment explicit. This suggests that ARPS continuative Present Perfects do not necessarily incorporate the present moment; rather, here the Present Perfect functions as a past form that necessitates further clarification as to its extension into present time. As we shall see further on, this claim has profound implications vis-à-vis what has been suggested for Argentinian Spanish and Latin American Spanish as a whole.

Recall that continuatives occur in contexts that are aspectually durative or iterative and mostly behave like a present tense (Brugger 1997: 53 ff.). This is the reason continuity is encoded via the simple present in many languages (including Spanish) (Klein & Vater 1998: 219; Tommola 2000: 447). In fact, this use of the simple Present is evidenced in the QUST. Recall that the QUST included four items targeting continuative perfects (two in formal and two in informal contexts), as in examples (55) through (58).

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41 Also see Howe (2006: 142) for reference to some Peruvian Spanish speakers’ preference for the Present Simple when the situation continues up until the present time.
A: ¿Te parece mal que tenga otra novia?
B: ¡Bueno, en el último mes (cambiar) de pareja como cuatro veces!
‘Do you (informal) think it is wrong for me to have another girlfriend? Well, in the last month (you-informal/change) partners like four times!’

A: ¿Le parece incorrecto que tenga otra pareja?
B: A ver, ¡durante el último mes (cambiar) de pareja casi ya cuatro veces!
‘Do you (formal) think it is incorrect for me to have another partner? Let me see, during the last month (you-formal/change) partners almost four times!’

A: ¿Qué le pasa a Mariana?
B: Está muy triste. (Estar) sentada ahí todo el día, sin decir nada.
‘What’s wrong with Mariana? She’s very sad. (Be) sitting there all day, without saying anything.’

A: ¿Qué le sucede a la Sra. Rosas?
B: Está muy consternada. (Estar) sentada ahí el día entero, sin decir palabra.
‘What’s the matter with Mrs. Rosas? She is very upset. (Be) sitting there the entire day, not a single word uttered.’

A distributional analysis of the entirety of the selected forms in the QUST reveals that, in informal contexts, the continuative function is represented by 72% Preterit (N=141), 9% Present Perfect (N=18), and 19% simple Present (N=38) verbs. Note the prevalence of both the Preterit and the simple Present over the Present Perfect. In line with the influence of style noted above, the use of the Preterit decreases to 65% (N=128) in formal contexts, while the Present Perfect escalates to 20% (N=39), and the simple Present hovers at 16% (N=31), as shown in Table 5.8.
Table 5.8 Preterit, Present Perfect, and simple Present usage across style in questionnaire continuative settings

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Present</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>198</td>
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Note that, while style proves relevant in Preterit and Present Perfect choice ($X^2=8.17; p=.004$), it does not influence the use of the simple Present ($X^2=0.156; p=.693$).

Regarding presence of TAs, in both the extended oral data and the QUST, proximate and frequency TAs such as *últimamente* ‘lately’ and *siempre* ‘always’ favor Preterit, rather than Present Perfect usage. This trend is particularly noticeable with frequency TAs like *siempre* ‘always’. In the extended oral data, the Preterit collocates with frequency TAs at 80% (28/35) while the Present Perfect occurs at only 20% (7/35). Likewise, in the QUST the Preterit occurs 80% of the time (101/126) with frequency TAs, while the Present Perfect amounts to 20% (25/126). Just as with the experiential and resultative functions, these trends show the high likelihood that the Preterit collocate with TAs of different kinds.42

The prevalence of the Preterit in the expression of continuity seems to run against canonical proposals that the time span represented by the verb include the speech time, since the Preterit carries with it the implicature that the situation in question does not indeed reach utterance time (Comrie 1985: 41). However, if the Present Perfect’s continuative interpretation is, as suggested by Iatridou et al. (2001: 196), reliant on adverbial modification, then the Preterit could arguably express continuative meanings when in conjunction with a TA.43 I discuss this issue further in chapter 7.

5.5.4 Current relevance

The current relevance Present Perfect features very sparsely in the extended oral data (at 3% [8/296]), and is more frequent in the QUST (at 11% [83/732]). The QUST included eight items targeting current relevance Present Perfects (four formal and four informal items). Examples (59) through (62) introduce the informal items

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42 Note that the favoring effect of proximate/frequency TAs on Present Perfect usage in the multivariate analysis presented above does not preclude the Preterit from occurring with these TAs. In fact, proximate/frequency TAs trigger a preponderance of Preterits – as shown above.

43 For instance, in an utterance such as *Tampoco hizo días de calor* (CC06FM4) (lit. ‘Neither made days of heat’) 'It was not/has not been warm either’ a conventionalization of implicature may be proposed, such that *tampoco hizo* incurs a continuative reading. This meaning is labeled “covert lately” by Iatridou et al. (2001: 197).
(for their formal counterparts refer to Appendix B). TAs contributing the current relevance/recent past interpretation have been underscored.

(59) A: ¿Qué pasa que están todos a los gritos?
B: ¡Argentina recién (ganar) el partido contra Brasil!
‘Why is everyone yelling?
Argentine just (win) the game against Brazil!’

(60) A: ¿Cómo que no está en casa?
B: No, (salir) para el trabajo muy apurado. ¡Ni un chau!
‘What do you mean he is not home?
No, he (leave) for work in a rush. He didn’t even say goodbye!’

(61) A: ¿Por qué estás tan deprimido?
B: Lo que pasa es que el médico me (decir) que no hay nada más que hacer. Es el final.
‘Why are you so depressed?
The thing is the doctor (tell) me there’s nothing else to do. It’s the end.’

(62) A: ¿Quién puede ayudarme con la tarea de Química?
B: Bueno, Carolina (hacer) Química I y II, así que podría ayudarte.
‘Who can help me with my Chemistry homework?
Well, Carolina (do) Chemistry 101 and 102, so she should be able to help you out.’

In (59) and (60) the focus is on the recency of Argentina winning the game and the person leaving home for work, respectively. These items thus target the recent past nuance of the perfect (cf. Comrie 1976: 56). Examples (61) and (62), on the other hand, test current relevance; specifically, they are offered as relevant contributions to the questions posed by A. Here both the recent past and current relevance perfect are grouped under the umbrella term current relevance. Regarding participant choice in the QUST, with the TA recién ‘just/recently’ (example 59) the Present Perfect is preferred at the rate of 11% (20/183), while the Preterit statistically prevails at 89%
The same percentages are maintained with the remainder of the current relevance items (examples (60), (61) and (62) above); namely, the Present Perfect is used at 11% (63/549) and the Preterit at 89% (486/549). However, once again, style plays an important role as Present Perfect usage grows together with increased formality levels. While the informal items in the QUST overwhelmingly favor the Preterit (at 96% [349/365]) and disfavor the Present Perfect (at 4% [16/365]), the formal QUST items display the predicted rise in Present Perfect usage (at 18% [67/367]), while the Preterit decreases to 82% (300/367). These trends are portrayed in Table 5.9.

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
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</table>

\[X^2=35; p=.000\]

Table 5.9 Present Perfect usage across style in questionnaire current relevance settings

The rise in Present Perfect usage in formal contexts provides evidence for participants’ view of the Present Perfect as more desirable when formality increases. This position relates to Solé’s (1992: 793) observation that one of the defining syntactic features of Buenos Aires Spanish as reported by 34% of his participants is *el uso incorrecto de los tiempos verbales* (recién pasó un tren) ‘the incorrect use of verbal tenses (a train just passed by)’ instead of the prescribed Present Perfect usage of *Recién ha pasado un tren* ‘A train has just passed by’. I return to this issue in chapter 7.

Let us now turn to the extended oral data. The current relevance Present Perfect represents a mere 3% of the data (8/296), while the Preterit is widespread at 97% (288/296). Examples (63) through (65) illustrate tokens where temporal recency is made clear by the use of the TAs *hoy en día* ‘these days’, and *ahora* ‘now’.

(63) *Hoy en día es imposible, los precios han subido muchísimo.*

(SLI07MG52)

‘These days it is impossible, prices have increased so much.’
In other examples, recency may be inferred through familiarity with the context of situation in which the verb appears, as in examples (66) and (67).

(66)  *Nos hemos mudado a Provincia.* (SLI08ML63)  
‘We have moved to outer Buenos Aires.’

(67)  *Con las inversiones que ha traído Italia.* (SLI08ML63)  
‘With the investments that Italy has brought.’

In (66) and (67), the TA *recientemente* ‘recently’ may be inserted clause-finally, such that the moving house in (66), and the bringing of Italian capital into Argentina in (67) clearly stand as recent events. Because of familiarity with the life of the interviewee and the socio-political circumstances surrounding the interview, these items may faithfully be classified as current relevance Present Perfects. This is an advantage over corpus data collected by third parties, where the context of situation is often unknown to the researcher.

Another use of the current relevance Present Perfect is found in situations that require announcing recent or new information. Note that these are different to hot news uses since the addressees are usually familiar with the information being transmitted but are somehow reminded of it in the form of an announcement. These uses of the current relevance Present Perfect sometimes resemble performative speech acts and are reminiscent of the pervasive hot news Present Perfects found in the 19th century data – as I show in chapter 6. Examples (68) and (69) were taken from TV programs (a prime time dance competition program and a World Cup 2010 elimination game, respectively). Example (70) was uttered by a male speaker (let us call him “A”) to another male speaker (“B”) as he announced the recent agreement between conversational partners that B was definitely overweight.
(68) **Lo que ha votado la gente.** (FW08M59)

‘What people have voted.’

(69) **Han empatado la Argentina y Paraguay.** (FW08M61)

‘Argentina and Paraguay have drawn the game.’

(70) **Hemos agregado otra al club de que estás gordo.** (FW08M66)

‘We have added another one to the group of people who think you’re overweight.’

The performative character of the current relevance Present Perfect in ARPS stands as a marked stylistic resource to emphasize recency of the situation in contexts that require public announcing of this type of information.44

Finally, the current relevance Present Perfect has been studied vis-à-vis its use in hodiernal (i.e. ‘today’) narratives (e.g. Schwenter 1994a). As mentioned in the previous chapter, some casual conversation interaction naturally triggered hodiernal narratives among participants, while twenty-two sociolinguistic interview participants were explicitly asked to describe their day on the day of the interview (in line with Schwenter 1994a; Howe 2006). Only one Present Perfect token (example (71) below) was extracted from the extended oral data in a hodiernal setting.

(71) **Y tu día, ¿cómo ha sido María Fernanda?** (CC07ML22)

‘How has your day been, Maria Fernanda?’

The question in (71) was posed by a young male to his female conversational partner as the opening sequence in an attempt to initiate interaction as soon as the recording began. The use of the Present Perfect in (71) – unlikely in ARPS current relevance contexts in casual interaction – seems to “parody” Peninsular usage (cf. Eckert 2008: 469). A section of the answer provided to his question appears in (72).

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44 The ARPS Present Perfect features readily in announcements indicating the completion of a process (such as the landing of a plane, the winning of a game, etc.). For instance, after successfully re-charging credit to a cell phone, the recorded message played the following: **Su crédito ha sido cargado** (FW08F27) ‘Your (formal) credit has been charged.’ These uses are similar to resultative Present Perfects in their focus on a resulting state and are akin to the somewhat formulaic Peninsular uses of the Preterit to encode recent past, as in the fixed expressions **se acabó** ‘it’s over’ and **te pillé** ‘I got you’ (Kempas 2008: 249).
Mi día, nada. Trabajo, de mañana y de tarde…más tranquilo está ahora el tema. Vine acá, ordené, cociné, limpié. Comimos con Carla pechuguitas de pollo con, no pata y muslo con verdurita salteada así…sanito. […] Y bueno, y recién llegué de trabajar, pasé por la terminal que tuve que sacar un pasaje para irme a La Plata. Y después me vine acá en colectivo, estuve esperando el colectivo bastante…esperé que no se largue a llover porque no tenía paraguas, nada y me iba a empapar. Y ahora estamos esperando para comer.

‘My day…not much, really. Work, in the morning and in the afternoon…everything’s a bit more relaxed now. I got here, tidied up the house, cooked, cleaned. We ate with Carla, (we had) chicken breasts…no, sorry, chicken drumstick with sautéed vegetables like that…healthy stuff. […] And well, and I just arrived from work, went past the bust terminal as I had to buy a ticket to La Plata. And I then came here by bus, I was waiting for the bus quite a long time…I hoped that it wouldn’t rain as I didn’t have my umbrella, so I was just going to get soaking wet. And now we are waiting to have dinner.’

Despite the use of the Present Perfect in the question, the entirety of the narrative in the response features the Preterit. To exemplify further, let us look at the Barcelona data (see §4.4.1). Example (73) is the account of the Catalan participant, while (74) introduces the Argentinian speaker’s hodiernal narrative. It should be noted that the four narratives were recorded in the presence of the other speakers, as a group.
como siempre. Y nada, he disfrutado una apasionante clase sin descanso y aquí estoy tomando una cerveza. (BCN08MR)

‘Well I have woken up, I have got up at quarter to 9. I have finally got up at 9, I have decided to get up. I have put myself into the shower, I have got dressed. I have had a bowl of Kellogg’s and about 5 or 6 grapes for breakfast. I have made myself a coffee, I have blow-dried my hair, I have had my coffee. […] Well, I have picked up my stuff, I have prepared my bag, I have left the house, I have picked up the bike before leaving home. And not much, I have come downstairs […]. And picked the bike and I have made it to class. I have got to class late, as usual. And I have enjoyed an inspiring class without a break and here I am, sipping a beer.’

(74)

Bueno, habíamos puesto el despertador a las 8 porque queríamos hacer la homework, nunca nos levantamos. La tuve que despertar a ella porque es peor que yo, “levantate, levantate, levantate” como 5 veces, así que… yo tipo 9 salí de la cama, nada, me lavé los dientes, me lavé la cara, me desperté fácil […] desayunamos, vinimos para acá, y nada, y eso y empezamos la clase. Hoy no tuvimos corte pero a mi se me pasó más rápido porque hubo como más actividad. Y después te esperé a vos y acá estamos. (BCN08FJ)

‘Well, we had set the alarm at 8 because we wanted to do our homework but we did not make it. I had to wake her up because she is worse than me, “get up, get up, get up” like 5 times, so… at 9ish I got up, nothing, I brushed my teeth, I washed my face, I woke up easily […], we had breakfast, we came here and yeah we started the class. Today we didn’t have a break but it went much faster for me because it’s like there was more activity. And then I waited for you and here we are.’

We can see that (73) agrees with Schwenter’s (1994) findings on the use of the Present Perfect in Peninsular hodiernal narratives. In line with Howe and Schwenter’s (2003) claims for Peruvian Spanish, the Preterit is systematically used in (74) to narrate same day situations. The examples presented above indicate that the proposed anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization which originates in hodiernal narratives is
not true for ARPS. The question remains however, how current relevance is expressed in this variety. I address this issue in §5.8.

5.5.5 Hot news

The hot news Present Perfect was not targeted in the QUST and is almost nonexistent in the extended oral corpora (N=1), which may partly be due to the nature of the data (i.e. no newspaper/TV news analyzed in this chapter). There were no contexts designed to target hot news Present Perfects in the QUST, although the item focusing on Juan’s arrival (Ha llegado/Llegó Juan ‘Juan has arrived/arrived’) could have been interpreted as a hot news token (following Pancheva (2003: 301 ff.), it was given a resultative interpretation instead). A single oral data use was recorded from a phone message left by the proud grandparents of a newly-born baby girl, shown in example (75).

(75) Queríamos avisarles que hemos sido abuelos. (FW08M38)

‘We wanted to let you know that we have been (become) grandparents.’

Example (75) combines two crucial hot news traits: resulting state and recency (cf. Schwenter 1994b). The resulting state in this case is becoming a grandparent, while the birth is recent to the time of speech (on the same day, about three hours later).

Another interesting hot news context was found in casual conversation between family members discussing their remote control, shown in (76).

(76) Tengo una noticia para darte: arreglé el control remoto. (CC07ML22)

‘I have news for you: I fixed the remote control.’

In (76) we find a Preterit, rather than a Present Perfect, used in a hot news context. This is in line with the pervasive use of the Preterit in current relevance or recent past contexts, as we shall see below.

The fact that hardly any hot news Present Perfects feature in the data analyzed here lends empirical support to the claim that the contemporary ARPS Present Perfect is not following the current relevance>hodiernal>hesternal>perfective grammaticalization path proposed for Peninsular Spanish. Recall that the emergence
of the hot news function normally precedes anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization, as has been the case in languages like French (Schwenter 1994b: 997). It remains to be seen whether this trend holds across different genres (and historical times). I reassess hot news usage in earlier and contemporary newspaper media in chapter 6.

5.5.6 Past perfectivity

The use of the Present Perfect to encode past perfectivity amounted to only one token in the extended oral data (0.1% [1/920]), while the QUST featured 14% (81/570) of these instances. Example (77) illustrates the use of the Present Perfect to encode past in the QUST. The TA has been underscored for illustration purposes.

(77) A: ¿Qué abrigo más bonito Sra. Marín! ¿Es nuevo?
    B: No es nuevo, me lo he comprado el año pasado con motivo de mi cumpleaños. (QUST06FS90)
    ‘What a lovely coat, Mrs. Marin! Is it new?
    No, it isn’t. I (have) bought it last year on the occasion of my birthday.’

Example (77) involves a clear perfective situation made explicit by the presence of the specific TA el año pasado ‘last year’. This QUST item is of particular interest since uses like these are unattested in the oral contemporary data (some perfective uses of the Present Perfect are found in the 19th century data, as we shall see later on). The formal character of this item may have contributed to the selection of the Present Perfect, although this choice would not commonly be made by speakers in spontaneous interaction (note the single Present Perfect token in a past perfective context in the extended oral data).

Recall that the QUST included six items (three formal and three informal) targeting Present Perfect usage in perfective contexts, as shown in (78) through (80).
(78) A: ¿No hay fotos de tu difunto hijo en esta casa?
B: No, no quiero poner fotos de personas que (morir) en esta casa.
‘Aren’t there any photos of your late son in this house?
No, I don’t want to put up photos of people who (die) in this house.’

(79) A: Chile y Argentina tienen mucho en común.
B: Sí, las dos (sufir) muerte y tristeza con sus dictaduras militares.
‘Chile and Argentina have a lot in common.
Yes, both (suffer) death and misery during their military dictatorships.’

(80) A: ¿Y ese abrigo nuevo?
B: No es nuevo, me lo (comprar) el año pasado para mi cumpleaños.
‘And that new coat?
No, it’s not new, I (buy) it/someone (buy) it last year for my birthday.’

Examples (78) and (79) refer to the emotionally touching subjects of a relative’s death and military dictatorship in South America. These items were originally included in the QUST to test the influence of subjectivity and emotion in the use of the Present Perfect. This was in line with DeMello’s (1997) proposal that the Spanish Present Perfect may sometimes be connected to the emotional and subjective attitudes of the speaker with regard to a particular discourse situation, and to Schwenter’s (1994a) observation that – although underrepresented in his data – participants in his Alicante Spanish study indicated that the so-called affective use of the Present Perfect is not uncommon in casual conversation (cf. Otálora Otálora 1970: 28; Cerny 1972: 5; Hernández Alonso 1990: 450; Rodríguez Louro 2006). The QUST results indicate that some participants favor the Present Perfect to refer to perfective situations independently of style. A cross-tabulation between perfect function and style shows that, while the informal items trigger 12% (35/289) Present Perfect, increased formality motivates a mere 16% (46/281) Present Perfect usage ($X^2=2.12; p=.145$).

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45 In the original utterance from which this QUST item was designed the prepositional phrase en esta casa ‘in this house’ was an adjunct of the main VP poner ‘to put’. That is, the speaker did not want to put up photos of deceased people in her new house (rather than the passing away of the person having occurred at the speaker’s place).
Affective involvement and formality levels may have motivated these trends within the QUST.\(^{46}\)

As mentioned above, in contrast to the QUST results, the Present Perfect was highly infrequent in Preterit contexts in the extended oral data. The only example noted in these data is offered in (81).

\[(81) \text{Uno de veintiocho años que ya ha cumplido en diciembre.} \]

(SLI07MQ55)

‘A twenty-eight year old who has already turned 28 in December.’

In (81) the interviewee refers to his son’s turning 28 years old in early December 2006, approximately two months prior to the interview. Besides the clear past perfectivity of the birthday in question, the punctual achievement *cumplir* ‘to turn’ should call for Preterit usage in this case. However, the Present Perfect is preferred. Note that the presence of the TA *ya* ‘already’ in this example agrees with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008: 25) observation on the use of the Present Perfect and *ya* as encoding past perfectivity in Peninsular Spanish.

Overall, the use of the Present Perfect across different perfect functions in the QUST is closely linked to style – a variable I discuss in the next section.

5.6 Style

As already noted, the Present Perfect rises in frequency as one approaches the least naturally occurring data (i.e. the QUST), in line with previous observations on the prevalence of the Present Perfect in formal styles (e.g. Donni de Mirande 1977: 46–49; 1992: 666–668; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413). As mentioned earlier, the casual conversation and the sociolinguistic interview show low overall Present Perfect usage (at 3% [N=20] and 6% [N=47], respectively). The QUST displays higher Present Perfect use, at the rate of 14% (N=305). Recall that the difference in Present Perfect use across data types was statistically significant ($X^2=80.5; p=.000$). These trends were originally presented to illustrate the progressive surge in Present Perfect choice from the more to the least naturally occurring data, upholding my hypothesis that the Present Perfect should be used more readily where linguistic production is

\(^{46}\) Note that (78) features a mass noun (i.e. *personas* ‘people’) followed by a relative clause (*que han muerto* ‘who have died’). As shown in §5.5.1, these structures are germane to the experiential perfect as used to encode indefinite and generic past.
highly monitored. As shown at different points in §5.5, Present Perfect usage grows consistently across perfect functions when formality increases in the QUST. Figure 5.4 summarizes the results of a cross-tabulation between style and perfect function (earlier introduced in different tables).

![Figure 5.4 Usage percentage of questionnaire temporal adverbials across style](image)

Resultative Present Perfects prove the most style-sensitive (5% [9/187] in informal contexts versus 32% in formal contexts [57/180]). Current relevance Present Perfects are specially affected by the stylistic flux, they appear at 4% [16/365] in informal contexts and at 18% [67/367] in formal styles. Continuative Present Perfects follow suit with a rate of 11% (18/159) versus 23% (39/167). Present Perfects in past perfective contexts also change across styles (at 12% in informal contexts [35/289] and 16% [46/281] in formal settings). The item containing the specific TA el año pasado ‘last year’ (see example (77) above) represents a more radical departure from spontaneous usage, and – as noted above – possibly an instance of hypercorrection.\(^{47}\) Recall that all of these tokens were registered in formal contexts and that Present Perfect usage increased systematically from informal to formal settings, even in the absence of TAs. The hypercorrect behavior of some speakers suggests that the Present Perfect (or perhaps some perfect functions) may indeed stand as a prestigious form in ARPS. Finally, in experiential contexts, the Present Perfect is immune to stylistic

\(^{47}\) This observation is in line with Cox (2005: 57), who suggests that the use of the Present Perfect in Preterit contexts in American English may be an instance of hypercorrection.
change (8% [8/97] in informal and 10% [10/99] in formal styles). Two reasons may explain this stability.

First, recall that the only experiential item in the QUST included the frequency TA nunca ‘never’. The presence of this TA may well have favored the Preterit. A second possible reason is that the experiential Present Perfect is actually quite embedded in the ARPS grammar. This is evidenced in the widespread use of this form in the extended oral data. In fact, in the extended oral corpora it is the Present Perfect that features most strongly in experiential contexts – at the rate of 60% [89/148] versus 40% [59/148] – a tendency that runs against the overall pervasiveness of the Preterit noted for the rest of the perfect functions. Despite the low overall frequency of the Present Perfect, my results indicate that analyzing variants in specific functional domains (experiential contexts, in this case) may be the key to uncovering complex spontaneous usage.

Likewise, style is a useful measure in analyzing which variables are prone to monitoring in linguistic production and are hence likely to stand as strong sociolinguistic markers. This is in line with the Labovian idea that “along a vernacular-standard continuum, speakers show lower usage levels for vernacular features, and higher levels for their standard counterparts, as they move from casual situations […] to formal situations” (Schilling-Estes 2002: 379). The almost negligible fluctuation of experiential usage across style in the QUST, and the pervasiveness of this Present Perfect type in the extended oral data suggest that the experiential Present Perfect is a vernacular feature of ARPS.

Conversely, the sharp increase in Present Perfect usage in resultative, continuative, and current relevance contexts in the formal QUST items is consonant with the behavior of standard variables, which – as noted above – tend to appear more widely in formal settings. This is also in line with Labov’s (2001a) concept of stylistic evolution, the contention that “style shifting is not found in the earliest stages of linguistic change, but becomes stronger as the change matures and is maximized if the feature is assigned prestige or social stigma as the change reaches completion” (2001a: 86). The more frequent use of the Present Perfect by women and older speakers in the QUST suggests that the ARPS Present Perfect carries some social stigma. Moreover, the hypercorrect use of the Present Perfect in past perfective settings – unusual and infrequent in spontaneous interaction – confirms these trends.
Dissecting Present Perfect usage to analyze different perfect types proves particularly helpful here, given the divergent behavior of different perfect types vis-à-vis style.

Regarding the oral data, while the casual conversation (including the observational data) can generally be described as quite informal, the sociolinguistic interview shows a fluctuating style pattern. That is, although deciding which particular tokens correspond to “careful speech” within the sociolinguistic interview remains highly problematic (cf. Coupland 2007: 32–42), some interesting tendencies are worth noting. Recall that the sociolinguistic interview consisted of two general sections. In the first section participants were encouraged to talk about their family, place of residence, and educational background, overseas-related experience or with foreigners visiting Argentina, and hodiernal activities. The second section of the interview asked opinion-based questions on language usage in Argentina (see Appendix A). This module, known as the language-related module in Labov’s taxonomy, is located on the “careful style” side of the Style Decision Tree (Labov 2001a: 94). It thus seems safe to analyze Present Perfect tokens within this module as somewhat formal. Although the numbers available here do not prove high enough for a multivariate analysis, let me suggest a brief qualitative analysis instead. The majority of the sociolinguistic interview Present Perfects feature in the language module (at 12% [15/124]). Two main topics may be identified: references to Argentina’s economic crises and educational standards (82)–(84), and language-based opinions (85)–(88).

(82) \textit{Hoy en día es imposible}, los precios \textit{han subido} muchísimo. (SLI07MG52)

‘These days it is impossible, prices have increased so much.’

(83) \textit{Un país que lamentablemente ha tenido muchas crisis a través de los años}. (SLI07MG52)

‘A country that has unfortunately had lots of crises throughout the years.’

(84) \textit{Con el nivel de educación que \textit{siempre ha tenido} acá Argentina}. (SLI07MQ55)

‘With the level of education that Argentina here has always had.’
Examples (82) through to (88) seem to fall under Labov’s so-called “soapbox” style (Labov 2001a: 91), which features repetitive rhetoric, references to government and police corruption, etc. In the examples presented here, participants use the Present Perfect to express social views regarding Argentina’s economy and educational system and, more interestingly, to refer to corruption in their language variety. The use of the Present Perfect sounds almost pre-fabricated in the expression of these social voices – a phenomenon reminiscent of stylization (see Coupland 2007: 149–150).48

More generally, the sociolinguistic interview was roughly divided into four sub-sections: background information, experience (overseas and with foreign visitors), recent past (hodiernal narratives and Christmas/New Year celebrations the previous month), and language-based opinion. Figure 5.5 illustrates Present Perfect usage in the different sub-sections.

48 The notion of stylization is inspired in Bakhtin’s idea that “our speech (…) is filled with others’ words” (Bakhtin 1986: 89).
Note that Present Perfect usage widens in the experience and opinion sub-sections (at 9.5% and 12%), while the re-telling of background information (including family life, studies and occupation) and recent past situations calls for minimal Present Perfect usage. The ARPS Present Perfect emerges in two crucial contexts: the narration of personal experience and contexts requiring opinion on complex social issues (such as the economy, politics, and language). The latter may be extended to situations where formality is perceived to be high. These in turn correspond to the *vernacular* and *normative* Present Perfect usage suggested in §5.4.2 above. These uses also agree with my earlier contention that the most outstanding Present Perfect usage in contemporary ARPS – as seen in these data – relates to experiential contexts and formal settings. I discuss these issues further in chapter 7.

### 5.7 Hypotheses revisited

The results introduced above point to areas of convergence and divergence vis-à-vis previous research on the Present Perfect. Table 5.10 outlines the hypotheses introduced in chapter 4 together with the results from the contemporary data analyzed so far. The hypotheses concerning historical time and the written media are discussed in chapter 6.
### Table 5.10 Summary of hypotheses and results for the ARPS contemporary data

A number of questions arise from the results introduced above. I deal with these in chapter 7, where I offer a general discussion of both contemporary and earlier findings. For the time being, I address the prevalence of the Preterit and its role as encoder of a number of nuances canonically ascribed to the Present Perfect.
5.8 The Preterit in Present Perfect contexts

To this point, the focus of my analysis has been on the uses and functions of the Present Perfect vis-à-vis linguistic-internal and linguistic-external variables. I now turn to a treatment of the different Preterit uses in the data. Pancheva (2003: 277) explains that perfect types are not exclusive to the perfect, despite the fact that they are mainly discussed in relation to it. Thus, at least in principle, we can expect forms other than the perfect to fulfill all resultative, continuative, current relevance, experiential and hot news functions. Indeed, this is what we find in the data analyzed here. I discuss these Preterit uses in the ensuing sections.

As previously mentioned in §4.6.7, Preterit tokens were coded for perfect function. These are exemplified in (89) through (94).

(89) **RESULT**

*Creo que no llegaron todavía.* (FW08F11)
‘I think they didn’t arrive yet.’

(90) **CONTINUITY**

*Toda mi vida se desarrolló como porteño.* (SLIMJ51)
‘All my life developed as porteño.’

(91) **CURRENT RELEVANCE**

*Recién llegué así que te espero atrás.* (FW08F41)
‘I just arrived so I’ll wait for you at the back (of the building).’

(92) **EXPERIENCE**

*Al casino no fui nunca.* (FW08M109)
‘I never went to the casino’ (i.e. ‘I have never been to the casino’).

(93) **HOT NEWS**

*Tengo una noticia para darte: arreglé el control remoto.* (CC07ML22)
‘I have news for you: I fixed the remote control.’
(94) PAST PERFECTIVITY

Estuve ayer en el shopping. (CC06FG6)
‘I was at the shopping mall yesterday.’

Whereas past perfective tokens like (94) (i.e. instances of Preterit use to encode a finished situation in the past) were relatively easy to identify, most Preterits in perfect contexts required that the verb in question be accompanied by some sort of TA to disambiguate temporal reference. In hodiernal contexts, the Preterit often appeared in the company of proximate (e.g. ahora ‘now’) and specific (e.g. hoy ‘today’) TAs, while in other instances it was the conversational context alone that provided enough information to determine temporal reference to today. Examples (95) and (96) illustrate Preterits used in hodiernal situations with and without TAs, respectively.

(95) Ahora llegó Jessica. (FW08F32)
‘Jessica now arrived.

(96) ¿Me diste $20 vos, no? (FW08M13)
‘You just gave me $20, right?’

In (95) the use of the proximate TA ahora signals that the situation is clearly hodiernal, referring to the moments previous to the time of speech. Despite the lack TA modification, reference to a same-day situation is clear in (96), where the speaker in question (a shop assistant) asks his customer if he had given him a twenty peso note a few seconds before. An ad hoc test utilized to code for the functions introduced in (89) to (96) above is to replace the Preterit with a Present Perfect form. If the outcome of this change is semantically felicitous (or infelicitous in the case of the past perfectivity) then the labeling is considered appropriate. To exemplify, in Recién llegué a la oficina (FW08M14) ‘I just arrived at the office’, the verb llegar ‘to arrive’ may be replaced with he llegado ‘I have arrived’ and the utterance continues to be semantically felicitous. The implications of this test reflect Rothstein’s (2008) suggestion that “if a present perfect can be replaced by a past tense without a significant change in meaning, it has a preterite reading. If the past tense cannot replace a present perfect, this present perfect has a perfect reading” (Rothstein 2008:
The test used here presupposes that the ARPS Present Perfect has a Preterit, rather than a Present Perfect reading. I return to this issue in §7.4.1.

As shown in §5.1, in the original contemporary corpora (i.e. the casual conversation, sociolinguistic interview, and QUST data) the Preterit is widespread at the rate of 90% (3253/3625), while the Present Perfect represents a mere 10% (372/3625) of the total data. The Preterit maintains a dual character in the data, as an encoder of (canonical) past perfective values on the one hand, and fulfilling functions usually expressed through the Present Perfect (i.e. result, continuity, current relevance, experience, and hot news) on the other. These Preterits in Present Perfect contexts certainly require further treatment.

Marginal results for the QUST data indicate that Preterit usage is high, at 86% (1886/2191). As expected for a past perfective, the Preterit occurs most frequently in the presence of specific TAs (96% [192/199]) and continues to feature prominently with frequency (87% [279/322]), proximate (86% [331/383]), and other (e.g. ya and todavía) TAs (83% [165/198]). This prevalence extends to adverbial-less contexts, where the Preterit occurs at the rate of 84% (919/1089). In the extended oral data, the Preterit is pervasive at the rate of 90% (1398/1560). In line with the QUST results, it features most frequently in the company of specific TAs (99% [156/158]), and is followed by connective (97% [85/88]), general (90.5% [38/42]), proximate (89% [57/64]), other (86% [70/81]), and frequency (80% [64/80]) TAs. In the absence of TAs, the Preterit appears at the rate of 89% (928/1047). The target items in the QUST were designed bearing in mind that (canonically) frequency TAs are consonant with the experiential and continuative functions, proximate TAs collocate with continuative and current relevance meanings, other TAs occur in resultative contexts, and specific TAs accompany past perfective meanings (see §2.3.2). The absence of TAs indicated that either a resultative, current relevance, or past perfective meaning could be assigned, depending on the context. The presence of TAs in the QUST thus played a central role in the choice of verb form, both for the researcher (in coding tokens) and the language user. The sections that follow address the use of the Preterit in resultative, continuative, current relevance, experiential, hot news, and past perfective contexts in both the extended oral corpora and the QUST.

The Preterit is used in resultative contexts (at the rate of 82% [301/367] in the QUST and at 64% [81/127] in the extended oral data) in the company of other
TAs (such as *ya* ‘already’ and *todavía* ‘still/yet’) as well as in the absence of TAs. Examples (97) through (102) illustrate some of these uses.

(97)  *Ya me hice el carnet nuevo.* (SLI07FS47)
    ‘I already did my new ID’ (i.e. I have a new ID).

(98)  *Ya aceptaron algunas otras palabras.* (SLI07M58)
    ‘[The Spanish Royal Academy] already accepted some other words’
    (i.e. the words are now in the Academy’s dictionaries).

(99)  *Creo que no llegaron todavía.* (FW08F11)
    ‘I think they didn’t arrive yet’ (i.e. they are not here).

(100) *La banda me dejó organización y entrenamiento.* (FW08F96)
    ‘The band left me organizational skills and training’ (i.e. I now have
    these skills).

(101) *Los 100 pesos que me escondí desaparecieron.* (CC06FF7)
    ‘The 100 pesos that I hid (have) disappeared’ (i.e. I don’t have them
    now).

(102) *Me quedaron grabadas muchísimas anécdotas.* (SLI07MJ51)
    ‘Many anecdotes stayed with me’ (i.e. I now have these memories).

When present, *ya* ‘already’ favors the Preterit at 83% (165/198), while the Present Perfect represents only 17% (33/198) of the data in the QUST. Similarly, the Preterit occurs at 80% (28/35) and the Present Perfect at 20% (7/35) in the extended oral data. These results – which agree with Burgos’ (2004: 89) observations on the appearance of *ya* with the Preterit – are antithetical to the expected co-occurrence of *ya* with the Present Perfect (see §2.3.2). Another trend observed in the extended oral data, which runs against canonical proposals, is the use of the Preterit in conjunction with the TA *todavía* ‘still/yet’.

Regarding **continuative contexts**, the Preterit is used at the rate of 82.5% (269/326) in the QUST and at 72% (44/61) in the extended oral data in the company
of proximate (e.g. *este año* ‘this year’, *últimamente* ‘lately’) and frequency (e.g. *siempre* ‘always’) TAs. These uses are illustrated in (103) through (108).

(103) **Estuvimos todo este año en el chat.** (CC07FG14)
   ‘We were in touch all this year in the chat (room).’

(104) **Desde la Guerra no tuvieron una oportunidad como ésta.** (CC08MJ26)
   ‘Since the war they did not have an opportunity like this one.’

(105) **Por la historia que tuvimos últimamente.** (SLI07FC11)
   ‘Due to the history that we had lately.’

(106) **Yo me incliné siempre por decir castellano.** (SLI07MJ51)
   ‘I always had an inclination towards saying Castilian.’

(107) **Siempre viví en Buenos Aires, desde que nací.** (SLI07FG45)
   ‘I always lived in Buenos Aires, since I was born.’

(108) **Siempre fue un quilombo acá.** (CC08MM29)
   ‘It always was a mess here.’

Recall that, canonically, the TAs *hasta ahora* ‘so far’, *desde X* ‘since X’, *últimamente* ‘lately’, *en los últimos X años* ‘for the past X years’, etc. call for perfect morphology (Pancheva & von Stechow 2004: 13; Howe 2006: 46). However, as shown in (104) and (105) above, these TAs occur in combination with the Preterit.49 With regard to the frequent TA *siempre* ‘always’, according to Rothstein, it requires that the eventuality encoded through the perfect hold at utterance time (Rothstein 2008: 56). This prerogative is clearly maintained in (107) where the speaker in question continues to live in Buenos Aires at utterance time. By the same token, (106) and

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49 Note that verb Aktionsart in the examples given above still complies with the requirement that achievements be precluded from occurring in continuative contexts. Specifically, (103) to (108) include atelic predicates (i.e. the activity *vivir* ‘to live’, and the states *estar*/*ser* ‘to be’ and *inclinarse* ‘to lean’ – here referring to a personal opinion). This is in line with Rothstein’s (2008: 161) contention that “Achievements are incompatible with the universal interpretation” since continuatives require duration (absent in punctual predicates).
(108) should imply that the speakers continue to refer to their language variety as Castilian, and that the situation described is still messy, respectively.

**Current relevance contexts** trigger Preterit use at the rate of 89% (649/732) in the QUST, and 97% (288/296) in the extended oral data. In the QUST, the two target items involving the structure *Argentina recién* (*ganar*) *el partido* ‘Argentina just (win) the game’ (with the proximate TA *recién* ‘just’) trigger the Preterit at the rate of 89% (163/183). In the extended oral data, the Preterit is widespread in the absence of TAs (at 97% [204/210]), and with proximate (at 96% [43/45]) and specific (at 95% [20/21]) TAs. The absence of TAs in current relevance contexts seems natural in the oral data where temporal reference remains mostly anchored in the here and now. The question remains however, what role TAs play in these data. Regarding proximate TAs, the Preterit is highly frequent with the TAs *recién* ‘just’, and *ahora* ‘now’. Examples (109) through (119) illustrate these uses.

(109) *Recién llegué así que te espero atrás.* (FW08F41)
‘I just arrived so I’ll wait for you behind (the building).’

(110) *Recién me lo contó Valentina.* (FW08F97)
‘Valentina just told me.’

(111) *Mi hermana, que me llamó recién.* (SLI07MO53)
‘My sister, who just called me.’

(112) *Pedro recién me preguntó.* (SLI07FG45)
‘Pedro just asked me.’

(113) *Ahora me anoté en Psicología Social.* (SLI07FK41)
‘Now I enrolled in Social Psychology.’

(114) *Algo muy importante que ahora me vino a la mente.* (SI07FA160)
‘Something very important that now came to my mind.’

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[50] It should be noted that, in coding both Preterit and Present Perfect tokens in oral interaction, current relevance was taken to refer to same day (i.e. hodiernal) situations and recent past contexts. Situations encoding subjective current relevance nuances were not included in the oral data analysis (see Harris 1982: 66 ff. for a discussion of the subjectivity of determining Preterit function in the absence of TAs).
Ahora fui a comprarle a María los pañales. (CC06FF7)
‘Now I went to buy diapers/nappies for Maria.’

Menos mal que te pasó ahora. (CC07FG14)
‘Good it happened to you now.’

Ahora (el agua) salió caliente. (FW08F92)
‘Now the water came out hot.’

Porque vos dijiste ahora que el café paso a ser cuestión social. (FW08M24)
‘Because you said now that coffee became a social thing.’

Ahora llegó Jessica. (FW08F32)
‘Jessica now arrived.’

Striking in the data is the use of the TA ahí ‘at this point in time’ (lit. ‘there’) in combination with the Preterit.51 This is in line with Curnow and Travis’ (2008: 7–8) suggestion that ahí functions, among other non-spatial uses, as a temporal marker in Colombian Spanish. The semantic extension of ahí from a spatial marker (example 120) to temporal deixis ([121] through [126]) is evidenced in my data, as shown below.

Ahí me lo he encontrado un par de veces. (FW0821)
‘There [i.e. in that place] I have bumped into him a couple of times.’

Bueno, ahí me sonó el celular. (CC07FF21)
‘Well, at this point in time my cell phone rang.’

Ahí tocó el portero Lorena. (CC07FC25)
‘At this point in time Lorena rang the bell.’

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51 There are no uses of ahí + Present Perfect in the data analyzed in this thesis.
(123) Ahí mandaron un mail. (FW08F70)
‘At this point in time they sent an email.’

(124) Ahí contestaron. (FW08F70)
‘At this point in time they replied.’

(125) Ahí cambiaron la pelota, ¿no? (FW08M84)
‘At this point in time they changed the ball, right?’

(126) Ahí empezó el programa. (FW08F89)
‘At this point in time the TV program began.’

Whereas in (120) ahí is used to express spatial location, the rest of the examples feature a temporal use of ahí with telic predicates (specifically, with achievements). This suggests that ahí indicates punctuality and immediacy. The periphrasis ahí + Preterit (presumably in this order) appears to encode immediate or very recent past. In the same vein, the use of the construction Preterit + deictic there as a marker of recent past has been noted by Miller (2004: 237) for Scottish English. Miller suggests that “there is used when the entity being pointed at is visible (actually or potentially) to both speaker and addressee” and that events in the recent past are pointed out as being “metaphorically visible” which indicates this structure is grammaticalizing from spatial to temporal reference. Note that TA placement is fixed in these ahí constructions.

Finally, the Preterit occurs with the specific TA hoy ‘today’ at the rate of 95% (20/21) in the extended oral data. Examples (127) through (131) exemplify this use.

(127) Vinieron hoy. (CC06FG6)
‘(They) came today.’

(128) ¿Te comiste las tortitas hoy o estaban feas? (FW08F39)
‘Did you eat the pastries today or were they ugly?’

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52 In fact, in examples (121) to (126) the TA just may be inserted before the VP in the English translations to clarify recency and immediacy of the past situation. For instance, in example (126) the translation into English may be ‘At this point in time the program just began.’
(129) *La vi cansada a Maria hoy.* (FW08F70)

‘Maria seemed tired today.’

(130) *¿Qué hiciste hoy cuando saliste de acá?* (CC07FC17)

‘What did you do today when you left here?’

(131) *Hoy me levanté tipo 10 de la mañana.* (SLI08MC60)

‘Today I got up at 10 in the morning.’

As exemplified in (74) and (76) above, hodiernal narratives trigger a preponderance of Preterits both in the casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview data. This trend is especially strong in the absence of TAs (at 98% [204/209]) and is also visible with TAs in examples (127) to (131) above. In contrast to Peninsular Spanish, the ARPS Present Perfect is negligible in hodiernal contexts. However, hodiernal narratives may be the locus for a different type of change, namely the emergence of constructions including a TA and a Preterit (although not necessarily in this order), which seem to stand as the usual encoders of current relevance in this variety. For ease of exposition, I will henceforth refer to this construction as TA + VERB-PRET. Note that the placement of the TA as preceding the Preterit in the construction introduced here is completely arbitrary since the data show both pre- and post-verbal TA placement in these constructions.

Recent past is also expressed in the data, although to a lesser extent, through the use of the complex construction *acabar de + infinitive* ‘to finish’, as in (132).

(132) A: *La acabás de comprar esa luz.* (CC06FF7)

B: *No, no la acabé de comprar, tiene dos años, tres.* (CC06ML8)

‘You just bought this light (lit. finish-PRS.2SG of buy-INF this light)

No, I didn’t just buy this, it’s two or three years old (lit. no finish-PRS.1SG of buy-INF).’

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53 In her study of Canary Island Spanish, Serrano (1994: 41) claims that the prevalence of the Preterit in hodiernal narratives is justified using relevance theory (Wilson & Sperber 1993) so that speaker’s every contribution is relevant at the time of speech. Relevance is also created by the addition of TAs and external considerations (such as speaker’s awareness of deictic temporal location).
Bybee and Dahl (1989: 58–68) note the evolution of the active verb *finish* into *to have just* and discuss the development of pasts and perfectives from perfects whose lexical sources are active verbs such as *finish* (see Figure 3.2 in §3.1.1). The complex cluster *acabar de + infinitive* stands as an encoder of perfectivity in this respect (cf. Burgos 2004).

Finally, the data reported above suggest that current relevance may be best viewed as encompassing different modes of expression along a continuum from purely grammatical or analytic (e.g. *He visto a Antonio* ‘I have seen Antonio’) where current relevance is a semantic component of the Present Perfect, to periphrastic (e.g. *Recién vi a Antonio* ‘I just saw Antonio’) where, I suggest, the Preterit is used to encode past and TAs (such as *recién* ‘just’) contribute the current relevance meaning.54 I address this issue again in chapter 7.

In experiential contexts, the Preterit occurs at 91% (178/196) in the QUST. On the other hand, it is the Present Perfect that overrides the Preterit (at 60% [89/148]) in the extended oral data. It was previously mentioned that the stability of the experiential Present Perfect across styles in the QUST may have been caused by the presence of the frequency TA *nunca* ‘never’ in the target items. This tendency was confirmed through a cross-tabulation of the Present Perfect function and presence of TA factor groups. With frequency TAs such as *jamás* ‘ever’, *nunca* ‘never’, *alguna vez* ‘sometime’, etc. the Preterit wins out over the Present Perfect at 91% (178/196) in the QUST, and at 74% (26/35) in the extended oral data. Examples (133) through (143) illustrate Preterit usage in experiential contexts with different frequency TAs.

(133) *Jamás se quejaron de nada.* (CC06FA4)

‘They never complained about anything.’

(134) *Yo no me enamoré nunca.* (CC07FC16)

‘I never fell in love.’

(135) *Al casino no fui nunca.* (FW08M109)

‘I never went to the Casino.’

54 The term periphrastic literally means “occurring in a roundabout fashion” (Hopper & Traugott 2003: 7).
In all of the above examples the speakers refer to past situations within the realm of their personal experience. If, based on Pancheva’s (2003: 279) claims, the experiential perfect resembles a past more than other perfects (in that relation to the moment of speech is not obligatory) the Preterit may also be available as a category for the expression of experience. This is clearly the case in the data presented above.

The Preterit is common in hot news contexts. Example (144) illustrates the use of the Preterit amongst business partners to communicate the latest news concerning their fashion design enterprise.
(144) **Hablé con el contador [...] y Cristina me dijo que contemos con ella.**

(CC07FA24)

‘I spoke to the accountant [...] and Cristina told me for us to count on her.’

The remaining six tokens (including example (76) above) also feature the Preterit in encoding hot news.

The Preterit is favored in **past perfective contexts** (at 86% [489/570] in the QUST and at 99.9% [919/920] in the extended oral data) and occurs with specific TAs such as *el martes* ‘on Tuesday’, *el miércoles* ‘on Wednesday’, and *ayer* ‘yesterday’, as in (145) through (154).

(145) **Vino el martes.** (CC06FG6)

‘She came on Tuesday.’

(146) ¿Por qué *el miércoles* fuimos al bar? (CC06FC11)

‘Why did we go to the bar on Wednesday?’

(147) **Yo ayer me quemé.** (CC06FM3)

‘I did get a tan yesterday.’

(148) **Estuve ayer en el shopping.** (CC06FG6)

‘I was at the shopping mall yesterday.’

(149) **Leo trajo ayer dos baldes de moras.** (CC06FG6)

‘Leo brought two buckets of blueberries yesterday.’

(150) **Me fui ayer al Tejado.** (CC06FG6)

‘I went to *El Tejado* [a farm] yesterday.’

(151) **Ayer estuvo descompuesto.** (CC06FA4)

‘Yesterday he was sick.’
Due to the Preterit’s extended temporal repertoire as an encoder of both perfectivity and other typically perfect functions, TAs may be claimed to fulfill a disambiguating role in ARPS. Specifically, if the Preterit performs more than its canonical role as a past perfective, it seems sensible to view TA usage as a grammatical development to provide disambiguation in cases where the interpretation of the Preterit as a past perfective form may be equivocal. I do not wish to imply that this usage is exclusive to ARPS. However, because of the widespread preference for the Preterit in prototypical perfect contexts we may expect considerable ambiguity in the interpretation of the Preterit in this variety.  

5.9 Summary of ARPS contemporary Preterit and Present Perfect usage

The results presented above show different usage patterns for the various functions canonically performed via the Present Perfect. Figures 5.6 and 5.7 illustrate the overall tendencies and usage frequencies noted for the contemporary data analyzed thus far.

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55 Chafe (1973) deals with the relationship between memory and use of TAs. He suggests that “material from surface memory may be reported with no temporal adverb, material from shallow memory with a weak adverb [e.g. yesterday], and material from deep memory necessarily with a strong adverb [e.g. last Christmas]”. My data suggest that, rather than displaying memory-related nuances, TAs play a crucial role in clarifying ambiguous temporal reference to situations of different degrees of pastness encoded by the Preterit.
The results outlined in the previous sections and illustrated in the above figures highlight five main issues:

(a) The discrepancies noted across different data types. Specifically, the fact that – while resultative and continuative contexts behave quite similarly across data types – current relevance, experiential, and past perfective contexts require further investigation;
(b) The TA + VERB-PRET construction used in the expression of current relevance vis-à-vis the overwhelmingly low usage frequency of the Present Perfect in these contexts;

(c) The prevalence of the experiential Present Perfect in the extended oral data; particularly in the company of frequency TAs and in relative clauses;

(d) The role of TAs in supporting Preterit, rather than Present Perfect usage;

(e) The influence of style in the use of the Present Perfect, as exemplified in the flux noted for the resultative, continuative, current relevance, and past perfective functions in the QUST.

5.10 Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have analyzed the contemporary uses and functions of the Preterit and the Present Perfect in an oral data set (including casual conversation, participant observation, and sociolinguistic interviews) and a questionnaire. General results for the two corpora indicate that, although low in overall frequency, the Present Perfect is used significantly more in the QUST. Two independent multivariate analyses carried out with the casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview data selected three factor groups as significant. These were: temporal adverbial, clause type, and gender. The Present Perfect was significantly favored with proximate and frequency temporal adverbials (TAs) and in relative clauses, especially as post-modifiers of indeterminate NPs and mass nouns such as gente ‘people’. Gender also proved significant in the multivariate analysis, with men more readily selecting the Present Perfect in oral interaction. In line with the favoring effect of proximate/frequency TAs, I have also shown that the ARPS Present Perfect is widespread in experiential contexts, where it encodes generic reference and indefinite past. Crucially, Aktionsart was not selected as significant in the multivariate analysis of the oral data, indicating that the ARPS contemporary Present Perfect is not aspectually contrived. This finding is crucial vis-à-vis the contention that Argentinian Spanish resembles Mexican Spanish in its use of the Present Perfect in continuative contexts (Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413; Howe 2006: 76). Moreover, the lack of Aktionsart restrictions in ARPS Present Perfect usage indicates that – as a member of the Latin American cohort – this variety is not correctly placed in Harris’ (1982: 49) stage II, where the perfect is restricted to expressing durative or repetitive situations extending into present time. In fact, I have suggested that the canonical extension of
the continuative perfect into speech time may be disappearing in present-day ARPS, since the simple Present juxtaposes with the Present Perfect to render continuity into the present moment explicit.

The significance of gender in the multivariate analysis of the oral data and the general preference for the Present Perfect by men also indicates that – contrary to Kubarth’s (1992a: 565) suggestion – the use of the Present Perfect is not extinct in this variety. This is further supported by the (non-significant) tendency for younger speakers to favor the experiential Present Perfect in the QUST. Based on the behavior of gender, age, and style in the different data types I have suggested two main uses of the Present Perfect in contemporary ARPS: a vernacular or innovative use (the experiential Present Perfect) and a normative or conservative one (arising in formal contexts). The latter use is supported by the statistically significant prevalence of the Present Perfect in formal QUST settings.

I have further shown that the Present Perfect occurs in resultative and continuative contexts, evidencing retention of meaning features of the source construction (Bybee et al. 1994: 15; Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 23). Crucially, the ARPS Present Perfect does not feature significantly in naturally occurring current relevance, hot news, and past perfective contexts, which confirms this form is not grammaticalizing as an encoder of perfectivity (Schwenter 1994a). In fact, I have argued that the use of the Present Perfect to express these functions in the formal QUST items does not indicate anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization but rather signals speakers’ insecurity regarding their use of the Present Perfect in an experimental setting.

Finally, I have analyzed the frequent occurrence of the Preterit and TAs (a construction I have operationalized as TA + VERB-PRET) in the expression of functions canonically encoded through the Present Perfect. In chapter 6, I present an analysis of written historical data in an attempt to tease out whether and how the ARPS Preterit and the Present Perfect have evolved throughout time.
CHAPTER 6

The written data: Earlier and contemporary usage

In this chapter I look at written data (historical documents, magazines, and newspapers) spanning the 19th–21st centuries. Three main claims are put to the test here: (a) the suggestion that Latin American varieties represent earlier stages in the grammaticalization of anteriors (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972; Harris 1982; Fleischman 1983; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000); (b) the proposal that the Present Perfect was used in 16th–19th century Argentina to express resultative, continuative, current relevance, experiential, and hot news functions (Burgos 2004: 272); and (c) the claim that the decrease in Present Perfect usage is restricted to the 20th century (Burgos 2004: 272). It was also hypothesized in §4.7.5 that, because the use of certain forms in historical data mostly reflects efforts to capture a normative dialect and show pervasive hypercorrection (Labov 1994: 11), the overall distribution of the Present Perfect in earlier ARPS should be higher than that in contemporary usage. I test these hypotheses in the ensuing sections.

The chapter is organized as follows. I begin with a description of the data in §6.1. I then present some general results in §6.2 and deal with the outcome of the multivariate analyses for each of the periods analyzed: Period I (§6.3); Period II (§6.4); and Period III (§6.5). In each of these sections, I analyze the most relevant variables influencing Present Perfect choice and illustrate different Present Perfect uses with instances from the data. I summarize the findings for the early and contemporary data (including the oral data analyzed in the previous chapter) in §6.6. I then compare the results of the multivariate analyses with the earlier data against my observations for contemporary oral ARPS. I conclude in §6.7, where I offer a brief snapshot of the results obtained in this chapter and outline the principal issues arising from this analysis, leading up to the discussion that lies ahead.
6.1 The data

The data analyzed include 138,338 words extracted from historical documents, magazines, and newspapers spanning the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries (see §4.4.3). Data prior to the 19th century were excluded as these are not representative of Argentinian Spanish but rather reflect the writing of Spanish officials living in the colony at the time. This is a definite drawback for historical analysis in colonial settings, as pointed out by Poplack and Malvar (2007: 124). The value of earlier data remains crucial in determining historical usage trends that may have contributed to the evolution and development of functions associated with specific forms. Labov (1997: 148) highlights the importance of historical data as a valuable resource in the study of variation, since – he argues – variationist analysis “articulates naturally with the general study of the history and the evolution of languages”. Moreover, the inherent permanence of newspaper prose, as opposed to other media, renders it an exacting place to analyze earlier usage (cf. Dunlap 2006: 38).

An important caveat regarding the analysis of written documents involves the extent to which these may compare to contemporary vernacular usage (i.e. the oral data corpora analyzed in chapter 5). In fact, data are not directly comparable across historical time since contemporary oral data should in principle bear little resemblance to the written documents studied here. However, as I show later in §7.3.2, in contemporary ARPS the newspaper data are remarkably like the oral corpora – an issue I discuss in chapter 7 as the naturalistic data problem.

As mentioned in chapter 4, despite the original classification of newspaper data into neatly separated centuries, a further division was empirically established to account for crucial differences in Preterit and Present Perfect usage within the 20th century. While 19th century usage as reflected in the data remains stable throughout the century, an important difference was noted within the 20th century in the process of token analysis. That is, early and mid 20th century data (1910–1970) were distinct from late 20th century data (1982–1997) particularly with respect to current relevance and hot news contexts. Specifically, while the Preterit and the Present Perfect were noted in the early and mid 20th century data in current relevance (76% [66/87] Preterit and 24% [21/87] Present Perfect) and hot news contexts (78% [21/27] Preterit and 22% [6/27] Present Perfect), the late 20th century corpora featured an overwhelming majority of Preterits in these contexts (at 98% [52/53] in current relevance and 100%
Based on this crucial difference, the early and mid 20th century data were analyzed together, while the late 20th century corpora (1982–1997) were added to the 21st century file. These protocols yielded three main data groups: 1810–1898 (henceforth Period I); 1910–1970 (Period II); and 1982–2007 (Period III). The year 1970 was included in Period II due to the appearance of postverbal passive *se* (as in the Preterit token *rechazose* ‘it was rejected’) – a use unattested in contemporary newspaper reporting.

### 6.2 General results

A total of 571 Preterit and 185 Present Perfect tokens (N=756) were extracted from the Period I, II and III corpora. The findings appear in Table 6.1.

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Period III</th>
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<td>76</td>
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<td>90</td>
<td>231</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>181</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>256</td>
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Table 6.1 Overall frequency distributions of Preterit and Present Perfect forms across historical periods

The Preterit is widespread across time periods in the written data analyzed and is used exponentially more than the Present Perfect in Period III (at 90%). Most striking about these results is the systematic (and statistically significant) decrease in Present Perfect usage from 46% in Period I to 24% in Period II ($X^2=27.1; p=.000$), and down to 10% in Period III ($X^2=19.4; p=.000$). Equally striking is the more widespread use of the Preterit as we approach Period III. Figure 6.1 displays these trends visually.

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56 See Poplack and Malvar (2007) for a similar division of historical data into periods.
These figures demonstrate important fluctuation across historical periods. However, it remains to be seen whether the linguistic conditioning of the variables under study is subject to change with the passing of time. This is the main purpose of the multivariate analyses introduced in the ensuing sections. I first deal with data extraction and exclusion (immediately below) and then look at each of the three periods separately. In each period, I analyze the most salient variables and illustrate with examples from the data. I then offer a qualitative analysis of Present Perfect usage by perfect function and conclude each section with a brief summary of the results obtained.

Four Preterit and two Present Perfect tokens (N=6) were excluded from the newspaper analysis. These were complex verb phrases consisting of a copula or intransitive verb (such as estar ‘to be’ or andar ‘to go, to walk, to function’) plus a gerundial form. As stated in §5.1.1, these tokens were excluded to eschew data analysis problems (e.g. the issue of whether the copula/intransitive conjugated form or the gerund should be coded for Aktionsart). Examples of these include (the conjugated forms of) andar sonándose la narigueta (BAN1863EM7) ‘to go around blowing your nose’, seguir lloviendo (BAN1950LN19) ‘to continue to rain’, continuar analizando (BAN2005LC14) ‘to continue analyzing’, among others.57

57 The information in brackets specifies data type (e.g. BAN: Buenos Aires newspapers), year, source (e.g. La Gazeta ‘LG’), and record number.
6.3 Period I: 1810–1898

A total of 181 tokens were extracted from the Period I file. The Preterit represents 54% (97/181) of the data, while the Present Perfect appears at the rate of 46% (84/181). Table 6.2 displays the results for a multivariate analysis of the contribution of internal factors on Present Perfect usage (PP) in the Period I data. Presence of ya ‘already’ was excluded as the Present Perfect occurs only once in the presence of this TA. The analysis shown in Table 6.2 was thus carried out with five factor groups. The picture offered by the multivariate analysis should be interpreted to represent the way the variants (i.e. the Preterit and the Present Perfect) share in the labor of expressing a number of nuances in the course of language development.\(^{58}\)

![Table 6.2](image)

The Period I corpora display a corrected mean of .46, the highest value in both the newspaper and oral and questionnaire (QUST) corpora. This shows that the Present Perfect was widely used in earlier (written) ARPS. Most striking about these data is the selection as significant of only one out of five factor groups analyzed. Temporal adverbial displays the highest range (range=27) and is statistically significant (\(p=.009\))\(^{59}\). Regarding the ranking of constraints, absence of TAs most favors Present Perfect usage in the earlier data. On the other hand, grammatical person, Aktionsart,
clause type, and object number play no statistically significant role in accounting for Present Perfect usage.\textsuperscript{60}

### 6.3.1 Temporal adverbial

A majority of Present Perfect tokens occur in the absence of TAs (at 53% [69/129]). This trend is clear in the multivariate analysis, where absence of TAs most favors the Present Perfect with a factor weight of .57, offering the highest magnitude of effect (range=27). Note, however, that absence of TAs displays a relatively low factor weight, suggesting that the effect of TA absence – although statistically significant – is not the sole variable favoring Present Perfect usage. This trend is clear in the data, where the Present Perfect features in the company of other TAs such as the specific TA \textit{hoy} ‘today’, as I show below.

Absence of TAs may best be explained by the high usage frequency of the Present Perfect in both current relevance and hot news contexts in these data (at 65% [11/17] and 100% [19/19], respectively). As mentioned earlier, current relevance and hot news contexts may not require TA modification since the (unstated) temporal anchoring of the situation in question is the very recent past, as depicted in (1) and (2).\textsuperscript{61}

(1) \textit{Robo} – \textit{Se han presentado} 2 individuos italianos al comisario de la 3\textsuperscript{a} diciendo que se les \textit{ha sustraido} 2 relojes y una cantidad regular de dinero. Según ellos, se \textit{ha cometido} el hurto aprovechando su sueño. (BAN1873EA8).

‘Theft – Two Italian subjects have presented themselves to the commissioner saying that they have had two watches and a regular amount of money stolen. According to them, the theft has been committed taking advantage of their sleep.’

(2) \textit{Aviso} – \textit{Han dejado} de pertenecer al personal de la Administración de “Caras y Caretas”, los empleados Oscar Bogo, Mario Ciapparelli, Héctor Lema y Emilio Céspedes. (BAN1898CC)

\textsuperscript{60} The newspaper data analyzed in this chapter display no uses of the Present Perfect in questions of any type.

\textsuperscript{61} All examples in this chapter are reproduced as they appear in the original sources, revealing the spelling and usage of the time.
The favoring effect of TA absence on Period I Present Perfect usage is reminiscent of Schwenter’s (1994a: 89) claims that, in Peninsular Spanish, frequent co-occurrence with specific adverbs referring to hodiernal situations (e.g. hoy ‘today’) has led to the Present Perfect absorbing the temporal context that accompanies these adverbs. Note that the Present Perfects in (1) and (2) above express recent past without the need of TAs since the contextual meaning of the recent/hodiernal past event is somewhat embedded in the meaning of the Present Perfect itself (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 8). As we shall see later on in §6.5.2, recency does not survive as a relevant constraint on Present Perfect usage into contemporary times.

Interestingly, in line with my observations for the contemporary data, presence of TAs favors the Preterit. The Preterit features at 71% (37/52) in the presence of TAs and at 46.5% (60/129) in adverbial-less contexts ($X^2=9.05; p=.003$). (Also note the low overall frequency of the Present Perfect in the company of proximate/frequency TAs, at 37.5% [3/8]). Despite the almost identical usage frequency of both forms, the presence of TAs such as siempre ‘always’, nunca ‘never’, and jamás ‘ever’ appear to play a role in Preterit selection as early as the 19$^{th}$ century.

### 6.3.2 Present Perfect function

In this section I offer a qualitative analysis of the Preterit and the Present Perfect by perfect function based on the Period I data. In **resultative contexts**, the Present Perfect occurs at the rate of 97% (32/33), while the Preterit merely represents 3% (1/33) of the data. A majority of resultative Present Perfects (87.5% [28/32]) occur without any TA, as in (3) through (5).

(3) **Quando el Congreso general necesite un conocimiento del plan de Gobierno que la Junta provisional ha guardado, no huirán sus vocales de darlo […].** (BAD18101)

‘When the general Congress needs to know about the plan that the provisional Government has designed, its vocals will not refuse to make it known’ (i.e. there is a designed plan).
...y que el pueblo tiene cada día nuevos motivos de felicitarse por la dichosa combinación que le ha puesto en aptitud de elegir su propio destino, y de entrar por sus heroycos esfuerzos en el rango y consecuencia de las naciones independientes. (BAN1816GZ4)

…and that the country has new reasons each day to congratulate itself for the happy combination that has put it in aptitude to choose its own destiny, and enter through its own heroic efforts in the rank and consequence of independent nations’ (i.e. the country is now ready to choose its own government).
Los que están acostumbrados á las formas monárquicas confunden en los gobiernos populares el desorden con el entusiasmo, y como se han hecho tan pocos ensayos en esta última clase de gobiernos se observa frecuentemente que las practicas afortunadas de este nuevo regimen burlan y confunden las mas sabias teorías. (BAN1816GZ4)

‘Those who are used to monarchic rule mistake disorder for enthusiasm in popular governments, and because only a few essays have been made on this last type of government it is frequently observed that the fortunate practices of this new regimen mock and confuse the wisest theories’ (i.e. only a few essays are written).

A single resultative Present Perfect appears in the company of the TA aun ‘still/yet’ typical of resultative contexts, as in example (6). The TA has been underscored for emphasis.

El comisario de esa sección hace las investigaciones que son del caso, mas aun no han sido capturados los ladrones. (BAN1873EA9)

‘The commissioner is doing the investigation in question but the thieves have still not been captured’ (i.e. the thieves are not in jail).

The ya ‘already’ plus Preterit construction – widely attested in the contemporary data – features only once in the Period I corpora and appears in example (7).

Ya oímos decir que solo ama la libertad de la prensa aquel que no le impone límites algunos. (BAN1852EN5)

‘We already heard that the only one who loves freedom of press is he who does not impose any limits on it’ (i.e. we know because we heard it).

Perhaps the most striking finding in the Period I corpora is the prevalence of the Present Perfect in current relevance and hodiernal past contexts (at 65% [11/17]), with the Preterit trailing behind at 35% (6/17). Recall that, it was the Preterit (in combination with TAs) that featured heavily in these contexts in oral contemporary ARPS. Examples (8) through (11) illustrate current relevance Present Perfects
accompanied by specific temporal reference to hodiernal contexts. Note that, in line with my previous observations on temporal specification (§4.6.2 ff.), hodiernal reference is sometimes embedded as a post head modifier in the subject NP (example 10) – rather than as a TA. Elements indicating hodiernal temporal reference have been underscored for illustration purposes.

(8)  *Hoy a las ocho de la mañana se han publicado* por el Bando Nacional los Decretos de la Asamblea anunciando para las doce de este día el recibimiento del Director Supremo. (BAN1815GZ2)
‘Today at eight in the morning the Assembly’s decrees have been published by the National Band announcing the welcoming of the Supreme Director for twelve today.’

(9)  *…como también armaron a la Gobernadora, que ya hoy ha quedado en Guayaquil.* (BAN1816GZ4)
‘…as they also put together the Gobernadora that has remained in Guayalquil today.’

(10)  *ROSARIO – El día de hoy es un día de gratas noticias para los defensores del órden y de las instituciones. Sucesos importantes de armas han tenido lugar en la costa del Paraná y en la del Uruguay en las que han sido aleccionados los rebeldes.* (BAN1873EA8)
‘The day today is a day of great news for the defenders of order and institutions. Important armed events have taken place on the coast of Parana and Uruguay in which the rebels have been taught a lesson.’

(11)  *Noticias escolares – En sesion de hoy el Consejo Superior ha fijado el jueves 7 de enero para dar comienzo a los exámenes para obtener diplomas de maestros y maestras.* (BAN1885EC11)
‘School news – In today’s session the Superior Congress has set Thursday January 7 as the date to begin exams to obtain teacher diplomas.’
Current relevance contexts feature prominently in the newspaper corpora. As mentioned earlier, the situation described is currently relevant in that it is recent, although its exact temporal reference remains unknown, as in our previous example re-introduced here as (12).

(12) Robo – Se han presentado 2 individuos italianos al comisario de la 3ª diciendo que se les ha sustraído 2 relojes y una cantidad regular de dinero. Según ellos, se ha cometido el hurto aprovechando su sueño. (BAN1873EA8).

‘Theft – Two Italian subjects have presented themselves to the commissioner saying that they have had two watches and a regular amount of money stolen. According to them, the theft has been committed taking advantage of their sleep.’

Although low in overall frequency, the Preterit occurs in current relevance contexts (at 35% [6/17]), especially in combination with specific TAs such as hoy ‘today’ (N=4/6), as shown in (13) through (15).

(13) Llaves – Hoy se entregaron las de la casa comercial del prófugo Laguerre al Presidente del Superior Tribunal de Comercio. Se dio el correspondiente recibo por la oficina de depósitos. (BAN1873EA8)

‘Keys – The keys to the commercial home of outlaw Laguerre were handed in today to the President of the Superior Tribunal of Commerce. The corresponding receipt was given through the deposit office.’

(14) Montevideo, Diciembre 9 – Continuo hoy la baja pronunciada en los títulos de la Deuda Publica. El lunes cerraron las operaciones á cuarenta y seis y cuarto por ciento y hoy bajo hasta cuarenta y cinco y medio. (BAN1885EC9).

‘Montevideo, December 9 – The pronounced low in stock exchange titles continued today. On Monday operations closed at forty six and a quarter per cent and today fell down to forty five and a half.’
‘Protection to salting factories – The law that declares freedom on the introduction of machines and materials destined to factories of conserved meat was proclaimed today.’

The Preterit also appears in current relevance contexts in the absence of accompanying TAs (N=2/6), as in (16).

Example (16) was extracted from El Mosquito, a mock periodical devoted to transmitting social and political news in a satirical style. The use of the Preterit in ‘I forgot’ suggests that the Preterit, rather than the Present Perfect, may have been common in expressing immediately recent past in spontaneous interaction in earlier ARPS. A reasonable hypothesis would thus be that (incipient) Preterit usage in current relevance contexts in the written corpora may to some degree mirror oral usage in spontaneous interaction. On the other hand, the example in (15) (‘I forgot’) seems reminiscent of Kempas’ (2008: 249) observation that the Preterit may be used in fixed expressions, as in the Peninsular Spanish recent past examples ‘it’s over’ and ‘I got you’. These claims thus remain purely speculative in the absence of earlier oral data.

Most striking about these data is the use of the Present Perfect in hodiernal (i.e. today) contexts. These Present Perfect uses are in line with what has been suggested for Peninsular Spanish in that the Present Perfect features in hodiernal narrative contexts to eventually expand into contexts crucially not involving current relevance (cf. Schwenter 1994a; Serrano 1994; Howe 2006; Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008). However, as we shall see later on, rather than signaling active

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62 This piece of data is crucial to my analysis since it contains made up dialogs between imaginary characters inspired in the tendencies and linguistic usage current at the time (i.e. the 1860s).
anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization, these uses become ultimately obsolete in contemporary ARPS.

The Present Perfect appears more readily than the Preterit in *continuative contexts*, at 85% (11/13) versus 15% (2/13), respectively. The majority of continuative Present Perfects occur in the absence of TAs, although the connection to present is implicit in the several states and activities included in the examples and leading up to Argentina’s independence. Examples (17) and (18) refer to the motivations for the Revolution of May in 1810. In (19) through (22) various descriptions of what colonial Argentina was like until the declaration of independence are provided. Throughout these, the use of the continuative Present Perfect highlights the repetitive and iterative nature of the situations described up to the revolution and subsequent independence. Note that the continuative Present Perfect here occurs with a preponderance of stative predicates (i.e. *ser* ‘to be’, *creer* ‘to believe’, *tener* ‘to have’, and *sufrir* ‘to suffer’) (cf. Vendler 1967: 107–108).

(17) *Ha sido incesante el desvelo.* (BAD18101)

‘The devotion has been incessant.’

(18) *Explicar los motivos que la han acelerado han sido objetos de su primer cuidado en esta memorable crisis.* (BAN1810GZ2)

‘Explaining the motives that have accelerated it have been the objects of its foremost care in this memorable crisis.’

(19) *Los europeos orgullosos han creido que somos entes de naturaleza inferior.* (BAN1816GZ4)

‘Proud Europeans have believed us Americans to be entities of a lower nature.’
(20) Siempre plagiando a instituciones extranjeras sin consideración á las costumbres y educación de los pueblos hemos tenido que tolerar á las páginas inmorales, escritos anarquicos de tribunas que predicaban con palabras muy claras la desorganización completa de la Republica.

(BAN1852EN4)

‘Always plagiarizing foreign institutions without regard for the customs and education of the nations we have had to stand the immoral pages, anarchic writings of tribunes who predicated with very clear words the complete disorganization of the Republic.’

(21) Hemos sufrido la total prohibición de usar la imprenta ni aun para tentar moderadamente las mejoras de nuestras instituciones.

(BAN1852EN5)

‘We have suffered a total ban stopping us from using the press not to tempt even moderately the betterment of our institutions.’

(22) Hemos sido inferiores a las instituciones que nos creábamos, no comprendíamos bien el límite de un derecho.

(BAN1852EN5)

‘We have been inferior to the institutions that we would create for us, we wouldn’t understand the limit of a right.’

A minority of canonical continuative tokens (N=3/11) collocate with the TA siempre ‘always’, as in example (23). TAs have been underscored for emphasis.

(23) La Reelección de Santos – El Ferrocarril Diario que si no es oficial ha tratado siempre de mantener buenas relaciones con la situación imperante (…).

(BAN1885EC9)

‘The re-election of Santos – The Ferrocarril Diario which even if not official has always tried to be in good terms with the situation at hand…’

The Preterit appears incipiently (N=2/13) in continuative contexts in the company of TAs, as illustrated in (24) and (25).
(24) *Si señores, en cuanto á virtudes, Da. Marica fue siempre una mata de hortigas.* (BAN1863EM6)

‘Yes, Dear Sirs, with respect to virtues *Doña Marica* was always difficult to mislead.’

(25) *Desde entonces, el occidente tuvo el beneficio de la fraternidad.*

(BAN1898CC11)

‘Since then, the West had the benefit of fraternity.’

Example (24) was extracted from *El Mosquito* (the satirical periodical introduced above) and is narrated in a cheerful style by a male narrator. The story revolves around an imaginary character who is eager to go to Heaven upon passing away – hence the writer’s reference to the continuity of her pure virtues. In (25) the focus is on how Christianity has provided fraternity to the West since the death of Jesus Christ. In both examples continuity up until the present remains clear.

As expected, the majority of **past perfective** situations are encoded via the Preterit (at 90% [84/93]), as in example (26). TAs have been underscored for illustration purposes.

(26) *Ayer a las 6 de la tarde se comunicaron al director supremo los decretos soberanos.* (BAN1815GZ2)

‘Yesterday at 6 in the evening the sovereign decrees were communicated to the supreme director.’

Most striking in these data; however, is the use of the Present Perfect in past perfective contexts (at 10% [9/93]), as shown in (27) through (31).

(27) *El Progreso esta publicando una memoria del Dr. Elizalde sobre el antiguo Banco Nacional, y la parte sola que ha aparecido en los dos últimos números hace ver que su autor equivoca todos los hechos.*

(BAN1852EN6)

‘*El Progreso* is publishing a memoir by Dr. Elizalde on the old National Bank, and the only part that has appeared in the last two issues makes it visible that its author confuses the facts.’
(28) Las manifestaciones públicas de alegría **han continuado desde la noche del 10 hasta la del 12.** (BAN1815GZ3)

‘The celebratory public manifestations have continued from the night of the 10th to the night of the 12th.’

(29) **Hace pocos días que se ha comenzado a cobrar el alumbrado público correspondiente a Febrero y Marzo del presente año.** (BAN1873EA8)

‘The public municipal tax for February and March of the current year has started being charged a few days ago.’

(30) **Ayer les ha sido pasada por el secretario del Jury de enjuiciamiento […] la siguiente invitacion a los miembros del mismo.** (BAN1885EC10)

‘The following invitation has been passed to the members of the Judiciary yesterday.’

(31) **Venta de propiedades – La direccion de rentas ha intervenido ayer en las siguientes ventas de propiedades (…).** (BAN1885EC11)

‘Property sale – The real estate office has intervened yesterday in the following property sales (…).’

Example (27) could arguably have been coded as continuative due to the presence of the TA **en los dos últimos números** ‘in the last two issues’; however, as suggested by Rothstein (2008: 161), continuative perfects are not licensed in combination with achievements (such as **aparecer** ‘to appear’), so a perfective reading of the perfect seems more appropriate. Example (28), too, suggests continuity (note the use of **han continuado** ‘they have continued’). However, the presence of the specific TA **desde la noche del 10 hasta la del 12** ‘from the night of the 10th to the night of the 12th’ provides a straightforward temporal boundary for the situation. Moreover, the article was published on June 15th 1815 – three days after the manifestations – clearly indicating past perfectivity. In (29), the achievement **comenzar** ‘to start/to begin’ contributes to the past perfective reading of the Present Perfect, which is further exacerbated by the presence of the TA **hace pocos días** ‘a few days ago’. Finally, (30) and (31) are straightforward in their reference to past perfective situations as they co-
occur with the specific hesternal TA ayer ‘yesterday’. The use of the Present Perfect in past perfective contexts resembles the hypercorrect usage noted for the QUST in chapter 5 – a trend motivated by the formality of certain items and the instrument itself (see §5.6). The use of the Present Perfect in past perfective contexts in the earlier data may also be a token of hypercorrection (i.e. overuse of the Present Perfect in canonically past perfective contexts), since its overall frequency remains lower than 10% and the Preterit prevails – as per canonical usage.

Unlike contemporary oral interaction, experiential contexts are highly infrequent (N=6), possibly due to the formal, impersonal nature of these media. Of these 6 instances, 33% (2/6) are Present Perfect and 67% (4/6) are Preterit tokens. Examples (32) and (33) illustrate the experiential Present Perfect and the TA + VERB-PRET construction, respectively.

(32) La más funesta y mortífera [batalla] de quantas hemos perdido. (BAN1810GZ2)
‘The deadliest [battle] we have lost.’

(33) Da. Marica quiere ganarse el cielo y es justo y rejusto que lo consiga; porque han de saber Vds. que jamás peco de lleno ni de vacío. Nunca miro bien a un hombre, y tan es cierto que dicen que nunca hubo nadie que se le acercase. Da Marica no mostró jamás esas indecencias [...]. (BAN1863EM6)
‘Doña Marica wants to get to Heaven and it’s fair for her to achieve so because you all should know that she never sinned. She never glanced nicely at a man, and what everyone says is so true that there never was anybody who would come close to her. Doña Marica never showed those indecencies.’

In (33) Doña Marica is described as still living, as evidenced in the opening sentence to the example Da. Marica quiere ganarse el cielo ‘Doña Marica wants to get to Heaven’ where the simple Present states her current wishes.

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63 Formality is evident in the frequent use of the Present Perfect in passive voice contexts in these data, at 68% (23/34).
A crucial feature of the Period I corpora is the overwhelming prevalence of the Present Perfect (at 100% [19/19]) in hot news contexts. Hot news Present Perfects feature in the body of the news in question, complementing the brief heading provided at the outset.\textsuperscript{64} Let me illustrate. Example (34) shows the official announcement of the brand new Minister of the Treasury in newly independent Argentina (recall that Argentina declared its independence from Spain on July 9\textsuperscript{th} 1816). The announcement was published four days later, on July 13\textsuperscript{th} 1816.

(34) \textit{Aviso oficial: El Sr. Ministro de Hacienda Dr. D. Manuel Obligado ha sido interinamente encargado por el Gobierno Supremo del despacho de la primer Secretaria de Estado}. (BAN1816GZ4)

‘Official announcement: The Minister of the Department of Treasury Dr. Don Manuel Obligado has been put in charge of the management of the first Secretary of State by the Supreme Government.’

Example (35) was excerpted from \textit{El Mosquito} (the satirical periodical). The following is a dialog between Don Hermójenes and Don Abundio. The former initiates interaction by asking ¿Qué hay de nuevo? ‘What’s new?’ – to which Don Abundio replies:

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\textsuperscript{64} The relationship between heading and news text changes by the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, where the headline and sub-headings introduce the core of the news and the text expands on that introduction. This change has implications for my analysis. Specifically, while 19\textsuperscript{th} century hot news tokens (introducing the novel news for the first time) are found in the body of the news text, 21\textsuperscript{st} century tokens feature prominently in the headlines and sub-headings.
(35) A Puebla la han tomado y no la han tomado.
El Club del Progreso ha repudiado la mesa de la roleta.
Al Ministro de Hacienda se la ha perdido un galguito llamado Vergüenza y al de Relaciones Esteriores otro llamado Opinión.
El Gobierno de la Provincia ha comprado un coche rejio, y van tres...El mismo gobierno avisa que no hay dinero con que aumentar el sueldo a sus empleados. (BAN1863EM7)
‘Puebla has been taken and has not been taken.
Club del Progreso has rejected the roulette table.
The Minister of Treasury has lost a puppy called Shame and the Minister of Foreign affairs [has lost] another called Opinion.
The provincial government has bought a great car, and it’s the third one...The same government announces that there is no money to give their employees a pay rise.’

Note that a priming effect may be involved in (35), where the iterative use of a specific tense (in this case, the Present Perfect) may be due to the speaker/writer simply repeating the same form a number of times in quite a mechanical fashion, rather than consciously choosing each and every Present Perfect token (cf. Schiffrin 1981: 55–56; Szmrecsanyi 2006; Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 25). However, the hot news Present Perfect – whether used repeatedly here as the result of mechanical repetition or not – eventually becomes extinct in the contemporary newspaper data, as I show in §6.5.

Most of the remaining Present Perfects in hot news contexts refer to relevant and recent events regarding criminal, political, and economic affairs, as in (36) through (39).

(36) Departamento de policía: Han entrado hasta el relevo de la guardia de hoy, 34 individuos remitidos de varios puntos del municipio. (BAN1873EA8)
‘Police Department: Thirty-four subjects from different locations in the municipality have entered until the release of today’s guard.’
‘New French Minister in Uruguay: Paris, December 8 – The count of Saint-Faix, general consul of France in Amsterdam, has been transferred to Montevideo as Business manager and General Consul, substituting Mr. Raul Wagner, [who has been] appointed to another mission.’

‘Death of banker Vanderbilt: London, December 9 – The death of the notoriously rich banker Vanderbilt has been announced here by telegram.’

‘News: A telegram from London received by us and inserted in the respective section informs us that the negotiation of that important transaction with the firms Baring Brothers and Morgan has finished due to its quantity.’

The use of the Present Perfect in hot news contexts remains a crucial finding since hot news perfects precede anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization, as has been the case in languages like French (Schwenter 1994b: 997). I show later on that, although originally prevalent in the Period I corpora, hot news Present Perfects systematically wane in frequency in Period II, and are categorically replaced by the Preterit in Period III.
6.3.3 Summary of Period I usage by perfect function

Table 6.3 summarizes the most central findings for the Period I data by perfect function, as noted in §6.3.2. Note that the Present Perfect is widespread in all canonical perfect contexts, including result, continuity, current relevance, experience, and hot news.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Prevailing form</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Result</td>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>A single ya + Preterit token in data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity</td>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>TA + VERB-PRET features at 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current relevance</td>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>TA + VERB-PRET features at 35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Experience very poorly represented in the data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot news</td>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>No Preterit tokens in hot news contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past perfectivity</td>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>Present Perfect also occurs at 10% – hypercorrection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3 Summary of Preterit and Present Perfect use by perfect function in Period I

6.4 Period II: 1910–1970

A total of 319 tokens were extracted from the Period II file. The Preterit represents 76% (244/319) of the data, while the Present Perfect appears at the rate of 24% (75/319). Two factor groups were knockouts and were thus excluded from the multivariate analysis. These were presence of ya ‘already’ and grammatical person (the Preterit shows zero values in both of these groups, and ya ‘already’ only occurs with the Present Perfect and third person subjects). Table 6.4 displays the results of a multivariate analysis of the contribution of internal factors on Present Perfect (PP) usage in the Period II corpora.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor groups</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% PP</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clause type</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subordinate clause</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.68</td>
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<td>.46</td>
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<td>Range</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object number</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>45</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>[.61]</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>[.51]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>[.43]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aktionsart</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>[.57]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>[.48]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N=75/319, p=.017 (p<.05), corrected mean=.22, Log-likelihood – 167.167, chi-square/cell 0.6197

Table 6.4 Contribution of internal factors on the use of the Present Perfect over the Preterit in the Period II corpora
(non-significant factor groups within brackets)

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65 A knockout is a value of 0 or 100 in a cell (Tagliamonte 2006: 265).
The Period II corpora show a corrected mean of .22, a much lower value than that noted for Period I. This illustrates a marked decrease in Present Perfect usage in this period. Most remarkable about these data is the selection as significant of two out of the four factor groups analyzed. Clause type displays the highest range (range=22) and is followed by object number (range=20). These factor groups were statistically significant ($p=.017$). Regarding the ranking of constraints, subordinate clauses and plural objects favor Present Perfect usage in the Period II data. On the other hand, temporal adverbial and Aktionsart play no statistically significant role in accounting for Present Perfect usage in these data.

6.4.1 Clause type and object number

Clause type displays the highest constraint ranking (range=22) in the multivariate analysis. Subordinate clauses favor the Present Perfect with a factor weight of .68, while Present Perfect use is less favored in main clauses and questions (.46). Recall that the subordinate clause group included both relative and nominal/adverbial clauses. In these data, a large number of Present Perfects occur within adverbial and nominal clauses (50% [12/24]), as illustrated in (40) and (41), respectively.

(40)  
Pero si en la capital el acto se ha desarrollado normalmente, en muchos puntos de la campaña (…) la jornada no ha sido tan satisfactoria. (BAN1940LN14)

‘But if in the capital the act has taken place normally, in many points around the countryside (…) the day has not been as satisfactory.’

(41)  
Pero se admite, en privado, que los norteamericanos se han colocado en una difícil situación (…) y que en el terreno de la propaganda han sufrido una seria derrota. (BAN1960LN23)

‘But it has been admitted that the North-American troops have been put in a difficult situation (…) and that, with regard to promotion, they have suffered a serious defeat.’

The selection as significant of clause type in the Period II data is commensurate with the more restricted character of the Present Perfect in this historical period. Recall
that, in Period I, the Present Perfect was favored in the absence of TAs and was unrestricted in terms of clause type and object number – two factor groups that significantly favor the Present Perfect in Period II. The Period I data resemble contemporary Peninsular Spanish (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 28) in the lack of clause type and Aktionsart restrictions. However, rather than journeying further along the cline to past perfectivity (like Peninsular Spanish), the ARPS Present Perfect not only dwindles in overall frequency but also acquires a variety of linguistic constraints with the passing of time.

Regarding clause type, the prevalence of the Present Perfect in subordinate clauses in Period II may be linked to the frequent use of transitive speech act verbs such as decir ‘to say’, admitir ‘to admit’, explicar ‘to explain’, etc. in the newspaper data. These verbs feature more prominently in the Period II corpora than in the contemporary newspaper data. In the absence of TV news programs featuring recorded interviews and speeches, detailed reporting of people’s comments may have been the rule in the written media of Period II. Furthermore, unlike the contemporary data reported in chapter 5, in the Period II corpora the Present Perfect is not prevalent in relative clauses (30% [9/30]).

Object number displays the second highest constraint ranking (range=20) in the multivariate analysis of the Period II data. Plural objects favor the Present Perfect with a factor weight of .67. The favoring effect of plural object complements on Present Perfect occurrence (at 38% [17/45]) should be interpreted as evidence for the continuative use of the ARPS Present Perfect in these data (cf. Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 16–17). As I show in the next section, Period II Present Perfects feature readily in continuative contexts (at 62.5% [10/16]).

6.4.2 Present Perfect function

In this section I offer a qualitative analysis of Present Perfect function. I show that, while the use of the Present Perfect in resultative and continuative contexts is in line with the contemporary trends noted in chapter 5, the Present Perfect features strongly in hot news and current relevance settings – a usage unattested in the contemporary data analyzed before. Let us take a look at each of the different perfect functions as represented in these corpora.

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66 In Argentina TV was not readily available until 1951.
In resultative contexts, the Present Perfect is more frequent than the Preterit (at 82% [36/44] versus 18% [8/44], respectively). Moreover, as with the Period I data, a majority of resultative Present Perfects (83% [30/36]) occur without TAs as in (42) through (44).

(42) La restricción del tráfico ferroviario ha hecho que las mercaderías se aglomeren en los puertos y en los centros de distribución. (BAN1940LN17)

‘The train transport restriction has caused the merchandise to pile up in harbors and distribution centers’ (i.e. the merchandise is stuck in distribution areas).

(43) Entretanto, los funcionarios aliados están muy molestos y creen que ha llegado el momento de la acción y no de discusión con los alemanes. (BAN1950LN20)

‘Meanwhile, the allied authorities are very upset and believe that, rather than a time for discussion with the Germans, the time for action has arrived’ (i.e. the moment for action is here).

(44) En el orden interno los tres partidos belgas han aprobado con poco entusiasmo el acuerdo para resolver la cuestión real. (BAN1950LN21)

‘Internally, the three Belgian parties have approved with little enthusiasm the agreement to solve the real question’ (i.e. the agreement is now approved).

A minority of resultative Present Perfects (11% [4/36]) co-occur with the TA ya ‘already’, as shown in (45) through (47).

(45) El bloqueo británico de las exportaciones de carbón alemán para Italia ha comenzado ya a producir perturbaciones en el mercado de ese producto en este país. (BAN1940LN16)

‘The British blockage on German coal exports bound for Italy has already started to cause trouble in the Italian market.’
(46) *Tal solución (...) es la que han preconizado ya algunos parlamentarios.* (BAN1950LN21)

‘Such a solution is the one that other members of parliament have already praised in public.’

(47) *La Comisión Antiapartheid de Oxford y el Club Laborista Universitario ha anunciado ya que harán manifestaciones contra la política racial sudafricana cuando sus jugadores de cricquet visiten a Oxford.* (BAN1960LN24)

‘The Oxford Antiapartheid Commission and the University Labor Club have already announced that they will manifest against South African racial policy when South African players visit Oxford.’

Interestingly, these data display no use of the *ya* + Preterit combination so frequently noted in the contemporary corpora of chapter 5.

The Present Perfect features more readily than the Preterit in *continuative contexts* (Present Perfect at 62.5% [10/16] and Preterit at 37.5% [6/16] Preterit). Moreover, the majority of continuative Present Perfects (60% [6/10]) appear in the absence of TAs. This is exemplified in (48), where hopeful presidential candidate John F. Kennedy explains that, until now, he hasn’t been able to convince voters that his religion is not to interfere with his politics.

(48) *El factor de mayor importancia en Virginia Oeste podría ser la religión católica de Kennedy, tema al que se refirió este anoche en un mensaje televisado. “Aparentemente, dijo, no he podido convencer a la gente que tengo [sic] las mismas convicciones que ellos…”* (BAN1960LN23)

‘The most important factor in West Virginia could be Kennedy’s Catholic faith, a topic he referred to in a message aired last night. “Apparently, he said, I haven’t been able to convince people that I share their values”…’
A minority of continuative Present Perfects (N=4/10) occur in the company of canonical TAs such as desde ‘since’, esta semana ‘this week’, etc., as shown in (49) through (52).

(49) *El Sr. Hess destacó que su partido llegó al poder por la voluntad del pueblo, voluntad que ha sido ratificada en todas las elecciones efectuadas desde entonces.* (BAN1940LN15)

‘Mr. Hess highlighted that his party got to power through people’s will, a will that has been ratified in all the elections held since then.’

(50) *Las relaciones entre las potencias ocupantes y el gobierno de la Republica Federal de Bonn (…) han desmejorado rápidamente en el curso de esta semana.* (BAN1950LN20)

‘The relations between the occupant nations and the government of the Bonn Federal Republic (…) have rapidly worsened in the course of this week.’

(51) *Durante sus ocho años de actividad el CIME [Comité Intergubernamental para las Migraciones] ha enviado las siguientes cifras de emigrantes europeos [siguen cifras].* (BAN1960LN23)

‘During its eight years of activity, the CIME [Intergovernmental Migration Committee] has sent the following numbers of European emigrants [figures ensue].’

(52) *Esta semana, por ejemplo, un periódico se ha empeñado en demostrar que en los Estados Unidos hay una tendencia no a la inflación (…) sino a la deflación.* (BAN1950LN21)

‘This week, for instance, a newspaper has set out to demonstrate that in the United States there is not a tendency towards inflation (…) but rather towards deflation.’

In line with the contemporary usage described in chapter 5, the Preterit occurs – albeit infrequently (N=3/6) – in the presence of frequency TAs such as siempre ‘always’, as exemplified in (53) through (55).
In (53), the Preterit and the TA *siempre* are used to encode iteration in the past. Note the occurrence of the simple Present (*sigue teniendo* ‘still has’) to further clarify the connection to the present moment. This use of the simple Present is reminiscent of that highlighted in §5.5.3 (example 54), where this tense is used to make connection to the present moment explicit. The example presented here is canonical in that the (prescribed) temporal reference ascribed to the Preterit does crucially not involve the present moment.

Unlike the categorical use of the Present Perfect in Period I hot news settings, the Preterit prevails over the Present Perfect (78% [21/27] Preterit and 22% [6/27] Present Perfect) in the Period II data. Note, however, that the lower use of the Present Perfect in this period suggests retention of this form in hot news contexts, in line with the tendency for older forms to co-exist with newer forms in the process of grammatical evolution (Heine et al. 1991: 20; Hopper 1991; Bybee et al. 1994). Recall that in the present study hot news instances were located in newspaper headlines while tokens in the body of the article were crucially not analyzed as hot news tokens (since, I contend, once readers see the headline in question the news ceases to be novel). Period I and Period II newspapers display longer, more
informative headings than Period III. As we shall see in §6.5, Period III headings are often short and catchy with the core of the news provided in the main text.

Examples (56) through (63) illustrate some Preterit and Present Perfect hot news uses noted in the Period II data.

(56) Noticias principales del 183 día de la guerra – Domingo 3 de febrero de 1940 – Fue bombardeado el trasatlántico Domala y hubo más de cien víctimas. (BAN1940LN17)
‘Main news on the 183rd day of the war – Sunday February 3rd 1940 – The transatlantic Domala was bombarded and there were more than one hundred victims.’

(57) Después de entrevistarse con Goering y Hess, Sumner Welles partió de Berlin rumbo a Suiza. (BAN1940LN17)
‘After meeting with Goering and Hess, Sumner Welles left Berlin on his way to Switzerland.’

(58) Son importantes los daños que ha causado el ciclón. (BAN1950LN19)
‘The damages that the cyclone has caused are important.’

(59) Otra divergencia ha complicado la crisis de Bélgica. (BAN1950LN20)
‘Another divergence has complicated the crisis in Belgium.’

(60) Se anunció que la Moore McCormack Lines se propone renovar su plan de operaciones. (BAN1950LN21)
‘It was announced that the Moore McCormack Lines intends to renew its operations.’

(61) Un millón de refugiados han encontrado ya patria y hogar. (BAN1960LN23)
‘One million refugees have already found nation and home.’
(62) **Rechazose un ataque a los comunistas en Laos.** (BAN1970LN27)

‘An attack to the communists in Laos was rejected.’

(63) **La temperatura máxima anotose ayer con 36º7.** (BAN1970LN28)

‘The maximum temperature was noted yesterday at 36º7.’

Examples (62) and (63) are of special interest given the use of the infrequent passive postverbal *se*. This use is only found in the 1970 newspaper data and – as noted earlier – was the reason why data from the 1970’s were included in Period II.

The Preterit and the Present Perfect appear to be in free variation in some of the hot news contexts analyzed here, particularly in newspapers from the first half of the 20th century. For instance, in the same piece of news (regarding Italy’s discontent at Britain’s blockage on Italian exports) the event is first introduced via the Present Perfect (example 64) and presented again – further down on the page – in a headline featuring the Preterit (example 65).

(64) **Roma ha protestado por el bloqueo de la exportación marítima de carbón alemán.** (BAN1940LN15)

‘Rome has protested about the blockage on maritime German coal exports.’

(65) **Italia protestó por el bloqueo de las exportaciones de carbón alemán.**

(BAN1940LN15).

‘Italy protested about the blockage on German coal exports.’

Likewise, both the Preterit and the Present Perfect are used in the headline to the same article in the 1955 issue of Clarín, exemplified in (66) and (67).

(66) **Se promulgó el rearme en Bonn.** (BAN1955CL22)

‘Rearmament in Bonn was proclaimed.’

(67) **Se ha pedido a Gruenther que aclare dos cuestiones decisivas.**

(BAN1955CL22)

‘Gruenther has been asked to clarify two decisive issues.’

183
The use of both the Preterit and the Present Perfect in the above examples indicates that these two forms were readily available for the expression of hot news in Period II. I later show in §6.5.2 that this free variation ends in resolution favorable to the Preterit in Period III, suggesting the complete encroachment of the hot news Preterit on the semantic spaces of the Present Perfect.

Unlike Period I, it is the Preterit that wins out over the Present Perfect in current relevance contexts in the Period II data (at 76% [66/87] versus 24% [21/87], respectively). Notwithstanding this prevalence, the Present Perfect is relatively frequent in comparison to the trends observed in oral contemporary ARPS (where the Present Perfect occurred at a mere 3%). Moreover, a majority of current relevance tokens appear in the absence of TAs (75% [50/66] Preterit and 85% [18/21] Present Perfect), as in (68) and (69).

(68) En el informe más reciente se dijo que los norvietnamitas se encontraban a casi 15 kilómetros de Long Cheng. (BAN1970LN28) ‘In the most recent report it was said that the North-Vietnamese were 15 kilometers away from Long Cheng.’

(69) Los hombres de Vang han tomado posiciones defensivas como preparativo contra un ataque. (BAN1970LN28) ‘Vang’s men have taken defensive positions in preparation against the attack.’

Note that the prevalence of adverbial-less current relevance tokens may be due to the nature of newspaper reporting, since most of the news occur within the recent past. As stated above, here headlines were considered to express hot news while tokens in the body of the article were not analyzed as instances of hot news. This decision caused a number of tokens (like (68) and (69) above) to be coded as currently relevant, which

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68 In the absence of explicit TA modification, the many tokens involving speech act verbs such as decir ‘to say’, añadir ‘to add’, sostener ‘to maintain’, admitir ‘to admit’ followed by a NP were coded as current relevance tokens. For example, in El secretario de defensa, Melvin R. Laird, admitió que aviones norteamericanos han bombardeado zonas de Laos. (BAN1970LN28) ‘The Secretary of Defense, Melvin R. Laird, admitted that North-American planes have bombarded certain zones in Laos’, the Preterit admitió ‘admitted’ was coded as a current relevance token.
may in turn have increased the number of current relevance tokens occurring without TAs.\footnote{Similar examples were coded as hot news instances in chapter 5 (see example 144). The tokens analyzed in this chapter are not viewed as hot news instances since they are not completely novel to the reader, having been presented first in the headline to the given text.}

Regarding presence of TAs, both the Preterit and the Present Perfect collocate with TAs (such as hoy ‘today’ and ahora ‘now’) in current relevance contexts, as shown in (70) through (76).

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(70)] El gobierno italiano \textit{ha presentado} al Británico, \textit{en la tarde de hoy}, su protesta por el bloqueo impuesto a sus importaciones de carbón desde Alemania. (BAN1940LN15)
\begin{quote}
‘Today in the afternoon the Italian government has protested against the British authorities about the blockage imposed on its coal imports from Germany.’
\end{quote}
\item[(71)] Evidentemente, Sir Charles no tenía nada satisfactorio que ofrecer al conde Ciano, que la protesta \textit{fue presentada hoy}. (BAN1940LN16)
\begin{quote}
‘Evidently, Sir Charles did not have anything satisfactory to offer Count Ciano; the protest was presented today.’
\end{quote}
\item[(72)] El número de diez heridos graves \textit{ha sido elevado hoy} a veinte. (BAN1950LN19)
\begin{quote}
‘The amount of ten gravely injured people has been increased to twenty today.’
\end{quote}
\item[(73)] Las informaciones incompletas (...) se deben a las interrupciones (...) ya que la lluvia \textit{continuó hoy} cayendo torrencialmente. (BAN1950LN20)
\begin{quote}
‘The incomplete information is due to the interruptions caused by the rain which continued to fall torrentially today.’
\end{quote}
\item[(74)] En Bonn se \textit{escucharon hoy} severas críticas. (BAN1950LN20)
\begin{quote}
‘Severe criticism was heard in Bonn today.’
\end{quote}
\end{enumerate}
(75)  *Rusia ha resuelto ahora permitir que su propio desarme sea fiscalizado por una inspección internacional.* (BAN1955CL22)

‘Russia has now decided to allow its own disarmament to be overseen by an international inspection.’

(76)  *Un grupo de 56 preceptores de la Universidad de Oxford declaró hoy que el match de cricquet de esta semana entre la Universidad y el equipo sudafricano “solo podrá servir para condonar la práctica de la discriminación racial en el deporte”.* (BAN1960LN24)

‘A group of 56 preceptors from the University of Oxford declared today that this week’s cricquet match between the University and the South African team “will only serve to condone the practice of racial discrimination in sport”.’

The prevalence of the Preterit in the presence of specific (e.g. *hoy*) and proximate (e.g. *ahora*) TAs (at 84% [16/19]) agrees with the tendencies noted for the contemporary ARPS data in chapter 5. Moreover, as with the hot news trends described above, the low usage frequency of the Present Perfect suggests “retention” of this form in current relevance contexts (Heine et al. 1991: 20; Hopper 1991; Bybee et al. 1994).

The Preterit overwhelmingly prevails over the Present Perfect in past perfective contexts (at 99.3% [142/143] versus 0.7% [1/143]). Some of these uses are shown in (77) through (81). Note the use of specific TAs in the vicinity of these past perfective Preterits.

(77)  *Alrededor de dos millones de ciudadanos se movilizaron ayer para designar 65 diputados nacionales.* (BAN1940LN13)

‘Around two million citizens voted to designate 65 national representatives yesterday.’
(78) *Antes de partir de Berlin a Suiza, el funcionario norteamericano se entrevistó ayer con el mariscal Goering y el señor Rodolf Hess.*

(BAN1940LN14)

‘Before leaving Berlin for Switzerland, the North-American official had an interview with Marshal Goering and Mr Rodolf Hess yesterday.’

(79) *La nota fue entregada ayer en la embajada británica en la capital italiana, pero no se publicará hasta que llegue a Londres.*

(BAN1940LN15)

‘The note was submitted yesterday at the British Embassy in the Italian capital but it will not be published until it reaches London.’

(80) *La comisión marítima aprobó en la semana pasada el pedido de subsidio de la compañía para tres barcos que llevaran los nombres de Argentina, Brasil y Uruguay.*

(BAN1950LN22)

‘Last week, the maritime commission approved the company’s request for the three ships that will be named Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay.’

(81) *España ingresó en el CIME en 1957.*

(BAN1960LN23)

‘Spain entered the CIME in 1957.’

A single Present Perfect token was recorded in past perfective contexts in the March 4th 1940 issue of *La Nación*, as seen in (82).

(82) *Algunos hechos de violencia han venido a poner una nota de sangre en los comicios de ayer: los de mayor gravedad son, sin duda, los ocurridos en Guillermina y en General Uriburu.*

(BAN1940LN13)

‘Some violent events have come to give yesterday’s voting a somewhat bloody twist: the gravest events are, without a doubt, the ones in Guillermina and General Uriburu.’

Interestingly, example (82) is the only use of the Present Perfect in a past perfective context in the Period II data. Recall that these uses were identified as tokens of
hypercorrection in Period I. The almost negligible occurrence of the Present Perfect in past perfective settings in Period II suggests that the hypercorrect use noted for Period I had diminished by the middle of the 20th century. As I show later on, no such hypercorrect uses are noted in the Period III data. However, recall that the Present Perfect features in past perfective contexts in the QUST. In this respect, the Period I data and the QUST are similar in the hypercorrect selection of the Present Perfect in past perfective settings. I return to this issue in chapter 7.

Only two experiential tokens were noted in the Period II data. As suggested above, the highly impersonal character of newspaper reporting may have influenced this trend. Examples (83) and (84) illustrate uses of the Preterit and the Present Perfect with the stative predicate experimentar ‘to experience’.

(83) La Comisión no ha experimentado el menor tropiezo. (BAD1910PREF12)
   ‘The Commission has not experienced the slightest stumble.’

(84) Lo cierto es que el número de víctimas es por demás elevado y que un crecido número de familias, aproximadamente 400 personas, han quedado sin techo y distintos establecimientos experimentaron perdidas cuantiosas. (BAN1950LN19)
   ‘The truth is that the number of victims is high and that a growing number of families, approximately 400 people, have been left homeless and that different establishments experienced several losses.’

6.4.3 Summary of Period II usage by perfect function

Table 6.5 summarizes the most central findings for the Period II data by perfect function, as noted in §6.4.2. Note that, while the Present Perfect “remains” in resultative and continuative settings, the Preterit is widespread in current relevance and hot news contexts (two settings dominated by the Present Perfect in the 19th century).
6.5 Period III: 1982–2007

A total of 256 tokens were extracted from the Period III file. The Preterit represents 90% (231/256) of the data, while the Present Perfect appears at the rate of 10% (25/256). First person grammatical subjects were excluded from the multivariate analysis as these displayed zero Preterit tokens. Presence of ya ‘already’ was also excluded as the Present Perfect appeared only twice in the presence of this TA. The analysis offered here is based on a small number of tokens. This is arguably less than ideal for multivariate analysis. However, the Period III findings are to be interpreted in comparison to previous periods and the contemporary oral data. Table 6.6 displays the results for a variable rule analysis of the contribution of internal factors on Present Perfect (PP) usage in the Period III corpora. Note that the overall low frequency of the Present Perfect is, in and of itself, an indicator of the status of this form in contemporary ARPS.

<table>
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<th>Factor groups</th>
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<td>.49</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Total N=25/256, p=.02 (p<.05), corrected mean=.06, Log-likelihood – 69.376, chi-square/cell 0.6576

Table 6.6 Contribution of internal factors on the use of the Present Perfect over the Preterit in the Period III corpora
(non-significant factor groups within brackets)
The Period III corpora show the lowest value in the written corpora (at only .06). This value documents the overwhelming decrease in Present Perfect choice in ARPS present day newspaper usage. Note that the Present Perfect is used almost to the same extent in the contemporary oral and written corpora. (The corrected mean for the casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview corpora was .04). Most remarkable about these data is the selection as significant of three out of four of the factor groups analyzed. Just as with the oral contemporary data, temporal adverbial displays the highest range (range=54), and is followed by Aktionsart (range=36) and object number (range=27). These factor groups were statistically significant ($p=.02$).

Regarding the ranking of constraints, proximate and frequency TAs, atelic predicates, and plural object complements favor the Present Perfect, while clause type plays no statistically significant role in favoring Present Perfect usage.

6.5.1 Temporal adverbial, Aktionsart, and object number

As with the contemporary oral data, temporal adverbial displays the highest constraint ranking (range=54) in the multivariate analysis. Proximate and frequency TAs favor the Present Perfect with a factor weight of .77. The favoring effect of proximate/frequency TAs on Present Perfect use (at 27% [3/11]) may be interpreted as evidence for the occurrence of the ARPS Present Perfect in continuative contexts. Note that, despite the exceedingly low number of tokens in this category, the similar usage trends across the oral and written contemporary corpora illustrate the importance of proximate and frequency TAs on Present Perfect use in present-day ARPS. Example (85) shows the Present Perfect with the proximate TA *en los últimos meses* ‘in the last months’, which has been underscored for illustration purposes.

(85) *En los últimos meses ha habido* varios atentados con bombas caseras contra bancos y empresas de capital estadounidense en Buenos Aires y sus alrededores. (BAN2005LC18)

‘In the last months there have been various home made bomb attacks against banks and business funded by American capital in Buenos Aires and around.’

Aktionsart displays the second highest constraint ranking (range=36) in the multivariate analysis of the Period III data. Specifically, atelic predicates favor
Present Perfect usage with a weight of .77. The Present Perfect occurs with atelic verbs at the rate of 23% (13/56), and only at 6% (12/200) with telic predicates. The favoring effect of Aktionsart on Present Perfect choice is also linked to the frequent occurrence of the Present Perfect in continuative contexts in these data, as discussed below.

Object number displays the third highest constraint ranking (range=27) in the multivariate analysis of the Period III data. Once again, plural objects favor the Present Perfect with a factor weight of .72. Just as with Period II, the favoring effect of plural object complements (at 21% [9/42]) should be interpreted as evidence for the use of the Present Perfect in continuative contexts in the corpora analyzed here (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 16–17).

In sum, the favoring effect of proximate/frequency TAs, atelic predicates, and plural objects on Present Perfect usage in the multivariate analysis of the Period III data is commensurate with the occurrence of the Present Perfect in continuative contexts. In these data, the Present Perfect and the Preterit occur at the same rate in continuative contexts (at 50% [12/24] Present Perfect versus 50% [12/24] Preterit). In fact, continuative contexts are unique in favoring Present Perfect use in written contemporary ARPS. As I show in the following section, the Preterit is widespread in all other contexts erstwhile occupied by the Present Perfect (including resultative, current relevance, and hot news settings).

6.5.2 Present Perfect function

Period III resultative contexts feature a predominance of Preterit tokens (at 71% [20/28]), while the Present Perfect occurs at 29% (8/28).70 The low overall usage frequency of the Present Perfect in resultative contexts explains the low factor weight for telic predicates in the Aktionsart group (at .41). Recall that resultatives require that the predicate be telic (Lindstedt 2000: 368). Resultative Present Perfects appear most frequently in the absence of TAs (at 87.5% [7/8]), as shown in (86) through (88).

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70 Further evidence of the widespread use of the Preterit in ARPS resultative contexts is found in John McCain’s America has spoken clearly speech, which was translated into ARPS as El pueblo habló, y habló con claridad ‘The nation spoke, and it spoke with clarity’ in the November 4th 2008 online version of La Nación.
Ministro - Duhalde… ¿Quién será el ministro de economía? 

No hemos encontrado nada mejor que Remes. (BAN2002LN40)

‘Minister – Duhalde [Argentina’s President in January 2002]…Who will be the next Minister of Economy? We haven’t found anything better than Remes’ (i.e. we have no Minister of Economy).

Las bajas norteamericanas en Irak han convertido a la guerra en el talón de Aquiles del presidente de los Estados Unidos, George W. Bush. (BAN2007CL41)

‘The North-American casualties in Iraq have converted the war into US President George W. Bush’s Achilles heel’ (i.e. the war is detrimental to US reputation).

(...) el diario The New York Times sostuvo ayer que el número de bajas refleja cuánto más peligroso y embrollado se ha convertido el trabajo de un soldado en Irak. (BAN2007CL41)

‘The New York Times held yesterday that the number of [US] casualties reflects how much more dangerous and complicated the work of a soldier has become in Iraq’ (i.e. the work of a soldier in Iraq is dangerous and complicated).

The Present Perfect appears only once in the company of the TA ya ‘already’, as shown in (89).

Ya me han desvalorizado algunos elementos. (BAN1997LN37)

‘(They) have already disregarded some elements’ (i.e. some elements currently have no value).

The Preterit often occurs in the absence of TAs in resultative contexts (at 55% [11/20]). A clear example of the use of the Preterit in such contexts stems from a speech by President Duhalde shortly after Argentina’s banking system collapsed in December 2001. Upon accepting the Presidency in the midst of socio-economic chaos, President Duhalde commented on the effects of Menem’s economic model (current throughout the 1990’s) in the hectic Argentina of 2001. The Preterit, rather
than the Present Perfect, is used in highlighting the material effects of the economic crisis, as shown in (90).

(90) La propia esencia de este modelo terminó con la convertibilidad. Arrojó a la indigencia a dos millones de compatriotas, destruyó la clase media, quebró nuestras industrias y pulverizó el trabajo de los argentinos (BAN2002CL38)
‘The very essence of this model finished with convertibility. It threw two million Argentinians into indigence, destroyed the middle class, rendered our industry bankrupt, and pulverized the Argentinians’ work (i.e. convertibility, indigence, destruction of the middle class, bankruptcy of the industries, and destruction of work exist now as a result of this model).

A similar use of the Preterit is shown in (91) where the results of the heavy rains are described.

(91) El temporal dejó dos muertos, 250 enfermos evacuados en un hospital de La Matanza, innumerables calles inundadas y 38 mil familias sin luz. (BAN1992CL34)
‘The heavy rains left two casualties, 250 evacuated hospital patients, innumerable flooded streets, and one thousand families without electricity.’

As noted in chapter 5, the Preterit is frequent in conjunction with the TA ya ‘already’ (45% [9/20]) in resultative contexts, as in (92) through (95), where ya ‘already’ has been underscored for illustration purposes.

(92) Ya aparecieron en las vidrieras los precios en pesos. (BAN1992CL34)
‘Prices in pesos already appeared in the window displays.’
On the days previous to the 2008 US election, Clarín online (November 2nd 2008) reported on the outstanding numbers of Americans who were heading to the polls to cast early votes. This example has not been included in the multivariate analysis but is presented here for illustration purposes.

As noted above, the Present Perfect and the Preterit occur at the same rate in Period III continuative contexts (at 50% [12/24] Present Perfect versus 50% [12/24] Preterit). The majority of continuative Present Perfects (75% [9/12]) appear in the absence of TAs, as shown in (97).
(97) *Ya ha habido muertos. Ha habido importantes saqueos que (...) fueron inducidos en no pocos casos. Ha habido gente que se armó en defensa propia (...). Ha habido quienes, después del fracaso del estado de sitio, (...) reflexionaron alrededor de la idea que la última valla ante la violencia incontenible era el toque de queda.*

(BAN2002LN39)

‘There already have been deaths. There have been important lootings that (...) have been induced in most cases. There have been people who loaded up in self-defense (...). There have been those who, after the failure of the siege, (...) played with the idea that the last resort to stop violence was the military call.’

The example in (97) refers to the Argentinian crisis of December 2001, when military intervention was required after a series of violent events. The boldfaced tokens have been coded as continuatives, in line with Howe (2006: 138). In his example (*La verdad es que ha habido buenos resultados* ‘The truth is that there have been good results’), Howe points out the results referred to by the speaker obtain as a consequence of a series of iterative processes in the time leading up to the present. The same applies to example (97), although it remains to be assessed whether the canonical extension of the continuative Present Perfect into present time is true for ARPS.71 The priming effect mentioned earlier in §6.3.2 may be adduced here as well since the four continuative Present Perfects in (97) immediately follow one another and are remarkably similar in their predication.

A minority of continuative Present Perfects (25% [3/12]) occur in the company of TAs such as *hasta ahora* ‘up until now’ and *en todos los momentos* ‘at all times’, as shown in (98) and (99), where the TAs have been underscored for illustration purposes.

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71 Romero (2002: 333) describes the events surrounding this critical time as “The commotion did not end that day [i.e. in December 2001]. Since then, and as of the middle of January 2002 when I write these words, there have been four successive presidents while the protests and outbursts of popular fury have continued sporadically”. Note the use of the English Present Perfect in referring to the continuous character of the situations described in example (97) above.
98. Pinochet anunció también que en los primeros meses de 1987 se legalizarán los partidos políticos, cuya actividad fue suspendida en 1973 y **hasta ahora han funcionado de hecho**. (BAN1987CL33)

‘Pinochet also announced that in the first months of 1987 political parties whose activity was suspended in 1973 and have worked factually until now will be legalized.’

99. **Yo he dado** muy buena información en todos los momentos. Y respecto de lo que dije tengo los elementos de juicio y todas las pruebas. (BAN1997CL36)

‘I have provided very good information at all times. And with respect to what I said I have all the necessary evidence.’

In line with my observations for the oral contemporary data, TAs canonically described as triggering Present Perfect usage (e.g. **siempre** ‘always’, **hasta ahora** ‘up until now’) (cf. Iatridou et al. 2001: 196; Zagona 2008: 139) also occur with the Preterit (at 59% [7/12]). This is illustrated in (100) through (103), where the TAs have been underscored for illustration purposes.

100. **Desde la implantación de la ley marcial en Polonia el 13 de diciembre** el Sumo Pontífice **efectuó** repetidos llamados a favor de la reanudación del diálogo. (BAN1982CL30)

‘Since the beginning of the martial law in Poland on December 13th the Pope made repeated calls in favor of dialog.’

101. **La Iglesia siempre enseñó** esta doctrina – acotó. (BAN1982CL30)

‘The [Catholic] Church always taught this doctrine – [he] added.’

102. …**el único dirigente de la más alta jerarquía del sindicato, que, de acuerdo con lo que se sabe, pudo escapar hasta ahora a la prisión.** (BAN1982LN30)

‘[He is] the only leader of the highest hierarchy who, as far as it is known, could escape prison until now.’
The Period III data show that both the Preterit and the Present Perfect may be used in ARPS continuative contexts. However, a comparison of the oral corpora analyzed in chapter 5 and the contemporary written data studied here indicates that the continuative Present Perfect is more widely preferred in the written medium (hence the selection of Aktionsart as significantly favoring Present Perfect usage in the Period III data analysis).

Unlike the trends noted for Periods I and II above, and in line with my findings for the oral contemporary corpora, the Preterit overwhelmingly prevails over the Present Perfect (97% [63/65] versus 3% [2/65]) in current relevance contexts. The Present Perfect, on the other hand, features only minimally in the absence of TAs. An example is offered in (104).

(104) **Ha quedado** en el camino el presidente de los módicos 7 días.  
(BAN2002LN)  
‘The President of the mere 7 days has stayed behind.’

The Present Perfect token in (104) seems to fulfill the announcing function of the current relevance Present Perfect noted in §5.5.4. Most Preterit tokens appear in current relevance contexts in the absence of TAs. As suggested above, this may be due to the nature of newspaper reporting and the fact that tokens in the body of the article were coded as current relevance instances. Thus, this decision may have increased the number of current relevance tokens occurring without TAs in the data. Example (105) illustrates one such use.

(105) **El nuevo peso argentino que entró en circulación es la cuarta moneda que se cambia en el lapso de veintidós años.** (BAN1992LN35)  
‘The new Argentinian peso that started to circulate is the fourth currency that is changed in the course of twenty-two years.’
The Preterit also occurs in the presence of TAs (at 19% [12/63]). It most typically collocates with specific TAs such as hoy ‘today’ as well as the proximate TA ahora ‘now’, as in (106) through (109). TAs have been underscored for illustration purposes.

(106) *El Papa Juan Pablo II hizo hoy su más firme defensa del movimiento Solidaridad al adordar [sic] la crisis polaca en su mensaje.* (BAN1982CL29)
‘Today Pope John Paul II made his firmest defense of the Solidarity movement in touching on the Polish crisis in his message.’

(107) “*Polonia está dispuesta a cumplir con el reembolso de los intereses de los créditos que le fueron concedidos por instituciones occidentales y los primeros pagos ya fueron efectuados el 24 de diciembre*” – *dijo hoy el presidente de las Cámaras de Comercio e Industria.* (BAN1982LN30)
‘Poland is open to honor its payment of the interest generated by the loans given by Western institutions and the first payments were already made on December 24th – said today the President of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry.’

‘The Pope celebrated the International Peace Day today and declared 1987–1988 to be a special Marian year.’

(109) *Ocurrió ahora que los tiempos han modificado tantas costumbres.* (BAN1997CL36)
‘It happened now that time has modified so many traditions.’

Remarkably, the overall usage frequency of the Present Perfect in current relevance contexts is identical in the oral and newspaper corpora (at 3%). This suggests that, contrary to the view that written language tends to reflect prescriptive rules (Lope Blanch 1972: 128 ff.), newspaper and oral usage may indeed be more closely intertwined than previously indicated. I return to this suggestion in chapter 7.
**Past perfectivity** is almost categorically encoded through the Preterit in the Period III corpora (at 99% [82/83]). The single Present Perfect token noted in the data is offered in (110) and refers to the US casualties in Iraq in December 2006. This example could arguably have been coded as a current relevance token, although – strictly speaking – the month of December is clearly over at the time of the news reporting (January 2\textsuperscript{nd} 2007).

(110) Con al menos 110 militares muertos, diciembre ha sido el mes más sangriento para las tropas estadounidenses destacadas en Irak.
(BAN2007CL41)
‘With at least 110 military deaths, December has been the bloodiest month for the US troops deployed in Iraq.’

The Preterit occurs relatively frequently (at 40% [33/82]) in the presence of specific TAs such as ayer ‘yesterday’, en diciembre ‘in December’, etc., as illustrated in (111) through (113).

(111) Los incrementos salariales para el primer trimestre del año en el sector privado serán negociados entre los empresarios y los trabajadores (...) se informó ayer oficialmente.
(BAN1987LN31)
‘The salary increase for the first trimester of the year in the private sector will be negotiated amongst the businesspeople and the workers (...) as it was officially informed yesterday.’

(112) Ayer, cuando concluían las principales “festividades” anuales, la Argentina comenzó a reorientar el delicado curso de su vida institucional.
(BAN2002LN)
‘Yesterday, when the main “festivities” were finishing, Argentina started to re-orient the delicate course of its institutional life.’

(113) Ayer, los turistas fueron a la playa después del mediodía.
(BAN2002CL37)
‘Yesterday tourists went to the beach in the afternoon.’
(114) **Unión Europea – Se sumaron ayer Bulgaria y Rumania.**
(BAN2007CL)
‘European Union – Bulgaria and Romania joined yesterday.’

(115) **La cifra se alcanzó en diciembre, el mes más trágico para las tropas desde 2004.**
(BAN2007CL40)
‘The figure (of US casualties) was reached in December, the most tragic month for the US troops since 2004.’

As mentioned in chapter 4, TAs are not the sole encoders of temporal reference; temporal anchoring may stem from other sentence constituents, such as the direct object *el 2006 ‘2006’* in (116).

(116) **Estados Unidos cerró el 2006 en Irak con el trágico record de 3.001 soldados muertos.**
(BAN2007CL40)
‘The US closed 2006 in Iraq with the tragic record of 3,001 soldier deaths.’

In line with Burgos’ (2004) claims that the Argentinian Present Perfect is widespread in hot news contexts, the entirety of the **hot news contexts** in the Period III data are encoded through the Preterit (at 100% [53/53]), a trend diametrically opposed to my findings for the Period I corpora. Examples (117) through (121) illustrate these uses.

(117) **Se fijaron las pautas de precios y salarios.**
(BAN1982LN31)
‘The guidelines for prices and salaries were established.’

(118) **Aumentaron los combustibles y tarifas. La nafta especial subió un 5,5%.**
(BAN1987LN32)
‘Tariffs and fuel prices increased. Unleaded gas increased by 5.5%.’
As already noted, experiential contexts are scarce, since newspaper media remains highly impersonal. The only two experiential Present Perfects recorded appear in (122) and (123).

(122) Aunque el gobierno actual ha demostrado con frecuencia que es más hábil en las palabras que en los hechos. (BAN2005LC21)
‘Although the current government has frequently shown that it is more able with words than with action.’

(123) (…) del crecimiento económico que ha experimentado la región. (BAN2005LC19)
‘(…) of the economic growth that the region has experienced.’

A single Preterit token is used in reference to the holiday celebrations of December 2001, in the midst of Argentina’s bankruptcy. The TA nunca ‘never’ contributes the experiential reading, as shown in (124).
(124) Nadie se engaña, sin embargo: nunca hubo “festividades” tan tristes y desoladoras. (BAN2002LN)

‘No cheating ourselves, though: never were there “festivities” sadder and more desolate [than these ones].’

6.5.3 Summary of Period III usage by perfect function

Table 6.7 summarizes the Period III usage by perfect function, as outlined in §6.5.2 above. Note that the Preterit is widespread across several perfect functions, while continuative contexts are unique in favoring the Preterit and the Present Perfect to the same degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Prevailing form</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resultative</td>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>A single $ya$ + Present Perfect token in data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Presence of TAs favors Preterit use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current relevance</td>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>TA + VERB-PRET features at 96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Experience minimally represented in these data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot news</td>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>No Present Perfect tokens in hot news contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past perfectivity</td>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>Present Perfect occurs once, in 2006, at 1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.7 Summary of Preterit and Present Perfect use by perfect function in Period III

6.6 Summary of early and contemporary usage

The written data analyzed in this chapter reveal a steady decrease in Present Perfect usage coupled with an increase in the use of the Preterit as we approach the 21st century. However, as mentioned above, overall frequency alone does not specify patterns of variability determining choice of the forms under study and possible routes to grammaticalization, since layering of forms may represent change in the direction of grammaticalization paths (Tagliamonte 2000: 340). Although largely exploratory at this point (due to low token numbers), a crucial advantage of the multivariate analysis is its ability to show how patterns of use shift throughout time, offering a glimpse at how the variable grammar is represented (Poplack & Tagliamonte 2001: 93). This is reflected in the general constraint ranking for each of the periods under investigation. Table 6.8 summarizes the most salient factor weights of the three multivariate analyses carried out in §6.3 through §6.5 above. I also include the results of the contemporary oral data for illustration purposes. The heaviest factor weights in each group have been **boldfaced** for emphasis.
Table 6.8 Comparison of factor weights across time and data type
(non-significant factor groups within brackets)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Period I</th>
<th>Period II</th>
<th>Period III</th>
<th>Oral data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total N:</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected mean:</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal adverbial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximate/Frequency</td>
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<td>[.61]</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>[.51]</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>[.43]</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause type</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate clause</td>
<td>[.56]</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>[.50]</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main clause</td>
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<td>.46</td>
<td>[.49]</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>[.50]</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>[.61]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>[.49]</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>[.49]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aktionsart</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>[.62]</td>
<td>[.57]</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>[.55]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>[.47]</td>
<td>[.48]</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>[.46]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the corrected means for each of the corpora reveal a steady decrease in Present Perfect usage from Period I through to Period III. Most remarkable in the contemporary corpora (represented as Period III and oral data in the table) is the almost identical corrected mean value for the oral and written data. The systematic decrease in Present Perfect usage since the 19th century reflects the steady encroachment of the Preterit on spaces erstwhile occupied by the Present Perfect. This trend is particularly noticeable towards the mid 20th century, taking special impetus in the 21st century, where the TA + VERB-PRET construction acquires a rather central status.

Regarding contemporary ARPS, although low in overall frequency, the Present Perfect is subject to similar linguistic constraints in the oral and written data. Specifically, it is favored in the presence of proximate and frequency TAs, in line with continuative and experiential Present Perfect usage (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 15). However, while in the Period III written data the Present Perfect is favored with atelic predicates and plural object complements, the oral contemporary Present Perfect is more readily found in subordinate (relative) clauses. Recall that while the continuative Present Perfect was the single perfect type to compete with the Preterit in the written data, the oral data display a preponderance of experiential Present Perfects. As expected, Aktionsart plays a significant effect in Present Perfect
use in the contemporary written media as a consequence of the somewhat frequent use of the Present Perfect in continuative settings. In fact, the significance of Aktionsart in Period III is linked to the favoring effect of continuative contexts in Present Perfect usage. Recall that continuative settings favored both the Preterit and the Present Perfect to the same degree (at 50% each) in Period III. The occurrence of the Present Perfect in newspaper continuative contexts (and the continuative Present Perfects noted for the oral data) suggests retention of this (earlier) perfect function (Heine et al. 1991; Hopper 1991; Bybee et al. 1994). On the other hand, contemporary oral usage is favored in experiential contexts, which are aspectually unrestricted. Moreover, the favoring effect of clause type on Present Perfect choice relates to the frequent occurrence of experiential perfect in relative clauses and in the company of indefinite mass noun subjects (e.g. as gente ‘people’, los demás ‘others’).

Most striking about the Period I data is the favoring effect of TA absence on Present Perfect usage. Recall that the Present Perfect was prevalent in Period I – where it featured more readily than the Preterit in all perfect contexts. The current relevance Present Perfect was used in Period I to encode recent past situations both with and without TAs. Note that the ordering of the groups within the temporal adverbial factor group indicates that the Period I Present Perfect was less contrived in terms of TA co-occurrence. As shown earlier, the Present Perfect was erstwhile favored in all perfect contexts – a trend that radically decreases in contemporary times. Remarkably, Aktionsart plays no statistically significant role in favoring Present Perfect use in the Period I and Period II data. This lack of aspectual restriction clearly demonstrates that the ARPS Present Perfect may not be located at Harris’ (1982) stage II, where the perfect exclusively fulfills durative and iterative aspectual functions.

The data analyzed in this chapter documents a remarkable change in the overall frequency of use and the functions expressed by the ARPS Preterit and the Present Perfect. While Period I shows a preference for the Present Perfect across different contexts, Period II stands as an intermediate step between the prevalence of the Present Perfect in Period I and the widespread use of the Preterit in Period III. Note that the Period II Present Perfect is significantly favored in subordinate clauses (especially in nominal and adverbial clauses) and with plural objects. The favoring effect of clause type and object number in the Period II corpora reflects the waning of Present Perfect usage in hodiernal and hot news contexts and a more specific usage in
settings involving iteration (plural objects) and the expression of background information (in subordinate clauses). As mentioned at various points in the analysis, the change in perfect function from Period I to Period III is crucial in understanding Preterit and Present Perfect usage in ARPS. Specifically, these changes offer empirical corroboration for the evolution of the ARPS verbal system thus challenging the contention that Latin American varieties represent earlier frozen stages of development akin to those of earlier Peninsular Spanish.

6.7 Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have analyzed the use of the ARPS Preterit and the Present Perfect in written documents, magazines, and newspapers spanning the 19th–21st centuries. I have shown that, whereas the use of the Present Perfect has systematically decreased since the 19th century, the linguistic conditioning of the categories inside the different factor groups remains relatively stable. For example, atelic predicates tend to favor the Present Perfect more than telic verbs. The corollary to this is the systematic decrease in the number of functions expressed by the Present Perfect since the 19th century and the steady encroachment of the Preterit on functions erstwhile encoded by the Present Perfect. This trend is particularly noticeable towards the mid 20th century, taking special impetus in the 21st century, where the TA + VERB-PRET construction acquires a rather central status.

In terms of the three claims set forth at the outset of this chapter, the suggestion that Latin American varieties represent earlier stages in the grammaticalization of anteriors (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972: 138) was rejected since Period I reflects uses of the Present Perfect beyond resultative and continuative contexts, including current relevance and hot news functions typical of varieties displaying advanced anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization (e.g. Harris 1982; Schwenter 1994a). Moreover, the oral contemporary data show no Aktionsart restrictions for the Present Perfect; rather, the Present Perfect is highly favored in experiential contexts involving the expression of indefinite and generic past situations. Further, although the focus is on the 19th and 20th centuries, my findings support the proposal that the Present Perfect was used in the 16th–19th centuries in Argentina to expresses resultative, continuative, (experiential), hot news and current relevance functions (Burgos 2004: 272). Likewise, my findings partly uphold the claim that the decrease in Present Perfect usage is restricted to the 20th century (Burgos 2004: 272),
even though I have shown that it is the mid 20th century that evidences significant Preterit growth at the expense of the Present Perfect. Moreover, the proposal that the Present Perfect should decrease in overall frequency from the 19th to the 21st century has also been upheld. That is, whereas the Present Perfect expresses result, continuity, current relevance, hot news and past perfectivity in Period I, it merely encodes continuity and – to a lesser extent – result in the Period III data. The earlier and contemporary written data analyzed also show that, in line with my observations in chapter 5, the Preterit canonically features as an indicator of past perfectivity throughout time, confirming the claim that the ARPS Present Perfect is crucially not undergoing the anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization proposed for other Spanish varieties. Particularly interesting about the Period I data is the use of the current relevance and hot news Present Perfect, which are considered hallmarks of anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization. As shown above, current relevance and hot news Present Perfects wane in overall frequency in the 20th century and show a categorical demise in the 21st century, where they are completely replaced by the Preterit (and a TA). A reasonable explanation would suggest that the encroachment of the Preterit on perfect contexts may have begun in oral interaction (as exemplified in the 1863 issue of the satirical newspaper *El Mosquito* where the Preterit features in current relevance contexts), and that the Present Perfect survived in the written data longer than it did in spoken language. This may have been the scenario throughout the 19th century, with the early 20th century showing competition of these forms in various domains, a situation that ends up in resolution favorable to the Preterit at the end of the 20th century and until the present day – both in oral and written genres. Furthermore, the use of the Preterit in current relevance settings may have triggered the disappearance of the Present Perfect from hot news contexts, since the latter presuppose recency (and recency is expressed through the Preterit in ARPS). However, these suggestions are speculative and should be taken conservatively in the absence of oral data. Finally, my findings support Burgos’ (2004) proposal that the prevalence of the Preterit does not seem to be conditioned by the medium (oral or written) involved since both oral and newspaper contemporary media display similar usage and constraint ranking in the multivariate analysis.

In the next chapter, I offer a discussion of the main issues arising from the analyses offered in the present and preceding chapters.
CHAPTER 7

Semantic, evolutionary, and sociolinguistic issues

As noted in chapter 1, the aim of this thesis is to offer an empirically-based account of the semantic, evolutionary, and sociolinguistic concerns surrounding ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect usage across a range of data types and historical times. In line with this aim, I have shown that the Preterit is used exponentially more than the Present Perfect in contemporary ARPS and that the Present Perfect is crucially not undergoing the anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization proposed for Peninsular Spanish. I have also shown experiential contexts to be exceptional in their favoring of the Present Perfect over the Preterit, where the Present Perfect encodes indefinite past and generic reference. I have further documented retention of resultative and continuative uses and have shown that the so-called continuative Present Perfect is displaying loss of its link-to-present requirement. Historically, I have documented a system dominated by both the Preterit and the Present Perfect in Period I (1810–1898), and have noted the decreasing usage frequency of the Present Perfect in Period II (1910–1970), where the emergent Preterit – and temporal adverbials (TAs) – began infiltrating the sector, particularly via current relevance and hot news contexts. I have noted the overwhelming extension of the Preterit in Period III (1982–2007), where it is used at the expense of the Present Perfect. I have further argued that in contemporary ARPS the Present Perfect is favored in the questionnaire (QUST), particularly in formal contexts. The discussion offered in this chapter addresses the research questions posed in §4.2 above and revolves around two main areas: linguistic internal and style-related issues.

I begin in §7.1.1, where I compare my results with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008) observations for Mexican and Peninsular Spanish. I then deal with two issues related to the ARPS Present Perfect: the experiential Present Perfect (§7.1.2), and the link-to-present problem (§7.1.3). In §7.1.4 and §7.1.5, I tackle the use of the Preterit in the expression of recency and the occurrence of the TA + VERB-PRET construction in contexts erstwhile occupied by the Present Perfect. In §7.2 I discuss the evolution of the Preterit and the Present Perfect throughout time, as displayed in my data. I then address two important style-related issues: the speaker-
ambivalence problem (§7.3.1), and the naturalistic data problem (§7.3.2). I conclude in §7.4, where I deal with three central areas of enquiry: the ARPS Present Perfect as a past-referring form (§7.4.1), grammaticalization (§7.4.2), and sociolinguistics (§7.4.3). The conclusions emerging from the discussion presented here are provided in chapter 8, where I offer an overview of the main findings and suggestions advanced in this thesis, and their implications for past and future research.

7.1 Linguistic internal issues

7.1.1 The ARPS Present Perfect vis-à-vis Mexican and Peninsular Spanish

As stated in chapter 4, this research is partly based on Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008) study of the Present Perfect in Mexican and Peninsular Spanish. One of the reasons why similar hypotheses were presented in this work was to enable a cross-dialectal comparison of results. Table 7.1 portrays my findings for the contemporary ARPS oral corpora (analyzed in chapter 5) vis-à-vis Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008) observations for Peninsular and Mexican Spanish. Here I focus on the factor weights obtained with respect to four of the most salient independent variables or factor groups analyzed: temporal adverbial, object number (noun number in Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ study), clause type, and Aktionsart. The bolded figures indicate the heaviest factor weights for each of the factor groups considered. Note that only the ARPS oral data are included in the comparison since Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ study focuses exclusively on conversational corpora. Specifically, their study is based on the conversational portion of the COREC Peninsular Spanish corpus (Marcos Marín 1992), and on samples of the Habla culta and Habla popular corpus for Mexican Spanish (Lope Blanch 1971, 1976). 72

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72 Clause type included three categories in Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ study, namely yes-no questions, relative clauses, and all others. Recall that my casual conversation and sociolinguistic interview data feature a mere two Present Perfect tokens with yes-no questions (2/45). For this reason, clause type was divided into two groups (subordinate clause and main clause + questions) in my analysis. In Table 7.1 the factor weight of .77 represents Present Perfect use in relative clauses, while .45 illustrates Present Perfect occurrence in main clauses and questions.
Arising from the factor weights displayed in Table 7.1 are the similar linguistic constraints as seen in the constraint hierarchies, i.e. the ordering of factor weights within each factor group. Note that – despite differences in the significance level of the different factor groups – ARPS, Mexican, and Peninsular Spanish display parallel constraint ranking indicating that the forms under scrutiny perform similar “grammatical work” in each variety (Poplack & Tagliamonte 2001: 93; Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 27). What this ranking does not show, however, is the vast difference in Present Perfect usage frequency between ARPS and Mexican Spanish, on the one hand, and Peninsular Spanish, on the other. ARPS offers the lowest Present Perfect usage frequency, reflected in a remarkably low corrected mean value of .04 (5%). Mexican Spanish displays an equally low corrected mean value of .06 (15%), and the Present Perfect is frequently used in Peninsular Spanish with a corrected mean value of .61 (54%). To illustrate, the Present Perfect is significantly favored in the presence of proximate/frequency TAs in the different multivariate analyses. However, this effect is clearly disparate across the three dialects: while proximate/frequency TAs favor the Present Perfect at 91% in Peninsular Spanish, they do so at 49% in Mexico, and only at 10% in ARPS.

In line with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 27) – and with the intention of comparing “the probability that the [Present Perfect] will occur in a given context while controlling for its frequency of occurrence in that context” – I reanalyzed the data to reflect the combined effect of the corrected mean and factor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oral ARPS</th>
<th>Mexican Spanish</th>
<th>Peninsular Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total N</td>
<td>67/1434</td>
<td>331/2234</td>
<td>956/1783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected mean</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal adverbial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximate/Frequency</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.53</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>Clause type</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes-no questions</td>
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<td>.65</td>
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<td>Relative clause</td>
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<tr>
<td>All others</td>
<td>Main clause &amp; questions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.1 Comparison of Present Perfect usage in ARPS, Mexican, and Peninsular Spanish
(non-significant factor groups within brackets)
This procedure allows for the comparison of factor weights across independent runs (Poplack & Tagliamonte 1996: 84). Table 7.2 shows the combined corrected mean and factor weight for the four factor groups considered earlier, based on ARPS, Mexican, and Peninsular Spanish (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 28).

Note that the combined corrected mean and factor weight for the ARPS data is not greater than .12. Likewise, Mexican Spanish displays low usage trends (no higher than .12), while Peninsular Spanish evidences a combined corrected mean and weight effect above .44 for the total factor groups analyzed. These figures indicate that, as noted earlier in §5.1, the Present Perfect is much more widely utilized in Peninsular Spanish than in ARPS and Mexican Spanish.

The results emerging from Tables 7.1 and 7.2 point to three main findings. These are highlighted in what follows and discussed further in the remainder of the chapter.

1. Proximate/frequency TAs favor the Present Perfect in the three dialects, although to different extents. This trend is indicative of continuative and experiential Present Perfect usage (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 28).

2. Clause type is significant in both ARPS and Mexican Spanish but non-significant in the Peninsular variety. Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 28) take this finding as evidence that the Peninsular Present Perfect has moved further along the anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization path. However,

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As noted by Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 35 ff.), “the combined corrected mean and factor weight values are in the last column of the one-step analysis.”

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Table 7.2 Combined effect of corrected mean and factor weight in ARPS, Mexican, and Peninsular Spanish (non-significant factor groups within brackets)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporal adverbial</th>
<th>Oral ARPS</th>
<th>Mexican Spanish</th>
<th>Peninsular Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proximate/Frequency</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object number</td>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative clause</td>
<td>Subordinate clause</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All others</td>
<td>Main clause</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aktionsart</td>
<td>Atelic</td>
<td>[.05]</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>[.03]</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

210
whereas Mexican Spanish favors the Present Perfect in yes-no questions, ARPS prefers the Present Perfect in relative clauses. I have argued that the favoring effect of relative clauses in contemporary ARPS is consistent with the widespread use of this form in experiential contexts. Recall that relative clauses offer “retrospective” information about a state of affairs that brings to life the situation described in the main clause. In this respect, relative clauses signal a situation that is prior to the one referred to in the main clause (Sebastián & Slobin 1994: 279–280). This reference to a time prior to the moment of speech supports the use of the ARPS Present Perfect in indefinite past situations previous to speech time. I return to this issue in §7.1.2.

3. The most fundamental difference between the Present Perfect in ARPS and in Mexican Spanish is the lack of Aktionsart restrictions of the former. As shown in the above tables, Mexican Spanish differs from Peninsular Spanish in favoring the Present Perfect with atelic predicates. In both Peninsular Spanish and ARPS the difference between telic and atelic predicates remains negligible. This finding is crucial in the present study since – as mentioned at various points in the analysis – “Latin American Spanish” is said to favor the Present Perfect in durative and iterative contexts (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972; Harris 1982; Fleischman 1983; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000). The results offered in this thesis clearly show that such is not the case in oral ARPS.74

Overall, the contention offered at the outset that the ARPS Present Perfect resembles the Mexican Present Perfect does not appear to be supported: ARPS is not like Mexican Spanish and is crucially not located at stage II in Harris’ (1982) model, since this form is by no means restricted to expressing durative and iterative past situations extending into present time. In fact, as I discuss in §7.1.3 below, the continuative Present Perfect is losing its link-to-present requirement. Furthermore, the suggestion that – as a dialect of “Latin American Spanish” – APRS is located at an earlier grammaticalization stage is clearly refuted by the historical data analyzed in this thesis. Specifically, the 19th century Present Perfect was subject to significantly

74 Note, however, that Aktionsart was selected as significant in the multivariate analysis of the contemporary newspaper data. As suggested earlier, iterative uses of the Present Perfect “remain” favorable in written ARPS (and to a lesser extent in the oral corpora), in line with the retention in grammaticalization hypothesis (Bybee et al. 1994: 16). Given the paucity of tokens on which these proposals are based, further research based on a larger number of Present Perfect tokens should determine the robustness of these claims for written contemporary ARPS.
fewer linguistic restrictions and was used to encode a variety of perfect functions beyond mere continuity. This challenges previous descriptions of the Argentinian Present Perfect (e.g. Kubarth 1992a; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000; Howe 2006). I follow up these claims in the ensuing sections.

7.1.2 The ARPS experiential Present Perfect

My results for the extended oral data (chapter 5) reveal that the Present Perfect is more frequent than the Preterit in experiential contexts – a finding contrary to previous claims that the ARPS Present Perfect is almost nonexistent in informal styles (e.g. Donni de Mirande 1977: 46–49; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413). Two types of experiential Present Perfects are evident in the corpora: those that indicate indefinite past and generic situation, and those encoding iterative and repetitive past.

Indefiniteness and generality are evident in the lack of specific temporal modification by TAs, unspecificity of temporal anchoring, and presence of plural and mass noun objects. Experiential Present Perfects collocate readily with first and third person grammatical subjects and first person experiencers as well as with predicates such as ver ‘to see’ and pasar ‘to happen/to occur’, plural or indefinite direct objects and mass nouns like gente ‘people’, and quantifiers such as tanto ‘so much’, mucho ‘much’, poco ‘little’, un montón ‘a lot’, as shown in (1) and (2).

(1) Yo lo he visto (a Mariano) en congresos de la Sociedad Argentina de Lingüística. (FW08M23)

‘I have seen Mariano at Argentinian Linguistic Society conferences.’

(2) He llorado un montón. (FW08F117)

‘I have cried a lot.’

The use of the ARPS experiential Present Perfect supports Leech’s (2004: 41) characterization of this form as an encoder of indefinite past. Recall the distinction between “token-focusing” reference typical of the Preterit and “type-focusing” reference applicable to the perfect, as suggested by Dahl and Heidin (2000: 388). According to these authors, while the (English) Preterit refers specifically to the number of events involved, the Present Perfect signals one or more occurrences of the event during a certain time period. I argue that the ARPS experiential Present Perfect
encodes indefinite past and is essentially “type-focusing” in its reference to situations prior to the speech time, as it centers on the situation(s) having occurred at an indeterminate point in the past, rather than on identifying a specific token of occurrence. In this respect, definiteness as applied to the perfect resembles definiteness in nouns. Recall Langacker’s (1991: 56–57) observation that an instance (e.g. the cat) but not a type (e.g. a cat) “is thought of as having a particular location in the domain of instantiation”, and his view of type specification “as floating about unattached through the domain of instantiation, with the potential to be manifested anywhere within it”. Once this potential is realized, Langacker contends, “an instance conception is obtained, when the specification is anchored at a particular spot”. Langacker’s distinction between instance and type (reminiscent of Dahl and Heidin’s (2000) token and type-focusing reference) has been adduced by Henderson (2008), who claims that the Present Perfect in Chilean, Paraguayan, and Uruguayan Spanish is used to encode type-focusing reference. I propose that the ARPS Present Perfect is preferred in experiential contexts to express indefinite and generic past. Langacker’s image of type specification as “floating around unattached” with the potential to be instantiated at any time supports the tendency for the ARPS Present Perfect to occur in contexts where temporal reference is unspecified – whereas a particular instantiation of the situation in question is encoded through the Preterit, as exemplified in (3).

(3)  

\textit{Yo te he atendido} a vos. \textit{Te atendi}. (FW08F15)

‘I have seen you. I saw you.’

In example (3) the speaker starts off by saying \textit{te he atendido} ‘I have seen you’, where the Present Perfect’s type-focusing reference emphasizes the indefinite character of the ‘seeing’ (and perhaps the speaker’s uncertainty as to when). The speaker then rephrases her utterance using the token-focusing referring form \textit{te atendi} ‘I saw you’, where the Preterit expresses her assurance that she did in fact get to see her interlocutor before. Type-focusing reference is also available through the use of frequency TAs such as \textit{nunca} ‘never’ and \textit{alguna vez} ‘sometime’, which offer unspecific information about the temporal location of the situation in question. Further type-focusing reference is available via iterative phrases such as \textit{un par de veces} ‘a couple of times’, \textit{montones de veces} ‘lots of times’, \textit{un montón} ‘a lot’ in
combination with the Present Perfect, where the focus is not with the occurrence of a situation at a definite point in time or with the situation’s extension into the present, but rather with its many instantiations at temporally indeterminate points in the past (cf. Hernández 2004).

Moreover, the prevalence of the ARPS Present Perfect in experiential contexts is associated with the disfavoring effect of Aktionsart in the multivariate analysis of the oral contemporary data. This runs contrary to previous claims about the use of the Present Perfect in Latin America, namely the contention that the decision to use the Preterit or the Present Perfect in “American Spanish” is made on aspectual grounds. That is, unbounded situations (begun in the past and continuing into the present) are encoded through the Present Perfect and past bounded situations are expressed via the Preterit irrespective of how recently these have transpired (Fleischman 1983: 196; 1994a: 79). As a member of the Latin American cohort, ARPS disconfirms these claims. Furthermore, the lack of Aktionsart restrictions in the ARPS Present Perfect (as seen in the oral data) indicates generalization of meaning (in line with Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 23), not in expressing current relevance nuances related to the present moment (Bybee 1985: 160; Lindstedt 2000: 368), but in encoding indefinite and generic past. I return to this issue in §7.4.1.

An important question concerning the experiential Present Perfect is the degree to which the past situation is related to speech time. In chapter 5, I have shown that the ARPS experiential Present Perfect is not linked to the present moment – as illustrated in (4) through (6).

(4)  *No lo ve [al padre] ahora, pero lo ha visto.*  (FW08F121)
     ‘She doesn’t see her father now, but she has seen him.’

(5)  ¿*Te ha costado crecer?*
     *Sí, y me sigue costando.*  (CC07MS15/FC16)
     ‘Has it been difficult growing up?
      Yes, it has and it still is.’

(6)  *Yo me he enamorado de tipos; me enamoro de tipos.*  (CC07MS15)
     ‘I have fallen in love with guys; I do fall in love with guys.’
In (4), (5) and (6) the simple Present is used to connect the past situation to the present moment, thus indicating that the experiential Present Perfect alone does not refer to present time. This lack of connection to the present has been viewed as a crucial semantic trait of the experiential perfect (e.g. Mittwoch 1988: 210). However, ARPS also evidences a lack of connection between the past and the present in continuative contexts. I turn to what I label the link-to-present problem in the next section.

7.1.3 The ARPS link-to-present problem

As noted in chapter 2, a hallmark of the continuative Present Perfect is its extension into the present to include the speech time. However, I have shown that some ARPS continuative contexts feature a direct disconnection with the present, challenging previous descriptions of the perfect as a relational form inclusive of speech time. To illustrate, let me re-introduce our example from chapter 5.

(7) **Este mes ha sido** – y sigue siendo – agitado. (FW08F105)

‘This month has been, and still is, hectic.’

The use of the simple Present (**sigue siendo** ‘and still is’) in example (7) indicates that the Present Perfect is exclusive of the present moment. The simple Present – introduced as a separate intonational unit proceeded by the connector y ‘and’ – contributes the expected extension into present time. Note that the TA **este mes** ‘this month’ should ideally imply that the being difficult is a property of the month still ongoing at speech time. However, the speaker’s use of the simple Present to establish the link-to-present indicates that this is not the case.75 The exclusion of the present moment in the continuative Present Perfect is further confirmed in Henderson’s (2008: 3–5) study of Chilean, Paraguayan, and Uruguayan Spanish. Henderson claims that the Present Perfect does not include the present moment in these dialects, since relation to the here and now appears as external to the Present Perfect form itself (through the simple Present).76 The lack of explicit connection with

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75 Back in 1945, the Present Simple was used after the Preterit in continuative contexts to make the connection to the present moment explicit. Recall El drama europeo siempre tuvo, y sigue teniendo, profundas repercusiones en los países americanos. (BAN1945CL17) ‘The European drama always had, and still does, profound repercussions in American countries’. This trend is seen in contemporary ARPS in combination with the continuative Present Perfect.

76 Henderson (2008: 3) offers the following examples (my translations): (i) es algo que toda la vida me ha llamado la atención; y **lo he hecho** y lo hago y me encanta hacerlo (CI, entrevista a Blanca) ‘it’s something that has caught my attention all my life; and
the present found in the ARPS continuative Present Perfect runs contrary to Squartini and Bertinetto's (2000: 413) proposal that in “Buenos Aires Spanish” the Present Perfect “denotes durative or iterative situations encompassing the Speech Time”. Moreover, Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008: 25) observation that the Mexican Present Perfect tends to follow the simple Present and thus function as a continuative is reversed in ARPS. That is, as shown in example (7), the Present Perfect occurs before – rather than after – the simple Present. Howe (2006: 114) argues that – when in the company of frequency TAs – both the Preterit and the Present Perfect may refer to the continuation of an interval which in turn extends into the present moment, containing iterations of the situation in question. Howe claims that, although the same iterative function is expressed via both the Preterit and the Present Perfect, the Present Perfect requires that the present moment be included in the relevant interval. However, my findings suggest that the Present Perfect may in fact not be inclusive of the present moment. The exclusion of the speech time in the continuative Present Perfect is a crucial difference between ARPS and Mexican Spanish. I contend that, while the Mexican Present Perfect is a present-referring form, the ARPS Present Perfect is crucially past-referring. Moreover, whereas iteration and connection to the present moment are a crucial nuance of the continuative perfect cross-linguistically, the ARPS continuative Present Perfect is losing its connection to the present.

Howe (2006: 130) suggests that forms such as the continuative ARPS Present Perfect may not be true continuatives but rather instances in which iteration of the situation in question comes to the fore, while extension into present time is left out.  Note that the focus on the past situation’s iteration at the expense of its connection to present resembles the use of the experiential perfect in iterative and repetitive contexts unrelated to speech time. This claim has profound implications vis-à-vis what has been said about Argentinian Spanish since not only is the Present Perfect’s overall frequency low in continuative contexts; most remarkably, some uses of the continuative Present Perfect do not extend into present time – featuring the simple Present to provide the connection to present instead. I argue that the ARPS continuative Present Perfect is on its way to losing its link-to-present requirement.

I have done it and I do it and I love doing it’; (ii) en el sistema educativo no existe actualmente y no ha existido desde que yo estoy en el colegio, una formación que le permita al joven simplemente decir no (Py, entrevista a Julio) ‘in the educational system there doesn’t exist at present and there hasn’t existed since I am at school, a training that allows youngsters to simply say no’.

77 Also see Howe (2006: 142) for reference to some Peruvian Spanish speakers’ preference for the Present Simple when the situation continues up until the present time.
while retaining its ability to refer to iterative past situations. This process is visible due to the availability of the simple Present for the expression of continuity in Spanish (see §5.5.3). Further, I suggest that the loss of present nuances associated with the continuative Present Perfect is motivated by the frequent use of the Preterit (and TAs) in continuative contexts. In sum, the ARPS continuative Present Perfect (among other perfect types) may be becoming a “perfective perfect” (Howe 2006: 114).

Although shown to favor the Present Perfect in the multivariate analysis of the contemporary oral data (at only 10% [12/122]), proximate (e.g. este año ‘this year’) and frequency (e.g. siempre ‘always’) TAs display a widespread tendency to collocate with the Preterit (at 80% in the oral and QUST data). The prevalence of the Preterit in the expression of continuity runs against canonical proposals that the time span represented by the verb include the speech time, since the Preterit carries with it the implicature that the situation in question does not indeed reach utterance time (Comrie 1985: 41). However, if the Present Perfect’s continuative interpretation is, as suggested by Iatridou et al. (2001: 196), reliant on adverbial modification, then the Preterit may arguably express continuative meanings when in conjunction with a TA. The Preterit’s indeterminacy with respect to its Aktionsart values (Cipria & Roberts 2000) further renders this form capable of encoding continuative meanings. It is questionable, though, whether the situation expressed by the TA + VERB-PRET construction extends into present time. To illustrate this point, let us return to our example from chapter 5.

(8)  *Siempre viví en Buenos Aires, desde que nací.* (SLI07FG45)

‘I always lived in Buenos Aires, since I was born.’

Continuity into present is clear in example (8) as the speaker continues to live in Buenos Aires at speech time. The position that the Preterit may combine with durational TAs to express extension into speech time is further supported by some preliminary results obtained via a questionnaire asking native ARPS speakers to evaluate a group of Preterit and Present Perfect utterances in terms of

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78 Howe (2006: 114) argues that loss of what he deems “true” continuative readings is a hallmark of the appearance of “perfective perfects”. My findings for contemporary ARPS support Howe’s claims.

79 As mentioned earlier, the ordering of the elements in the TA + VERB-PRET construction is completely arbitrary, since the data show uses of the construction with both the TA preceding the Preterit (as with the novel ahi ‘at this point in time’ (lit. ‘here’) + Preterit uses noted in chapter 5), as well as with the Preterit preceding the TA, as in *Mi hermana hizo 18 viajes.* (SLI08MOS53) ‘My sister did 18 trips already.’
naturalness/unnaturalness (Rodríguez Louro in prep.). In this questionnaire-based study, more than 95% of the participants noted that the item *Juan estuvo enfermo toda la semana. ¡Todavía está tosiendo! ‘Juan was sick all week long. He is still coughing!’* (i.e. Juan is still sick) sounded perfectly natural. This further indicates that, the Preterit (sometimes in combination with TAs) carries the inference of continuity into present time.80

Returning to the loss of present nuances attached to the canonical continuative Present Perfect, I contend that the availability of both the Preterit and the Present Perfect in ARPS continuative contexts motivates speakers’ reanalysis of the Present Perfect as a past-referring form. In other words, because the Preterit features in contexts where the Present Perfect could also possibly be used, the Present Perfect is reinterpreted as a variant of the Preterit. Note that the variability mentioned here was different in the Period II data, where continuity was predominantly expressed through the Present Perfect, with the TA + VERB-PRET construction featuring incipiently (at 34%). The prevalence of the TA + VERB-PRET construction in the oral and newspaper contemporary ARPS data shows the degree to which the Preterit has extended as the encoder of continuity. The continuative Present Perfect is thus currently reanalyzed as a variant of the Preterit, also expressing pastness – hence the use of the simple Present to reassert the connection of the past situation to the present moment. I return to this discussion in §7.4.1.

7.1.4 Recency and the ARPS Preterit

As I noted in chapters 5 and 6, the Present Perfect occurs very seldom across a variety of data types in contemporary ARPS. Moreover, the prevalence of the Preterit (and TAs) in current relevance contexts is attested as early as Period II. The Preterit is also categorical in contemporary hodiernal narratives, where speakers provide specific temporal anchoring through a TA in combination with the Preterit. Recall the Preterit-

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80 The following suggestions extracted from a discussion blog on English-Spanish translation ([http://www.english-spanishtranslator.org](http://www.english-spanishtranslator.org)) closely relate to claims about the continuity of the Present Perfect. The explanations below were offered by a Peruvian (excerpt a) and an Argentinian (excerpt b) speaker to an English-speaking learner of Spanish grappling with the Spanish Imperfect (although the comments excerpted focus on the Preterit and the Present Perfect). These are offered in (a) and (b) below (the original spelling has been kept). Note that the Peruvian person’s comment supports Jara Yupanqui’s (2006: 210) observation that TAs with present relevance favor the Present Perfect in Peruvian Spanish (see chapter 3, §3.2.2).

(a) “I speak Peruvian Spanish. The sentence *este invierno hizo mucho frío* [‘this winter it was very cold’] is not grammatically correct in my view. Firstly, *este* [‘this’] denotes that we are at the tailend of winter, that we're still in it. Then *hizo* [‘was’, lit. ‘made’] is in the past simple [Preterit]. In my view, *hizo* [‘was’] is the wrong tense, it should be *ha hecho* [‘has been’], meaning we are still in winter, in the tailend of it, denoted by the word *este*, [‘this’] and the action is coming from the past into the present’. (Peruvian post 2007)

(b) “I'm Argentinian, and (…) I would say *Este invierno hizo mucho frío* [‘This winter was very cold’], if we're still in winter, as well as if we’re not in winter anymore.” (Argentinian post 2007)
laden account of the Argentinian participant’s day in Barcelona as opposed to the Catalan participant’s narrative – filled with hodiernal Present Perfects (§5.5.4). Establishing that the Preterit is near-categorical in ARPS current relevance and hodiernal contexts is crucial given the contention that “in order for a perfect to become a past the point of reference must be restricted to the moment of speech, and the part of its meaning that specifies that the past event is especially relevant to the current moment must be lost” (Bybee & Dahl 1989: 74). I argue that the ARPS Present Perfect is unable to grammaticalize via the proposed current relevance>hodiernal>hesternal>perfective path since it is not productively used (and has not been used for over a century) to express current relevance in the first place. A corollary to the absence of grammaticalization via recency and hodiernal past extensions is seen in the use of the Preterit in hot news contexts. As I have shown in chapter 6, hot news contexts are dominated by the Preterit beginning in Period II – while the hot news Preterit is categorical in Period III. The absence of the Present Perfect in hot news contexts further reveals that the anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization proposed for Peninsular Spanish does not hold in ARPS, as it has been claimed that hot news perfects form a bridge to further stages in the grammaticalization process such as perfectives and hodiernal pasts (e.g. Dahl & Hedin 2000: 399). I discuss this issue further in §7.4.2.

7.1.5 The Preterit in Present Perfect contexts

In chapter 5, I suggested that resultative, continuative, current relevance, experiential, and hot news functions may be encoded through the TA + VERB-PRET construction in ARPS. My findings are in line with Burgos’ (2004: 89 and 95) claims that in his written corpus ya ‘already’ and todavía ‘still/yet’ co-occur with the Preterit. Moreover, these uses are against canonical proposals that certain TAs (such as ya ‘already’, todavía ‘still/yet’, últimamente ‘lately’, etc.) collocate with the Present Perfect (see §2.3.2). The question remains what the meaning of these TAs is when in combination with the Preterit.

As noted in §2.4, TAs serve to encode temporal and aspectual notions such as result, completion and current relevance, among others (Berman & Slobin 1994: 149; Pancheva 2003: 279–280). For example, Mittwoch (1988: 245) suggests that the

81 Burgos (2004: 201) also notes that the TA recién ‘recently’ only combines with verbs inflected for the Preterit in Argentinian Spanish.
pragmatic function of the TA *already* is to add stativity to the perfect. In my data, the use of the TA *ya* ‘already’ in combination with the Preterit is in line with the treatment of *ya* as a (potential) anteriority marker cross-linguistically. For instance, Dahl (1985: 130) suggests that in Yoruba and Karaboro (Niger-Congo) “the particle used in PFCT [perfect] contexts also has the interpretation already” (italics in original) and that, in Karaboro, the particle *yaa* ‘already’ is somewhat frequent, although not frequent enough to stand as a perfect marker in his study. This possibility is further discussed by Bybee and Dahl (1989: 68) who claim that “In a language without a grammatical perfect (such as Russian), morphemes meaning ‘already’ may be used more extensively than in English to make up for the lack of a perfect as it were”. Based on Dahl’s (1985) findings, they contend that in Karaboro these particles may actually be grammaticalizing as perfects. Similarly, it has been suggested by Lindstedt (2000: 372) that in Portuguese “it is rather the adverb *já* ‘already, now’ that may be grammaticalizing as the real perfect marker”. I propose that *ya* ‘already’ may be evolving as a resultative marker when in combination with the Preterit in ARPS. This development is supported by the high usage frequency of this combination both in the contemporary oral and written language.82

The use of TAs in combination with the Preterit is central in the expression of current relevance and recent past in ARPS. The Preterit here collocates with TAs such as *recién* ‘just’, *ahora* ‘now’, *hoy* ‘today’, etc. In chapter 5, I suggested that the overwhelming presence of the Preterit in hodiernal narratives provides evidence of the development of the Preterit (and TAs) as encoders of current relevance in ARPS. I also noted the frequent use of the TA *ahí* ‘at this point in time’ (lit. ‘there’) in combination with the Preterit and compared this development to the Preterit + deictic *there* construction which marks recent past in Scottish English (Miller 2004: 237). Note that the ARPS Preterit (whether in past perfective or perfect contexts) is not restricted to spontaneous spoken interaction (as suggested by Miller 2004: 244 for Scottish English) but also features widely in written newspaper language (see §6.5.2).

The importance of TAs in adding temporal and aspectual nuances to the verbal predication has been highlighted by Berman and Slobin (1994: 260), who explain that “the heavy use of verbal aspectual morphology may minimize the use of such adverbs

82 The *ya* ‘already’ + Preterit combination increases in frequency from the 19th century and into contemporary times. Specifically, while in Periods I and II the Preterit appears only once in the company of *ya*, the contemporary oral and newspaper data combined display 80% (36/45) of these uses.
[e.g. already] in Spanish” and that (Peninsular) Spanish-speaking 9 year-olds in their study seem more comfortable with aspectual verbs (such as the perfect) than with adverbs. By the same token, the use of a primarily temporal form like the Preterit – canonically devoid of aspectual nuances such as result, iteration, durativity, etc. and temporal reference to recent and hodiernal situations – requires that TAs accompany the predication to encode these notions. On a day-to-day basis, TAs perform an important disambiguating function in ARPS. Specifically, they help speakers identify the temporal location or aspectual value of the situation in question. For instance, an utterance such as Fui de compras ‘I went shopping’ is ambiguous as to its temporal location; one may be left wondering whether this happened on the same day or a couple of weeks before. The use of TAs thus helps convey the temporal and/or aspectual nuances of the situation as needed.83 I suggest that the TA + VERB-PRET construction encodes meanings expressed through the Present Perfect in other Spanish dialects (and in earlier written ARPS). The process proves highly productive, with TAs favoring Preterit use in a variety of perfect contexts. Further, I argue that the TA + VERB-PRET construction is grammaticalizing as an encoder of perfect nuances. Note that this development does not involve grammaticalization proper, since an analytic form (the perfect) is replaced by a periphrasis (TA + VERB-PRET). I return to this point in §7.4.2.

7.2 Perfect functions throughout time

In the previous chapter, I noted a dwindling in Present Perfect use and a surge in Preterit occurrence from Period I (1810–1898), through Period II (1910–1970), to Period III (1982–2007). Specifically, while resultative and continuative contexts maintain relatively stable overall usage across historical times and data types, the Present Perfect decreases systematically in current relevance and hot news contexts. I have further shown that the hot news Present Perfect eventually exits this functional domain in Period III – and is completely superseded by the Preterit in contemporary ARPS. I have also observed that the Present Perfect features very sparsely in past perfective contexts and that the few tokens found in these settings may be instances of hypercorrection. I here discuss two main issues related to the findings noted for the

83 The importance of TAs has also been highlighted by Winford (1993: 156) who claims that, in Trinidadian English, “the same verb form may be interpreted as referring to quite distinct time references, depending on the type of temporal adverbial accompanying it.”
earlier and contemporary newspaper data: (a) the retention and persistence of the resultative and continuative Present Perfect and emergence of the TA + VERB-PRET construction in these contexts; and (b) the variable expression of current relevance and hot news (and its implications for perfect evolution) across time.

As noted in chapter 6, resultative and continuative contexts remain relatively strong predictors of Present Perfect usage in the ARPS newspaper corpora across historical time. However, the Preterit (and TAs) escalates as we approach Period III. This variability is typical of grammaticalization processes where emerging forms co-exist and interact with existing equivalent ones – a principle known as layering (Hopper & Traugott 2003: 124). Figures 7.3 and 7.4 illustrate the use of the Preterit and the Present Perfect in resultative and continuative settings across time.

![Figure 7.3 Preterit and Present Perfect newspaper usage in resultative contexts across time](image1)

![Figure 7.4 Preterit and Present Perfect newspaper usage in continuative contexts across time](image2)

222
The resultative Present Perfect (Figure 7.3) shows a strong waning in usage frequency from Period I to Period III, where the Preterit alone or in combination with *ya* ‘already’ is widespread. The presence of the TA + VERB-PRET construction (specifically with the TA *ya* ‘already’) in the newspaper data suggests that these combinations have become entrenched in every day usage. Recall that some speakers added the TA *ya* ‘already’ in the target items involving the predicate *cambiar* ‘to change’ in the QUST (§5.5.2 ff.), which suggests that the TA + VERB-PRET construction is productive in the expression of result.

The continuative Present Perfect (Figure 7.4) also shows a waning in frequency from Period I to Period II. However, note that in Period III the Preterit and the Present Perfect are used to the same extent – a trend motivating the statistical significance of Aktionsart in the multivariate analysis of these data. Interestingly, the Preterit in combination with the TA *siempre* ‘always’ is readily used in contemporary written ARPS – a finding parallel to that noted for the oral data. Overall, whereas the Present Perfect wins out over the Preterit in the 19th century, resultative and continuative contexts feature both the Preterit (and TAs) and the Present Perfect in contemporary ARPS. The encroachment of the TA + VERB-PRET construction on spaces erstwhile dominated by the Present Perfect suggests that this periphrasis is widening. I return to this issue in §7.4.2.

As noted above, the Preterit overwhelmingly prevails over the Present Perfect in current relevance or recent past contexts, where it tends to co-occur with proximate and specific TAs (e.g. *recién* ‘just’, *hoy* ‘today’). The question remains whether the Preterit has replaced the Present Perfect in these contexts and if these forms have ever competed for the expression of current relevance and recency. My analysis of earlier newspaper data indicates that the Present Perfect was more frequent than the Preterit in current relevance and hodiernal contexts in Period I. This trend is reversed in Period II, where the Preterit increases in frequency vis-à-vis a persistent Present Perfect (displaying free variation in some cases, as shown in §6.4.2). The Preterit wins out in Period III – just as noted for the oral data. Figure 7.5 illustrates these trends.
Despite the prevalence of the Present Perfect in current relevance contexts in early ARPS, the hoy ‘today’ + VERB-PRET construction (not necessarily in this order) is attested as early as 1863. Recall, also, the use of the Preterit in current relevance contexts in the satirical newspaper *El Mosquito*, where two imaginary characters engage in oral interaction.

(9)  
_Adíós mi buen señor D. Abundio. ¡Ah, se me olvidó decirle también que se va a repetir la Indígena!_ (BAN1863EM7)

‘Goodbye my good Sir Don Abundio. Oh, I forgot to also tell you that _La Indígena_ is going to be repeated!’

The use of the Preterit (i.e. _se me olvidó_ ‘I forgot’ instead of _se me ha olvidado_ ‘I have forgotten’) in (9) above may indicate that the Preterit was used in everyday interaction to express recent past as early as 1863. As mentioned earlier, this proposal is suspect since the expression _se me olvidó_ ‘I forgot’ may actually represent fixed usage. However, the overwhelming growth of the Preterit (and the associated decline of the Present Perfect) in current relevance contexts across time suggests that this use was already in place in the 19th century. A reasonable hypothesis would be that the written media were conservative in openly utilizing the Preterit in current relevance settings. In fact, it is not until Period III that oral and written data _catch up_ in this respect. However, these suggestions remain highly speculative in the absence of oral records for 19th century ARPS.
Hot news settings (defined in this research as the news reported in the body of the message in Period I, and in headlines and sub-headlines in Periods II and III) evidence a more radical change from Period I to Period III. As I noted in chapter 6, the Present Perfect is pervasive in Period I. The Preterit enters this domain in Period II and is categorical in Period III – where the Present Perfect is completely ousted from hot news contexts. This development is parallel to what I noted for current relevance contexts. In both cases, Period II is transitional; i.e. both the Preterit and the Present Perfect perform current relevance and hot news functions. Recency remains a crucial nuance of both the current relevance and hot news Present Perfect. The complete prevalence of the Preterit in contexts involving recency of a past situation is crucial in the evolution of this form – and the meanings associated with the Present Perfect, as I discuss in §7.4.2.

7.3 Style issues

To this point, the focus of my discussion has been on several structural issues involved in the use and evolution of the Preterit and the Present Perfect in earlier and contemporary ARPS. However, style has also proved to play a crucial role in the occurrence of the Present Perfect both in the QUST and earlier ARPS. Two crucial style-related issues deserve close examination: speakers’ hypercorrect behavior in the QUST and in earlier ARPS (the speaker ambivalence problem), and the similar usage patterns noted for the oral and written naturalistic data in contemporary times (the naturalistic data problem).

I have observed that the Present Perfect occurs significantly more often in the QUST than in the oral data in contemporary ARPS. This trend is even more pronounced in the QUST formal target items. More remarkably, I have noted some hypercorrect Present Perfect usage; that is, the overuse of the Present Perfect in current relevance and canonically past perfective contexts. The question remains what this hypercorrect behavior may be signaling. The second relevant style-related issue involves the controversial finding that contemporary naturalistic oral interaction and newspaper data display similar corrected mean values (at .04 and .06, respectively), and linguistic ranking and constrains. This runs contrary to the general contention that

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84 The hot news Present Perfect seems not to have vanished completely. As I have shown in chapter 5, the Present Perfect is sometimes used in ARPS to announce new information (see §5.5.4 ff.). I have argued that these uses resemble performative speech acts and are reminiscent of the pervasive hot news Present Perfects found in the Period I data.
written language is more conservative than oral data (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972: 128 ff.).
The question that arises is why oral and newspaper data may be alike in this study. I
address these crucial stylistic issues in the ensuing sections.

### 7.3.1 The speaker ambivalence problem

The speaker ambivalence problem involves speakers’ use of the Present Perfect in the least naturally occurring data – a use that opposes the trends noted for the naturally occurring corpora. I have shown in chapter 5 that Present Perfect usage frequency significantly rises as one approaches the least naturally occurring data (e.g. the QUST). I have also suggested that this is motivated by the presence of formal target items in the artificial context of the QUST. Recall that the Present Perfect was selected significantly more readily in resultative, continuative, current relevance, and past perfective formal contexts. Experiential contexts were crucially not seen to vary across different styles – suggesting that this is a vernacular feature of ARPS. While style was shown to significantly influence Present Perfect choice, an important distinction should be made between resultative and continuative contexts on the one hand, and current relevance and past perfective settings, on the other. Recall that the ARPS Present Perfect occurs in resultative and continuative contexts in both the oral and the newspaper data. This – I argued – is evidence of the retention of meaning features of the source construction (Heine et al. 1991: 20; Hopper 1991; Bybee et al. 1994) and represents *layering* (Hopper & Traugott 2003). Based on the contemporary oral and newspaper data, I further suggested that the Present Perfect is *not* presently used in current relevance and past perfective contexts and that these functions are almost categorically performed through the Preterit (and TAs), instead. However, the QUST features frequent use of the Present Perfect in formal current relevance and (formal and informal) past perfective contexts – a trend diametrically opposed to that of the naturally occurring data. While past perfective contexts may have been skewed due to the presence of the so-called *affective* use of the Present Perfect (see §5.5.6), the current relevance Present Perfect featured more strongly in the formal QUST items. Figure 7.6 illustrates the use of the Present Perfect in current relevance contexts in the contemporary oral, newspaper, and QUST data. The informal/formal QUST distinction has been kept for illustration purposes.
Note that, whereas the current relevance Present Perfect occurs almost at the same rate in the oral, newspaper, and informal QUST data, its usage frequency increases significantly in the formal QUST items. I have argued in chapter 5 that the Present Perfects used in the formal QUST current relevance contexts reflect speakers’ perception of their own variety as lacking in a form heavily featured in normative Peninsular Spanish. Note, moreover, that the hypercorrect use of the Present Perfect in the QUST is consistent with Labov’s (1990: 213) “change from above” which involves a high level of social consciousness. In these contexts, the dependent variables in question occur more readily in formal styles, are subject to hypercorrection, and are particularly adopted by groups with high linguistic insecurity (e.g. women).

I have also suggested hypercorrect use of the Present Perfect in definite past perfective contexts in the Period I data, where 10% of the Present Perfects refer to perfective situations and collocate with specific TAs such as ayer ‘yesterday’. As suggested earlier, the earliest newspaper data analyzed in this thesis are very much like Peninsular Spanish – with the Present Perfect featuring strongly in all perfect functions. However, the use of the Present Perfect in squarely past perfective contexts is suspicious. Claiming that these uses represent early stages of anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization would be incorrect as they vanish completely in a relatively short period of time (from Period I to Period II). In this respect, the formal QUST items and the early data share the commonality of speaker insecurity. I return to this point in §7.4.3.
The discrepancy between “introspective” and “observational” data has been pointed out by Labov (1996), who provides empirical evidence for the claim that native speaker intuitions may sometimes “fail”. A similar trend has been noted by Rickford and Wasow (2008) who observe that participants who said they would never use coda-less as far as constructions (e.g. As far as Gore, I make no predictions) were actually heard doing so. Although the QUST used in this study did not ask for intuitions in any direct fashion – as stated in §4.4.2 – its original aim was to tap into speakers’ unconscious linguistic knowledge to account for certain areas of linguistic behavior that may not be evident in the naturally occurring oral data and sociolinguistic interview. I suggested at the outset that, in line with Howe (2006: 17), the apparent absence of a form in a specific corpus does not mean the form is not a crucial part of the native speaker’s internal grammar and that a variety of data types (i.e. spontaneously produced versus native speaker judgments) may be complementary and thus beneficial to the research program as a whole. My results show that, together with tapping into speakers’ unconscious linguistic knowledge, the QUST used in this study reveals what speakers believe to be desirable linguistic performance in an experimental setting, where linguistic production is under examination. I argue that – in sociolinguistic research – questionnaires are valuable not necessarily in their reflection of speakers’ unconscious knowledge or internal grammar but rather in their potential to display speakers’ ideas of what constitutes correct linguistic behavior – both by the speakers themselves and by others.85

7.3.2 The naturalistic data problem

My results indicate that, contrary to the contention that the Present Perfect occurs more frequently in the written media (De Kock 1989: 489; Berman & Slobin 1994: 250; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413), the contemporary oral and newspaper corpora show similar distributional tendencies and linguistic constraints. For instance, the corrected mean in the oral and written corpora is highly similar (at .04 and .06, respectively) while the overall usage percentage of the Present Perfect in current relevance contexts is identical in the oral and newspaper corpora (at 3%). This

85 The schism between spontaneous and QUST data is clearly illustrated in the following comment by one of the participants (noted down at the end of her QUST): Muchas de estas estructuras no son utilizadas y es difícil contestar este cuestionario. Las respuestas son forzadas y no corresponden a situaciones reales. Estas frases, si en vez de estar escritas fueran habladas, seguramente resultarían distintas. Uno piensa y analiza lo que escribe, cosa que no pasa al hablar. Nos monitorean distinto. (QUEST06FM78) ‘Many of these structures are not used and it is difficult to answer this questionnaire. The answers are forced and do not correspond to real situations. If these phrases were spoken, rather than written, they will certainly seem different. One thinks about and analyses what one writes, which we cannot do while speaking. We monitor ourselves differently’.
observation is in opposition to the view that written language tends to reflect prescriptive rules (Lope Blanch 1972: 128 ff.; Placer 2003: 12). I contend that the similar usage patterns noted in the oral and newspaper data should be taken as indicative of the extent to which the Present Perfect and the Preterit (and TAs) have become entrenched in contemporary ARPS. The invariance noted across these data types suggests that – barring differences germane to each of these genres (such as the absence of subjective experiential contexts in the newspaper) – people’s oral interaction and the newspaper media they are exposed to are for the most part reflective of each other. This may firmly be claimed of the contemporary data, although earlier usage remains partly unattested. The little evidence of 19th century usage (as seen in the satirical newspaper El Mosquito) suggests that some of the widespread trends of contemporary ARPS were present in oral interaction (as illustrated in dialog between imaginary characters) as early as the 1800s. I suggest that written usage may have begun to reflect spoken language with the passing of time. This is empirically supported by the canonical use of the Present Perfect in the 19th century, and the subsequent relaxation of these canons as we approach the contemporary newspaper data. The parallel between oral and written language becomes more powerful in 21st century Internet publications – a genre that presupposes speedy access to information.

The similar findings noted in the contemporary oral and newspaper corpora support Biber’s (1986: 385) observations that oral and written language should be understood as being multidimensional, rather than regarding speech and writing as coherent one-dimensional wholes distinguishable only on the basis of a few linguistic restrictions. In Biber’s (1988: 36) words “there is no linguistic or situational characterization of speech and writing that is true of all spoken and written genres”. That is, there may be more similarities between different types of oral and written language than generally believed, which may explain the similar usage frequencies noted across data types. Regarding De Kock’s (1989: 491) question of whether the written language is adjusting to the oral language (or the other way around), my

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86 Lope Blanch (1972: 128 ff.) suggests that *En general la lengua escrita de México sigue normas "académicas" y el empleo de los tiempos verbales es muy semejante al español (nivelaición literaria culta) “In general, the written language of Mexico complies to the academic norm in the use of tenses, which is very similar to [Peninsular] Spanish (educated literary leveling)”.

87 In a telephone interview with the editor of the online version of Clarín (January 2007), I was told that the Preterit is preferred over the Present Perfect not only because it is a feature of porteño Spanish but also because it is more direct than the Present Perfect in transmitting information. The editor also commented on the Present Perfect’s length, suggesting the Preterit takes up less of their valuable space online.
findings suggest that – in ARPS – the newspaper data increasingly reflect oral usage. The question remains why the QUST displays canonical and hypercorrect usage.

Interestingly, the view that the Present Perfect occurs more frequently in formal styles under the influence of Peninsular Spanish (Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413) is both rejected and supported in my study. That is, while the Present Perfect (and the $TA + VERB\text{-PRET}$ construction) is used almost to the same extent in the oral and newspaper data, the Present Perfect is more widespread in the QUST. I contend that Squartini and Bertinetto’s proposal holds in the QUST, as we note a widespread use of the Present Perfect in formal styles. However, as proposed in §7.3.1, the use of the Present Perfect in the QUST is mostly hypercorrect – evidencing speakers’ awareness of others’ usage of this form – particularly in Peninsular Spanish. Moreover, speakers’ overuse of the Present Perfect in the QUST clearly exemplifies the existence of competing norms (Schneider 2007: 314) as this use is unattested in contemporary oral interaction. I return to this issue in §7.4.3.

7.4 Bringing it all together

As stated at the outset, the aim of this thesis is to offer an empirically-based account of semantic, evolutionary, and sociolinguistic concerns surrounding ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect usage across a range of data types and historical times. In the ensuing sections, I return to the observations offered in §7.1 to §7.3 and discuss them vis-à-vis three main areas: semantics, grammaticalization, and sociolinguistics.

7.4.1 The ARPS Present Perfect as a past-referring form

In the previous sections I suggested that while the Preterit is widespread in canonically perfect contexts in contemporary ARPS, the use of the Present Perfect to encode experience (particularly indefiniteness and generic reference) is an invariant property of the ARPS grammar. This was supported by the almost identical usage frequency of the experiential Present Perfect in the informal and formal QUST items (see §5.5.1), and by the more frequent use of the Present Perfect by men and younger speakers in spontaneous interaction (a usage I described as vernacular). Table 7.3 displays the preferred uses noted in the contemporary data (including both the extended oral data and the newspaper corpora).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Preferred form</th>
<th>Other forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Result</td>
<td>(TA) + VERB-PRET</td>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity</td>
<td>TA + VERB-PRET [ + simple Present]</td>
<td>Simple Present; Present Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current relevance</td>
<td>(TA) + VERB-PRET</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>(TA) + VERB-PRET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot news</td>
<td>(TA) + VERB-PRET</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.3 Contemporary ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect usage

As noted in Table 7.3, the Preterit features widely across different canonically perfect functions, while the Present Perfect remains the preferred form in experiential contexts and is less widespread in resultative and continuative settings (as a result of layering and retention, as mentioned above). Note that the Preterit may collocate with TAs of different types; depending on the situational context (i.e. where the temporal location and aspectual contours of the situation are derivable by context a TA may not be necessary). An exception to this trend is seen in continuative settings, where TAs tend to be obligatory (Brugger 1997: 53 ff.).

Despite the use of TAs signaling connection to the present moment, as I have shown before, the ARPS continuative Present Perfect evidences loss of the crucial connection to present time (hence the appearance of the simple Present [in brackets] with the continuative function in Table 7.3). Note that both the Preterit and the Present Perfect (whether accompanied by TAs or not) may require the simple Present in making the relation to present moment explicit. In this respect, the Preterit and the Present Perfect are past-referring forms, where presentness nuances are provided through the use of the simple Present, as needed. The past-referring value of the Present Perfect has been noted by Stowel (2008: 104–105) who claims that some uses of the Present Perfect construction in English convey past tense (or, in his own words, “past-shifting”). The view that the ARPS Present Perfect is past-referring opposes canonical descriptions of the perfect as a relational form characterizable by “its Janus-like attention to both past process and present circumstance” (Slobin 1994: 124). For example, Peninsular Spanish displays some clear present-referring Present Perfects, mainly in resultative and continuative contexts. An example is found in Berman and Slobin’s (1994: 442) study where Madrid children are noted to shift from the simple Present to the Present Perfect to indicate resultant state, as in Aquí se ha subido ‘Here

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Chafe (1973: 279) claims that information from surface memory may be reported without a TA since both speaker and addressee are aware of the present moment in such a way that the utterance time is automatically known to both and thus not necessarily explicitly communicated.
he has climbed’ (a resultative Present Perfect). Berman and Slobin also study Argentinian children’s narratives but make no comment regarding which forms appear in these resultative contexts – although they do notice the absolute absence of the Present Perfect in the children’s narratives.

My view of the ARPS Present Perfect as a past-referring form challenges the contention introduced earlier that “Latin American Spanish” (just like Portuguese) employs the Present Perfect in continuative contexts encompassing the speech time (Camus Bergareche 2008: 98; Martínez Atienza 2008: 219). As noted before, my characterization of the ARPS Present Perfect as a past-referring form exclusive of speech time is corroborated by the use of the simple Present immediately after the Present Perfect, as in (10).

(10)  *Este mes ha sido* – y sigue siendo – *agitado.* (FW08F105)

‘This month has been, and still is, hectic.’

Interestingly, a similar example is provided by Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 6), as in (11).

(11)  *Lo ha atendido,* y lo sigue atendiendo.

‘He [the doctor] has treated him and he continues treating him.’

The authors interpret (11) as making “the continuing persistence of the past situation explicit”. However, the fact that speakers use the simple Present to make this connection unequivocal is antithetical to the cross-linguistic requirement that the continuative perfect extent to include the present time. In other words, if the Present Perfect included the speech time there would be no apparent reason for the use of the simple Present to make the connection explicit. Here I make no claims about the relevance of this example for the contention that Mexican Spanish favors the Present Perfect in encoding continuity. However, my findings for ARPS do indeed support the view that the Present Perfect is a past-refering form in this dialect. In fact, I argue that this feature of the ARPS Present Perfect is a crucial synchronic difference between ARPS and other Spanish varieties. The Mexican example seems to suggest, however, that the Present Perfect’s switch from present-refering to past-refering
focus is by no means restricted to ARPS and can potentially expand in other so-called Preterit-favoring dialects (Howe 2006: 8).

In this study, the past-referring nature of the ARPS Present Perfect has also been noted of experiential Present Perfects. As I have shown before, the ARPS Present Perfect is prevalent in experiential settings – a trend supported by the significance of frequency TAs in favoring Present Perfect occurrence in the multivariate analysis of the oral data. I have argued that the ARPS Present Perfect is preferred in the expression of type-focusing reference, in line with Henderson’s (2008) proposal for Chilean, Paraguayan, and Uruguayan Spanish. The use of the ARPS Present Perfect in experiential contexts goes hand in hand with the tenets of the previously mentioned indefinite past theory, in which the perfect is seen cross-linguistically as expressing a past event which is unidentified as to its temporal location – and contrasted to the definite past perfective (Binnick 1991: 98, 264). Moreover, within indefinite past theory, there is no real difference between the past perfective and the perfect “since a definite time $t^+$ in the past is simply one of the indefinite times $t$ in the past” (Binnick 1991: 265, emphasis in original). The question remains why the ARPS Present Perfect is frequent in experiential contexts when all other prototypically perfect readings have for the most part been overridden by the Preterit (in combination with TAs). I contend that the Present Perfect stands as an encoder of experience (and indefinite/generic past) in opposition to the token-focusing reference of the overwhelming Preterit. This position is in line with Elsness’ (1997: 9) suggestion that the perfect fills the gap created from the fact the Preterit can only express anchored past time. Recall that, in ARPS, current relevance and hot news contexts favor the Preterit (and TAs, as needed). Result and continuity are also mostly expressed through the $TA + \text{VERB-PRET}$ construction. Experience, however, tends to be encoded through the Present Perfect.

Likewise, Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 31) argue that the route from hodiernal to past perfective status is “primarily via temporally indeterminate contexts” since these are more prone to the generalization of the perfect than contexts involving definite time reference. They also suggest that, in indeterminate temporal reference contexts (i.e. clearly past-referring instances whose specific temporal anchoring is left unspecified by the speaker), the number of Present Perfects with specific temporal anchoring (e.g. the connective $TA \text{ al final ‘in the end’}$) represents 33% (15/46) of their data, while the Present Perfect occurs significantly in the absence
of TAs (at 76% [371/490]). My extended oral data display similar trends: the Present Perfect features at 27% (43/162) in the presence of TAs, and at 73% (119/162) in the absence of temporal modification. Moreover, more than half of these adverbial-less Present Perfects occur in experiential contexts (at 61% [73/119]). The use of the ARPS Present Perfect in encoding indefinite past and generic reference supports Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008: 31) contention that perfect evolution may be better understood as undergoing a “new route”, i.e. one via temporally indeterminate contexts.

Returning to Howe’s (2006: 221–222) characterization of cross-dialectal semantic overlap presented in chapter 3 (Figure 3.4 in §3.2.4), the use of the contemporary, oral ARPS Preterit and the Present Perfect described in this thesis supports Howe’s original description of Peninsular Spanish. Here I borrow Howe’s characterization and use it to display semantic overlap in ARPS, as shown in Figure 7.7.

![Figure 7.7 Tense semantic overlap in ARPS](image)

Note that, in line with my observations on the use of the Preterit and the Present Perfect in ARPS, the intersecting semantic space between the Preterit and the Present Perfect includes resultative, continuative, and experiential uses which – as I have shown earlier – tend to occur with both the Preterit and the Present Perfect in ARPS (although at different rates). The dotted line between the Present Perfect and the Present tense shows the discontinuous link between the semantic spaces of both these tenses. This representation should not be interpreted as precluding the Present tense from fulfilling perfect functions (recall that the simple Present occurs in continuative contexts in the QUST). However, the relationship between present time and the Present Perfect is waning as the Present Perfect interacts with the Preterit in a number of highly frequent contexts. The position advanced in this section that the ARPS

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89 In her study of online newspaper Preterit and Present Perfect usage in Argentinian, Bolivian, Chilean, Cuban, Peninsular, Mexican, and Peruvian Spanish, De Oliveira (2007: 80) also shows that – although low in overall frequency – the Argentinian Present Perfect is mostly favored in the absence of TAs (at 64% [7/11]).
Present Perfect is essentially past-referring opposes the claim that in Latin America the Preterit and the Present Perfect show virtually no semantic overlap (Howe & Schwenter 2003: 1). Although low in overall frequency, the ARPS Present Perfect is used to express indefinite past thus sharing the expression of past perfectivity with the Preterit, which is used to refer to definite past situations. I propose that, because functional overlap favors semantic change (Howe 2006: 222), continued interaction of the Present Perfect with the pervasive Preterit strengthens the Present Perfect’s meaning as a past-referring form. This is supported by the lack of present connection found in the continuative and experiential Present Perfect and the widespread use of the Preterit in continuative contexts. In fact, Howe explains that “perfects in Spanish that show increased overlap with the pretérito [Preterit] should disfavor [the continuative] use” (2006: 215). My suggestion that the ARPS Present Perfect is essentially past-referring (exemplified by the use of the simple Present in explicitly noting a link to the present moment) opposes Reichenbach’s treatment of the perfect as a form where the point of the situation (S) and the point of reference (R) co-occur in preceding the point of the event (represented as E<S, R in example (5) in §2.2.3). Instead, the use of the ARPS Present Perfect as a past-referring form is best represented as R, E<S – Reichenbach’s characterization of the Preterit. When present, TAs may be seen as contributing the E<S, R reading independently of tense semantics, as previously suggested by Burgos (2004). The question remains how these interactions have developed and what direction they may take in the future. I tackle evolutionary issues in the following section.

7.4.2 Grammaticalization

As noted in §3.2.1, Peninsular Spanish (especially the Madrid, Alicante, and Valencia varieties) shows clear signs of anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization in that the Present Perfect is used as a past hodiernal form (Schwenter 1994a), and may even encode past perfectivity beyond same-day narratives (Serrano 1994). I have argued that the ARPS Present Perfect is unlikely to grammaticalize via the proposed current relevance>hodiernal>hesternal>perfective path since it is not productively used (and has not been used for over a century) to express current relevance in the first place. Moreover, the use of the Preterit in hot news contexts further documents the lack of grammaticalization via recency and hodiernal past extensions. However, as suggested in the previous section, the ARPS Present Perfect has evolved as an
encoder of past perfectivity via indeterminate temporal reference contexts; that is, clearly past-referencing instances whose specific temporal anchoring is left unspecified by the speaker. Although not analyzed as an independent variable in this thesis, indeterminate temporal reference is reflected in the prevalence of the Present Perfect in the absence of TAs, and with mass nouns and quantifiers such as *gente* ‘people’, *mucho* ‘a lot’, *poco* ‘a little’, etc. The evolution of the ARPS Present Perfect thus confirms Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos’ (2008: 31) suggestion that the anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization occurs via indeterminate temporal reference contexts. The question remains what further developments may unfold in ARPS. In what follows, I discuss two main issues: the use of the TA + VERB-PRET construction, and the experiential Present Perfect.

In this thesis the TA + VERB-PRET construction has been shown to be productive in its encoding of a number of functions erstwhile associated with the Present Perfect in ARPS. I have proposed that these constructions are pervasive across different typically perfect functions and are on the increase – as shown in my historical data analysis. These uses are presently central to the expression of result, continuity, current relevance, hot news and, to a lesser degree, experience. I propose that, rather than verbal aspectual morphology, contemporary ARPS favors a combination of verbal and adverbial means to express both temporal and aspectual nuances. The use of phrasal means in the expression of perfect functions seems contrary to grammaticalization proposals that language development proceeds from periphrastic to analytic.

Developments that counteract the proposed lexical to grammatical unidirectional pathways typical of grammaticalization have been seen as instances of lexicalization or degrammaticalization (e.g. Janda 2001; Norde 2001; Hopper & Traugott 2003: 133–134). However, I argue that here the use of the TA + VERB-PRET construction should not be seen as a reversal of anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization, but as an independent development (see Vanneck 1958: 240 for a similar claim regarding the "colloquial preterite" in American English). Recall that the 19th century data show widespread Present Perfect usage across different perfect functions – including current relevance and hot news (where the Present Perfect is categorical). The Present Perfect dwindles in the 20th century and is almost totally superseded by the Preterit in the 21st century. Table 7.4 illustrates the distribution of the Preterit and the Present Perfect (PP) across historical periods. Recall that
experience contexts were insubstantial in the newspaper data (the only data for Periods I and II) – hence the indication of “--” in Table 7.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Continuity</th>
<th>Current relevance</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Hot news</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>PP</td>
<td>PP</td>
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<td>PP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>PP</td>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Preterit</td>
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<tr>
<td>III(*)</td>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>Preterit</td>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Preterit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.4 Preferred tense forms for the expression of perfect functions across time

The historical evidence indicates a marked change in Present Perfect usage from Period I to Period II in contexts involving recentness (i.e. current relevance and hot news). Note that the resultative and continuative Present Perfects decline gradually, such that a change is only visible from Period I to Period III. These trends suggest both that the resultative and continuative Present Perfects were somewhat stable in earlier ARPS and that the current relevance Present Perfect was never deeply engrained in the spoken colonial variety. The retention of the resultative and continuative Present Perfect in Period II is in line with layering – an important grammaticalization process discussed further shortly. The newspapers may have partly emulated Peninsular Spanish usage for a while (until around the 1940s), but the rapid decline of the current relevance and hot news Present Perfects and their replacement by the Preterit (and TAs) in the middle of Period II suggests that oral usage may have been different from the outset and may have gained access to the newspaper language relatively quickly (recall that the Preterit is noted in newspaper current relevance and hot news settings as early as 1940). Therefore, rather than interpreting the use of the TA + VERB-PRET construction as an instance of degrammaticalization (reversing resultative to current relevance perfect evolution), it seems reasonable to suggest that this construction arose independently of perfect usage and began to gain ground slowly but steadily, performing the functions carried out by the Present Perfect in Peninsular Spanish.

Although I do not believe the rise of the TA + VERB-PRET periphrasis to be a counterexample to grammaticalization, the highly frequent use of this construction across various genres may – in line with usage-based approaches (e.g. Bybee 2003, 90 Period III includes both written and oral data. In continuative contexts the Preterit is the preferred option in the oral contemporary data while it is as prevalent as the Present Perfect in the written data.
2006; Bybee & Eddington 2006) and language change principles in general (Lüdtke 1986; Keller 1994; Croft 2000) – further develop with the passing of time.91 Recall that, in contemporary ARPS, the Preterit is most frequently used in combination with the simple TAs *ya* ‘already’ (for result), *siempre* ‘always’ (for iteration and continuity), *recién* ‘just’, *ahora* ‘now’ *ahí* ‘at this point in time’ (for recency and immediacy), and *nunca* ‘never’ (for experience). The highly frequent collocation of these TAs with the Preterit may cause these forms to eventually automate as units encoding result, continuity, current relevance, and the like. The possibility of further development is supported by the low frequency of use of the experiential Present Perfect in the QUST (at a mere 9%). As I noted in chapter 5, presence of the TA *nunca* ‘never’ in the target QUST items favored the Preterit rather than the Present Perfect. Likewise, Burgos (2004: 168) suggests that, in his data, both the Preterit and the Present Perfect are available in experiential contexts – an observation which leads him to claim that these forms are interchangeable. He then suggests that the written language seems to favor the Preterit, rather than the Present Perfect (2004: 169). However, I contend that rather than a particular perfect function or the written language triggering the Preterit, it is the presence of the TA *jamás* ‘ever’ that favors the use of the Preterit in Burgos’ data. It seems reasonable to suggest that the TA + VERB-PRET constructions may be grammaticalizing as encoders of perfect nuances. The contemporary use of TAs fulfills a pragmatic function and is optionally used in combination with the Preterit. However, the contemporary trend for the Preterit to optionally occur with TAs may one day become obligatory, in line with the expected pragmatic function>syntactic function effect common of grammaticalization processes. Further grammaticalization may lead to phonological reduction (erosion) and to a more fixed syntactic position of the TA (Heine et al. 1991: 213; Bybee et al. 1994: 110).92 This development opposes what has been suggested for hodiernal Present Perfects in Peninsular Spanish, as reviewed in chapter 3. Recall Schwenter’s (1994a: 89) claims that frequent co-occurrence with specific adverbs referring to hodiernal situations has led to the Present Perfect absorbing the temporal context that accompanies these adverbs and that, as a result, the contemporary Peninsular Present

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91 The theory of grammatical change advanced by Keller (1994) includes three stages in a cycle of language change: periphrasis, fusion, and erosion (Croft 2000: 151–164). In the first stage, an elaborate construction is used to express a situation. The periphrasis later becomes conventional and is thus fused into a unit. This entrenched linguistic routine in turn becomes eroded adopting a fixed syntactic position and undergoing phonological reduction.

92 Note that the TA *ahí* ‘at this point in time’ (lit. ‘there’) occurs only in sentence-initial position in contemporary ARPS. When placed in sentence final position, *ahí* ‘there’ exclusively encodes spatial location.
Perfect expresses hodiernal past without the need of TAs. In the case of the TA + VERB-PRET construction proposed in this work, the Preterit seems less likely to absorb the temporal context of the TA since, as stated previously, this form also performs canonical past perfective functions. While the TA may display phonological reduction with the passing of time, the complete shedding of the TA in the proposed construction seems less viable since – as noted before – the TA fulfils an important disambiguating function.

In addition to the importance of the TA + VERB-PRET construction in encoding perfect nuances, a further characteristic feature of contemporary ARPS is the use of the Present Perfect in experiential contexts. I have suggested that the vernacular ARPS Present Perfect is mainly used to express indefinite and generic past, as well as to express type-focusing reference. Specifically, the ARPS experiential Present Perfect occurs frequently where temporal reference remains unanchored, and in the absence of TAs. In line with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 31), I propose that ARPS Present Perfect evolution does not come about through remoteness distinctions (Bybee et al. 1994: 98) but through definiteness concerns: anchored, definite temporal reference (token-focusing) favors the Preterit; unanchored, indefinite, generic temporal reference (type-focusing) calls for the Present Perfect. This is represented in Figure 7.8.

![Figure 7.8 Past time reference and definiteness in ARPS](image)

As I have shown in chapter 6, the developments described above co-exist with older resultative and continuative uses of the Present Perfect. This variability is typical of grammaticalization processes where emerging forms interact with existing equivalent ones – known as layering (Bybee et al. 1994: 21; Hopper & Traugott 2003: 124). Synchronously, layering motivates variation in specific functional domains. In ARPS, the Preterit and the Present Perfect are in variation in resultative and continuative contexts (see §7.2). It is an open question whether the ARPS experiential Present Perfect – here described as a vernacular feature of ARPS – will continue to
develop as a more general encoder of indefinite past, thus undergoing specialization (Hopper & Traugott 2003: 116–117). In the present study, indefinite, generic, and type-focusing reference were regarded as characteristics of the experiential Present Perfect (see §2.3.2). However, the lack of certain formal restrictions – such as co-occurrence with first person subjects and in questions (Dahl 1985: 141 and 143) – indicates that the ARPS Present Perfect may be better characterized as expressing indefinite past, thus moving beyond the realm of personal experience. Moreover, a common mechanism motivating semantic change and leading to further grammaticalization is known as inference or conventionalization of implicature (Dahl 1985; Bybee et al. 1994; Hopper & Traugott 2003). This process entails the absorption of the inference made in the context in which the form is used so that the structure itself may come to be associated with that inference; eventually, such inference may become part of the semantic content of the form. It is reasonable to suggest that frequent use of the Present Perfect in indeterminate temporal contexts and in the absence of TAs may trigger the inference that the ARPS Present Perfect encodes unanchored past time. This, coupled with the token-focusing nature of the pervasive Preterit may cause this form to further develop as an encoder of indefinite past temporal reference, beyond personal experience.

Finally, my findings offer strong support against the position that all Latin American Spanish varieties are located at Harris’ (1982) stage II – where the Present Perfect is aspectually marked as durative or repetitive – since the ARPS Present Perfect is predominantly used to encode experience and, as suggested before, is mainly a past-referring form. Table 7.5 offers a revised version of Table 3.3 (§3.2.6), taking into account the findings outlined in this thesis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Preterit</th>
<th>Present Perfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Peninsular Spanish</td>
<td>Past perfective uses</td>
<td>All perfect functions; hodiernal uses (e.g. Schwenter 1994a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peruvian Spanish</td>
<td>Past perfective uses</td>
<td>Perfect functions and some perfective uses encoding spatial/locative/source/discourse relevance and evidentiality (e.g. Escobar 1997; Howe 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvadoran Spanish</td>
<td>Past perfective uses</td>
<td>All perfect functions and perfective uses (in narrative sequence) (e.g. Hernández 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican Spanish</td>
<td>Past perfective uses; recent past uses</td>
<td>Continuative uses (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972) and in unspecified contexts (Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARPS</td>
<td>Past perfective uses; encodes result, continuity, current relevance, experience and hot news (sometimes in combination with TAs)</td>
<td>Experiential uses (indefinite and generic past) Some resultative and continuative uses (but continuative Present Perfect is losing its connection to speech time) Favored in formal styles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.5 Revised Preterit and Present Perfect research findings across Spanish varieties

In sum, the ARPS Present Perfect is not grammaticalizing via the proposed current relevance>hodiernal>hesternal>perfective pathway since it is not encroaching on determinate, token-focusing Preterit spaces, nor is it “falling into disuse” (Burgos 2004: 103) or used randomly (Kubarth 1992a: 565). Further development may be due to the prevalence of the TA + VERB-PRET construction in perfect contexts (here understood as an independent development – rather than as an instance of degrammaticalization). Moreover, my findings provide support against the almost mythical contention that Latin American Spanish is somewhat frozen in time, performing functions akin to those of early Peninsular Spanish. Instead, I have argued that both the Preterit and the Present Perfect are involved in dynamic evolutionary processes. Specifically, I have shown that ARPS uses the Present Perfect to encode experience and indefinite/generic past while the Preterit is encroaching on semantic spaces previously dominated by the Present Perfect. Contrary to Peninsular Spanish, the development of past nuances in the ARPS Present Perfect stems from its use in indefinite past contexts, which strengthens its value as a past-referring form. This does not come about as a result of pointing to past hodiernal situations but rather emerges in highlighting finished situations located at an indeterminate point in time.
The major contribution of this thesis is the empirical characterization of the ARPS Present Perfect as crucially not developing alongside the proposed anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization cline suggested for Spanish (among other languages). My findings agree with Miller’s (2004: 229) contention that “grammaticalisation processes reside in particular varieties (of a given ‘language’) and not in language tout court”. The observation introduced at the outset that human languages are able to locate time (Comrie 1985: 7) and that time location differs across languages may be expanded here to include cross-dialectal variation. I have shown that, although generally likened to Mexican Spanish, ARPS is following its own development and that – however low in overall frequency – the Present Perfect is used in this variety to encode experience and indefinite past (a vernacular use). Other perfect functions also feature in this dialect, in line with the tendency for grammaticalizing forms to co-exist for some time (Lichtenberk 1991: 37). Crucially, the development of the Present Perfect as an encoder of indefiniteness does not come about through remoteness or recency distinctions, but as a reaction against the token-focusing character of the pervasive Preterit.

In the next section, I tackle some sociolinguistic concerns regarding the Present Perfect usage described thus far.

7.4.3 Sociolinguistics

Earlier in this thesis, I have noted the more frequent use of the Present Perfect by men in oral interaction and by women in the QUST. I have also suggested that women’s prevalent use of the Present Perfect in the QUST is consonant with Labov’s observation that “women use more standard forms responding to the overt prestige associated with them” (Labov 1990: 210). I have further argued that these results partly uphold the hypothesis advanced in §4.7.3 that, if the ARPS Present Perfect is a prestigious sociolinguistic variable, women should use the Present Perfect more readily than men (Coulmas 2005: 81). The disparate favoring trends for the Present Perfect by ARPS speakers across genre has led me to confirm the existence of what I have elsewhere identified as double standards (Rodríguez Louro 2008a).

The schism in Present Perfect usage between men and women was also apparent –although non-significantly – across age groups. Specifically, younger and middle-aged participants tended to use the experiential Present Perfect more often than older speakers, providing evidence against the claim that older, more educated
speakers tend to favor the Present Perfect (Kubarth 1992a: 565). However, older speakers did favor the Present Perfect over the younger cohort across all perfect functions (except for the experiential) in the QUST.93

Based on the contrastive behavior of males and females and younger and older speakers, I have suggested two uses of the Present Perfect for ARPS: a vernacular (or innovative) use favored by men and younger speakers in oral interaction, and a normative (or conservative) use preferred by women and older speakers in monitored settings such as the QUST. These two competing “norm orientations” (Schneider 2007: 314) arise in different stylistic contexts.

The relevance of style proved crucial in the QUST, with speakers (particularly older participants and women) using the Present Perfect more readily in completing the formal target items. Although no objective measure of formality was provided for the oral data, I noted the importance of style in the opinion-based section of the sociolinguistic interview. In §5.6, I argued that speakers’ use of the Present Perfect in the opinion-based section of the interview accords with Labov’s definition of “soapbox” style (Labov 2001a: 91), which features repetitive rhetoric, references to government corruption, etc. I argued that, in my data, the Present Perfect sounds almost pre-fabricated in the expression of social commentary involving the economic situation and language corruption – a phenomenon reminiscent of Bakhtin’s (1986) concept of stylization, that is, “an artistic image of another’s language” (see Coupland 2007: 149–150). Present Perfect use in the sociolinguistic interview also supports Schilling-Estes’ (2008) suggestion that the interview “is actually a rich site for the investigation of how speakers ‘really’ use stylistic variation in displaying and shaping personal, interpersonal, and larger group identities”. The question remains whose language and which “identities” ARPS speakers may be displaying.

In order to understand the existence of hypercorrect Present Perfect usage in ARPS, a broader notion of style is needed. In line with Eckert (2008: 454), I take the meaning of style to be “not precise or fixed but rather constitute a field of potential meanings – an indexical field, or constellation of ideological related meanings”. I suggest that the ideologies related to the more careful styles arise from linguistic-external issues such as prescriptivism, as discussed below.

93 Recall that educational background did not play a relevant role in Present Perfect choice (both the secondary and the post-secondary educated participants favored the Present Perfect to the same extent). I should mention, however, that my study is based on production and QUST responses by mostly secondary and university-educated participants. Analysis of data by speakers of different educational backgrounds may reveal different trends.
I previously mentioned that the QUST features frequent use of the Present Perfect in formal current relevance and (formal and informal) past perfective contexts – a trend diametrically opposed to that of the naturally occurring data. As proposed earlier, speakers’ use of the current relevance Present Perfect in the QUST relates to Solé’s (1992: 793) observation that some of his participants regarded Preterit usage in current relevance contexts (e.g. *Recién pasado un tren* ‘A train just passed by’) as incorrect – deeming the *prescribed* Present Perfect usage of *Ha pasado un tren* ‘A train has just passed by’ more desirable.

In fact, prescription plays a pivotal role in speakers’ linguistic usage and attitudes. The school system and language academies are key institutions fostering prescriptivism (Poplack & Malvar 2007: 160). Recall Mar-Molinero’s (2004: 16) contention offered in chapter 1 that language is regulated by the education system and language academies and that this is especially noticeable in the Spanish-speaking world. For instance, the appearance of *tuteo* (i.e. the use of the second person singular pronoun *tú* ‘you’ instead of the Argentinian *vos* ‘you’) has been defined as belonging to “non-spontaneous, school-inspired speech” (Penny 2000: 153). Moreover, Alonso (1968: 119) explains that in 1891 the Argentinian government would send out letters to educational institutions advocating the teaching of the Castilian (i.e. Peninsular) linguistic norm. Mar-Molinero (1997: 60) has described speakers’ attitudes towards Peninsular Spanish as “reverence” and has suggested that speakers of Latin American varieties “still believe that there is a correct form from which their variety has deviated” – a belief arising from “centuries of prescriptive educational norms, by the Castilian political elites dominating cultural circles (…) and by an eurocentric sense of superiority”. As noted at the outset, a direct consequence of prescriptivism is the description of Argentinian Spanish as imperfect, ugly, and unhealthy (Blanco 1994: 102). Remarkably, these views are still attested in current times, as shown in (12) through (16) from the language-related module of the sociolinguistic interview (relevant descriptive words appear in **bold**).

94 Interestingly, one of my interviewees expressed her concern over the lack of a language education based on the Argentinian vernacular. In her own words: *Yo hay una cosa que no entiendo muy bien de Argentina, que es por ejemplo: cuando nosotros vamos al colegio […] a nosotros no nos enseñan ‘vos’ (*yo, vos, él*), nos enseñan ‘yo, tú, él’: ¿por qué nosotros seguimos repitiendo ‘vos’?…o sea, es como que tenemos una instrucción que te pone el ‘tú’ y el uso popular que te  usa el ‘vos’…eso es lo que no entiendo […] No te enseñan ‘yo, vos, él, nosotros, ustedes, ellos’. (SLI07FJ13) ‘There is one thing that I don’t understand about Argentina. For example, when we go to school […] we are not taught to use *vos* (as in *yo, vos, él*), we are taught *yo, tú, él*, why is it that we continue to repeat *vos*?…so, it’s like we have one instruction that teaches you *tú* and a popular use that prefers *vos*…that’s what I don’t get […] They don’t teach you *yo, vos, él, nosotros, ustedes, ellos*.’

95 An excerpt from the letter reads *Renunciemos a vanagloriarnos con nuestras incorrecciones; como lo repite expresamente el plan de estudios, no hay más idioma nacional que el castellano. ‘Let’s give up taking pride in our incorrect usage, as clearly stated in the study plan, there is no other national language than Castilian Spanish.’* (Alonso 1968: 119).
(12)  _El verdadero español_ que hay que enseñar es el que corresponde, el español verdadero, el de España, esa es mi opinión. Porque si no estaría aprendiendo una _deformación_ del verdadero idioma. (SLI07MJ57)
   ‘The true Spanish that should be taught is the proper one, the true Spanish, the language of Spain; that is my opinion. Otherwise, he/she [the student] would be learning a deformed version of the true language.’

(13)  _Nosotros el castellano lo hemos llevado hasta un dialecto._ No se utiliza el castellano _puro_ como lo aprendemos estudiando en el colegio. (SLI07ML63)
   ‘We have transformed Castilian into a dialect. We don’t use pure Castilian as it is taught to us at school.’

(14)  _Porque en España lo hablan como se debe hablar_, pero acá a través de generaciones creo que se viene hablando así, no creo que se pueda cambiar. Y no es _culpa_ de nuestra generación porque ya creo que nuestros abuelos y creo que _era peor antes_. (SLI07MG50)
   ‘Because in Spain they speak [the language] as it should be spoken, but here through many generations I think it is spoken this way, I don’t think this can be changed. And I don’t think it’s our fault, I think in our grandparents’ generation [language use] was much worse.’
Hay una especie de degeneración del idioma. Pero bueno eso…
[Una forma de prevenir esto sería] no permitiendo en las escuelas hablar de esa forma. Que hablen como corresponde y escriban como corresponde, que es otro problema bastante grave… (SI07MR161)
‘There is a kind of degeneration of the language. But basically that…A way to prevent this would be to ban people from speaking badly at school. People should speak and write properly, writing is another important problem…’

Es un idioma en el cual [sic] se fue...degenerando iba a decir. Se fue como degenerando, no se si está bien la expresión. Y se logró este castellano pero en realidad nosotros como argentinos adoptamos como nuestras propias palabras. Me parece que no es como un idioma castellano digamos, puro, o sea, que como que cuando vino acá… (SLI07FN44)
‘It’s a language that has…degenerated I was going to say. It degenerated; I don’t know if the expression is correct. And we have this Castilian but in reality we as Argentinians adopt our own words. I think that this is not like a pure Spanish, not as pure as when it came here anyways…’

These attitudes illustrate speakers’ downgrading of their own variety and are reflected linguistically in the overuse of the Present Perfect in current relevance and past perfective contexts in the QUST.

However, as stated in chapter 1, language autonomy and nationalism were a crucial element of Argentinian post-colonial generations. These ideals still prevail at some level in Argentina. Two realities thus emerge in contemporary times: the original nationalistic post-colonial support of linguistic emancipation and a later sense of insecurity and inferiority via-à-vis the perceived purity of the Peninsular norm (Mar-Molinero 1997: 60; Muysken 2008: 19). Argentina’s double standards include speakers’ antagonistic views on ARPS as both quintessentially Argentinian and corrupt. The latter view is expressed through metaphors of illness and corruption, as shown above. To exemplify further, Solé (1992: 801) shows that while 74% of his Argentinian interviewees believe that Argentinian Spanish needs to follow the lead of
the Argentinian Academy of Letters (rather than the Real Academia Española ‘Royal Spanish Academy’), 48% of his participants think that Spanish is best spoken outside of Argentina itself. The vernacular and normative uses of the Present Perfect described earlier also agree with this ambivalence. Although low in overall frequency, the experiential Present Perfect expressing indefinite past and generic reference is vernacular to ARPS (i.e. it is favored in oral interaction, by younger speakers, and men); the normative Present Perfect appears in monitored settings and is preferred by older speakers and women. Hypercorrect behavior reflects the linguistic insecurity of ARPS speakers not vis-à-vis their own standard, but in the face of Peninsular Spanish canons.

Returning to the claims that motivated the sociolinguistic hypotheses proposed for ARPS, Kubarth’s (1992a: 565) contention that the ARPS Present Perfect is especially favored by older participants and Squartini and Bertinetto’s suggestion (2000: 413) that the Present Perfect is prestigious in Latin America under the influence of the Peninsular norm are only supported by the QUST results. However, the vernacular usage described in this thesis – as a result of a detailed analysis of Preterit and Present Perfect occurrence in naturally occurring oral interaction – does not support these views. The vernacular Present Perfect is favored by men and younger speakers, suggesting that this form is crucially not on its way to extinction (as claimed by Kubarth 1992a: 565; Burgos 2004: 103). Moreover, my results for the extended oral data (chapter 5) reveal that the Present Perfect is more widespread than the Preterit in experiential contexts – a finding contrary to previous claims that the ARPS Present Perfect is almost nonexistent in informal styles (e.g. Donni de Mirande 1977: 46–49; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413; Burgos 2004: 103). Here I have noted that, although low in overall frequency, the ARPS Present Perfect is by no means extinct.

The issues discussed in this work are generally representative of the “actuation problem”; the fact that “the over-all process of linguistic change may involve stimuli and constraints from both society and from the structure of language” (Weinreich et al. 1968: 186). In fact, it is questionable whether linguistic change per se may possibly be isolated from social concerns (Silva Corvalán 2001: 277; Milroy 2003: 156). I have shown that both linguistic-internal and linguistic external factors play a role in ARPS Preterit and Present Perfect usage.
Methodologically, I have advocated for the use of questionnaires as valid research tools in sociolinguistics. Their relevance rests not so much on their ability to afford views on speakers’ unconscious linguistic knowledge, but on the observations they provide on the social, political, and linguistic landscape of the variety under study. The QUST reveals speakers’ perception of how others speak and how they *should* speak. This is in line with Labov’s (1996: 108) analysis of intuitions on BIN in African American Vernacular English as a report “on how [speakers] have learned to interpret the speech used by the blacks they have been associated with. It is therefore no self-report, but rather a report of observations”. Squartini and Bertinetto (2000: 423) also explain that controlled research tools reflect “some sort of mental projection of the standard language rather than actual linguistic behavior”. I contend that instruments designed to elicit controlled responses, judgments, or intuitions can be valuable in a complete analysis of the sociolinguistics of a particular linguistic form. Establishing which variables are purely vernacular to the language under study and which are derived from people’s perceptions of correctness and prestige has been crucial to this analysis.

I conclude in the next – and final – chapter, where I offer an overview of the main findings and suggestions advanced in this thesis, and their implications for future research.
CHAPTER 8

Conclusion

In this thesis I have provided evidence to support a number of linguistic and sociolinguistic hypotheses regarding Preterit and Present Perfect usage in contemporary and earlier Argentinian River Plate Spanish (ARPS). The major contribution of this work has been the advancement of an empirically-based account of semantic, evolutionary, and sociolinguistic issues concerning Preterit and Present Perfect usage in ARPS. This account was enabled via an exhaustive quantitative and qualitative analysis of naturally occurring and experimental data across different historical times. My analysis is innovative in that it questions the view that geographical proximity is in itself responsible for patterns of language variation and change (see Muysken 2008). Specifically, this work challenges the almost mythical belief that Latin American varieties represent earlier frozen developmental stages akin to those of earlier Peninsular Spanish (e.g. Lope Blanch 1972: 138; Harris 1982: 50; Fleischman 1983: 196; Schwenter 1994a: 79; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413).

Moreover, the results show that both linguistic-internal and linguistic-external concerns play a role in Preterit and Present Perfect usage in ARPS. In contrast to previous claims that the Present Perfect is almost nonexistent in informal styles (e.g. Donni de Mirande 1977: 46–49; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413), the contemporary oral ARPS Present Perfect is used in experiential settings to express generic reference and indefinite past (a vernacular use) and is not aspectually restricted to repetitive and iterative contexts extending into speech time. In fact, my data demonstrate that the ARPS continuative Present Perfect is losing its link-to-present requirement, challenging the above proposals regarding the use of the Present Perfect in Latin America. The ARPS Present Perfect also features in resultative and continuative settings, in line with layering of old and new grammaticalizing structures (Bybee et al. 1994: 21). However, the loss of the continuative link-to-present requirement indicates that persisting “older grams” do not remain untouched but continue to absorb the semantic nuances of elements in their vicinity. I have suggested that the widespread use of the Preterit in continuative contexts contributes the
inference that the Present Perfect also encodes finished past. Moreover, present relevance does not determine Present Perfect usage in ARPS – as current relevance is overwhelmingly encoded through the Preterit (and temporal adverbials [TAs]).

Historically, the ARPS Preterit and the Present Perfect have undergone their own development. The ARPS Present Perfect has dwindled in usage frequency since the 19th century and the Preterit has invaded the spaces erstwhile occupied by the Present Perfect. As a result, the various functions expressed by the Present Perfect (including result, continuity, current relevance, and hot news) in the 19th century are currently mostly fulfilled by the Preterit, sometimes in combination with TAs. Further, the TA + VERB-PRET construction has widened since the 19th century and has emerged as a periphrastic encoder of perfect nuances – a development reminiscent of perfect periphrases in Yoruba and Karaboro (Niger-Congo) (Dahl 1985: 130), Russian (Bybee & Dahl 1989: 68), and Portuguese (Lindstedt 2000: 372). These periphrases are expected to grammaticalize further such that the currently free syntactic position of the TA may become fixed. A contemporary example of this potential change is found in the fixed pre-verbal position of the innovative temporal marker ahí ‘at this point in time’ (lit. ‘there’) in combination with the Preterit.

The usage described in this work also confirms that the ARPS Present Perfect is not undergoing anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization via the proposed current relevance>hodiernal>hesternal>past perfective path (Bybee et al. 1994; Schwenter 1994a) since the Present Perfect displays an outstandingly low usage frequency in contexts involving temporal recency. Back in the 19th century, recency played a central role in Present Perfect usage as this form was widespread in current relevance and hot news contexts. The contemporary absence of the Present Perfect in hot news contexts shows that the anterior-to-perfective grammaticalization proposed for Peninsular Spanish does not hold in ARPS, as it has been claimed that hot news perfects form a bridge to further stages in the grammaticalization process such as perfectives and hodiernal pasts (e.g. Dahl & Hedin 2000: 399). Instead, the development of the ARPS Present Perfect as an encoder of indefinite past is possible in contexts where temporal anchoring is indeterminate (in line with Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008: 31).

In this thesis, the past-referring nature of the ARPS Present Perfect has been linked to the experiential perfect. However, the non-significance of linguistic variables such as first person subjects and plural objects in the statistical analysis
indicates that the ARPS Present Perfect is not restricted to experiential contexts. In fact, the loss of the link-to-present requirement noted for the continuative Present Perfect (where the simple Present is used to make the connection to the present moment explicit) is indicative of the past-referring nature of the perfect – whether within the realm of personal experience or beyond.

The ARPS Present Perfect is sociolinguistically constrained; men use it significantly more often in spontaneous oral interaction while women prefer the Present Perfect in the questionnaire. This form is used by younger speakers as well, challenging the position that the Present Perfect is favored exclusively by older speakers and is thus on the verge of extinction (Kubarth 1992a: 565; Burgos 2004: 103). Remarkably, in contrast to the contention that the Present Perfect occurs more frequently in the written media (Lope Blanch 1972: 128 ff.; De Kock 1989: 489; Berman & Slobin 1994: 250; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413), the contemporary oral and newspaper corpora show similar distributional tendencies and linguistic constraints. Only in non-naturalistic experimental settings is the Present Perfect used more readily in ways unattested in oral interaction (i.e. in current relevance and past perfective settings) and by women and older speakers. This usage is hypercorrect and normative, rather than naturalistic or vernacular. ARPS ambivalent use of the Present Perfect represents the essence of the so-called “actuation problem”; that is, the contention that the process of linguistic change involves stimuli and constraints from both society and from the structure of language (Weinrech et al. 1968: 186).

The identification of vernacular and normative Present Perfect uses was enabled through the analysis of a wide variety of data types, including casual conversation, participant observation, sociolinguistic interviews, questionnaires, and newspaper data. The findings in this thesis fully support the proposal that genre plays a central role in language use patterns (Travis 2007: 103, 131).

Methodologically, an important innovation has been the inclusion of inter-rater reliability in quantifying Present Perfect function and the addition of style as an independent variable in the questionnaire. Coding for perfect function has proved crucial in uncovering complex Preterit and Present Perfect usage in the absence of linguistic features associated with specific perfect types – e.g. occurrence of the experiential perfect in questions and with first person subjects (Dahl 1985: 141 and 143; Bybee et al. 1994: 62). Moreover, using a questionnaire to elicit speaker preference proved valuable not necessarily in its reflection of speakers’ unconscious
knowledge or internal grammar but rather in its potential to display participants’ language use in a highly monitored setting and its indexing of what constitutes correct linguistic behavior – both by the speakers themselves and by others. The normative use of the Present Perfect outlined above may not have been identified without this important experimental instrument.

Finally, this research has demonstrated that language variation and change are best explained and understood by analyzing dialect-specific linguistic-internal and linguistic-external variables across a range of different genres, including both vernacular and normative usage. This approach is particularly appropriate in Latin America, where strong prescriptivism by the educational system and language academies has contributed to speakers’ views of their own language as a deviant version of the source language. The findings offered in this thesis suggest that, although linguistically insecure in an experimental setting, speakers use forms consistently across various naturally-occurring genres. Further language evolution will thus stem from speakers’ vernacular usage in everyday communicative acts (Schneider 2003: 314). It remains to be assessed, however, how linguistic insecurity and prescriptivism will contribute to – or hinder – such development.

8.1 Further research

Further research should focus on the importance of usage frequency on the potential grammaticalization of the $TA + \text{VERB-PRET}$ construction. The use of the $TA + \text{VERB-PRET}$ construction should be studied vis-à-vis the language change phases of periphrasis, entrenchment, and erosion outlined by Croft (2000: 151 – 164). In this thesis I have provided evidence that most prototypically perfect contexts are being systematically replaced by the Preterit in combination with TAs. Further research should determine: (a) the extent to which the Preterit and TAs have become entrenched linguistic routines for the expression of result, continuity, current relevance, experience, and hot news; (b) the degree to which TAs favor Preterit rather than Present Perfect usage (contra Harris 1982: 54); (c) the likelihood that the $TA + \text{VERB-PRET}$ construction may lose syntactic independence and possibly undergo phonological erosion (Bybee 2003: 5); and (d) the viability that highly frequent TAs that collocate exclusively or almost exclusively with the Preterit (such as $ahí$ ‘at this point in time’ and $ya$ ‘already’) may grammaticalize earlier or at a faster rate than constructions with other TAs (cf. Bybee & Torres Cacoullos 2007: 212).
Another interesting question that arises is how Argentinian children acquire the Present Perfect. Previous research has shown that Argentinian Spanish-speaking children make no use whatsoever of this form (Berman & Slobin 1994: 442). It remains to be determined when and how the ARPS Present Perfect emerges in children’s speech and what these usage patterns may reflect about adult preference for these forms in spontaneous speech (cf. Labov 1989). Findings from children’s speech may also illuminate the extent to which the TA + VERB-PRET construction has advanced as the default encoder of canonical perfect nuances.

Finally, future research should investigate whether the ARPS vernacular Present Perfect usage described in this study is also found in other Southern Cone Spanish varieties including Chilean, Paraguayan, and Uruguayan Spanish. Henderson’s (2008) research suggests many similarities between my observations for ARPS and other Southern Cone dialects. Establishing whether these dialects display common usage patterns would indicate that Present Perfect usage and change in Latin America is more complex than previously suggested.
APPENDIX A

SOCIOLINGUISTIC INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Entrevista sociolingüística 2007/2008

Esta es una entrevista acerca de su opinión sobre el idioma en Argentina. Primero vamos a romper un poco el hielo con preguntas generales sobre Usted:

1. ¿Cuánto hace que vive acá?
2. ¿Cómo es su familia o su grupo de amigos? (Lo que Usted prefiera).
3. ¿Cuándo terminó sus estudios? (El secundario o su carrera universitaria).
4. ¿Tiene alguna experiencia viviendo en el exterior?
5. ¿Tiene alguna experiencia con personas de otros países? (Amigos, parientes, etc.).
6. Cuénteme su día de hoy (actividades, horarios, etc.).

Ahora le voy a pedir su opinión sobre otros temas relacionados con nuestro idioma en Argentina.

7. Si un extranjero le preguntara que idioma se habla en Argentina, ¿qué le contestaría?
8. ¿Piensa que deberíamos usar otro nombre para referirnos a nuestro idioma?
9. ¿Qué piensa sobre el uso de otros idiomas como el italiano, el inglés, etc. en nuestro país? ¿Cree que estos idiomas influyen nuestra propia lengua?
10. ¿Qué variedad de castellano/español cree debería enseñarse en el exterior? (Por ejemplo a un estudiante alemán estudiando castellano en Alemania).
11. ¿Cree que los argentinos nos sentimos orgullosos de nuestro idioma? ¿Por qué?
12. ¿Le gustaría preguntar algo o agregar algún comentario antes de terminar con la entrevista?

¡Muchas gracias por su colaboración!
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE
Nombre: 
Edad: 
Educación: 
Idiomas que habla: 

CUESTIONARIO

Lea las siguientes oraciones y complete el espacio en blanco con una forma del verbo que aparece entre paréntesis. Trate de elegir una forma que Usted usaría si dijera la oración en realidad. Cada espacio puede ser completado con más de una palabra.

Ejemplos:

(A1)
A: ¡No quiero dejar al perrito en casa cuando vayamos de vacaciones!
B: No te preocupes, lo vamos a llevar (llevar) con nosotros.

(A2)
A: ¿Me ayudas a cambiar los frenos de la bici?
B: Ahora no puedo (poder), después lo hacemos.

EL CUESTIONARIO EMPIEZA AQUI

(1)
A: ¿Querés que te preste el Código Da Vinci para leer?
B: No, gracias ya lo ________________(leer).

(2)
A: ¿Vamos de paseo al parque?
B: No, ____________ (tener) que estudiar para el examen final de Anatomía.

(3)
A: Las repúblicas de Chile y Argentina tienen tanto en común...
B: Sí, ambas ________________ (sufrir) muerte y tristeza con sus dictaduras militares.
(4)
A: ¿Y ese abrigo nuevo?
B: No es nuevo, me lo ________________ (comprar) el año pasado para mi cumpleaños.

(5)
A: ¿Le parece incorrecto que tenga otra pareja?
B: A ver, ¡durante el último mes______________ (cambiar) de pareja casi ya cuatro veces!

(6)
A: ¿Por qué estás tan deprimido?
B: Lo que pasa es que el médico me ________________ (decir) que no hay nada más que hacer. Es el final.

(7)
A: No me gusta ese tipo de película, ¿a Usted que le parece?
B: A mí me ________________ (dar) igual.

(8)
A: ¿Tiene Usted retratos de su difunto hijo en su casa?
B: No, no quiero colocar fotografías de personas que ___________ (fallecer) en esta casa.

(9)
A: ¡Vengan todos a ver!
B: ¡___________ (llegar) Juan!

(10)
A: Y España, ¿qué le parece?
B: No sé, nunca ________________ (visitar) Europa.
A: ¿Qué pasa que están todos a los gritos?
B: ¡Argentina recién ganar el partido contra Brasil!

A: El profesor de Lengua y Literatura es muy responsable.
B: Sí, siempre corregir la tarea de una semana para la otra.

A: ¡Qué abrigo más bonito Sra. Marín! ¿Es nuevo?
B: No es nuevo, me lo comprar el año pasado con motivo de mi cumpleaños.

A: ¿Qué sucede, Señores, que están todos levantando la voz?
B: ¡Argentina recién ganar el partido contra su rival Brasil!

A: Y España, te gusta?
B: No sé, nunca visitar Europa.

A: ¿Usted me está diciendo que Marta no está en casa?
B: Disculpe, salir rumbo al trabajo deprisa, ¡ni un saludo!

A: ¿Quién puede ayudarme con la tarea de Química?
B: Bueno, Carolina hacer Química I y II, así que podría ayudarte.

A: ¿No hay fotos de tu difunto hijo en esta casa?
B: No, no quiero poner fotos de personas que morir en esta casa.
(19)
A: ¿Qué le pasa a Mariana?
B: Está muy triste. ________________(estar) sentada ahí todo el día, sin decir nada.

(20)
A: Ana siempre tiene ropa nueva.
B: ¡Es que su marido ________________(ganar) mucha plata!

(21)
A: ¿Cómo que no está en casa?
B: No, ____________(salir) para el trabajo muy apurado. ¡Ni un chau!

(22)
A: ¿Qué le parece que le deje mi copia de El Código Da Vinci para leer?
B: No, le agradezco ya lo _________________(leer).

(23)
A: ¿Te parece mal que tenga otra novia?
B: ¡Bueno, en el último mes ________________(cambiar) de pareja como cuatro veces!

(24)
A: Chile y Argentina tienen mucho en común.
B: Sí, las dos ________________(sufrir) muerte y tristeza con sus dictaduras militares.

(25)
A: Esos libros son viejos, dáselos a alguien que los necesite.
B: Bueno, ahora mismo _________________(ir) al centro a ver qué se puede hacer.

(26)
A: ¿Qué le sucede a la Sra. Rosas?
B: Esta muy consternada. _____________(estar) sentada ahí el día entero, sin decir palabra.
(27)
A: ¡Vengan Señoras y Señores a ver!
B: ¡__________ (llegar) Juan Amado!

(28)
A: Profesora, ¿quién podría darme una mano con el ejercicio de Química?
B: A ver, Carolina Manzi _________(hacer) Química I y II así que ella debería poder ayudarlo.

(29)
A: Ahora no tengo tiempo para ir al supermercado.
B: ¿Y si ______________(ir) juntos después de almorzar?

(30)
A: ¿Por qué se lo ve tan deprimido?
B: Lo que sucede es que el médico me _____________(decir) que no hay nada más que hacer. Es el final.

**FIN DE CUESTIONARIO**
APPENDIX C

CODING INSTRUCTIONS: ENGLISH
Cross-coding instructions

Thank you for your help in this cross-coding exercise. This document specifies how to go about analyzing the tokens you will find in the second document attached (list of tokens provided). The idea is to code every single Present Perfect token (PP token) in the table provided in the attached document as belonging to one of the following categories:

- Resultative perfect (RES)
- Continuative perfect (CONT)
- Current relevance perfect (CR)
- Experiential perfect (EXP)
- Hot news perfect (HN)
- Past perfective (PAST)

Please read the example and its translation into English and decide which of the above categories you think applies to each.

There are three columns: under PP function you should provide one of the labels (RES, CONT, CR, EXP, HN) given above. The “justification” column should include, in a few words, why you think the particular token is an example of the above functions. Finally, in the “other info.” column you are welcome to include any further information that has helped you make a choice. Example (1) illustrates the procedure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PP token</th>
<th>Approximate English translation</th>
<th>PP function</th>
<th>Justification</th>
<th>Other contextual info.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) He conocido gente interesante</td>
<td>I have met interesting people</td>
<td>EXP</td>
<td>Refers to a situation that has held at least once in the time leading up to now/ It refers to the speaker’s personal experience</td>
<td>ISG animate subject/Direct object gente ‘people’ is generic and indefinite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please refer to the background section below for a clear idea of what each of the different PP functions entails. Also, although some tokens may seem to encode more
than one PP function, try to decide on the one function that stands as most salient to you.

**Background section**

**Resultative**

The resultative perfect signals a present state brought about by a past occurrence or event, and usually carries with it the implicature that a result obtains as a consequence of a past action (Schwenter 1994b: 998). Resultative predicates are mostly telic (i.e. achievements and accomplishments), with the end-point of the predication generally representing the outcome of the situation encoded by the verb. Most importantly, the resulting eventuality must obtain at utterance time (Pancheva 2003: 278).

(1) *Las cosas han cambiado mucho.*

‘Things have changed so much’ (i.e. things are now different).

**Continuative**

Continuative uses of the present perfect are more frequent in English (e.g. ‘Carla has lived in Chicago for 5 years’) than in Spanish, where the equivalent of the previous example takes the simple Present (e.g. *Hace cinco años que Carla vive en Chicago*), rather than the Present Perfect (cf. Comrie 1976: 60). The continuative perfect describes an event “that began somewhere in the past but continues up until present time” (Schwenter 1994b: 999). Continuative perfects may co-occur with specific temporal adverbials as long as these include the present time in their temporal makeup. In fact, continuatives almost invariably require that a temporal adverbial of some sort accompany the predication (Brugger 1997: 53 ff. 1).

(2) *En los últimos años mi trabajo ha sido con personas extranjeras.*

‘In the last couple of years my work has been with foreigners.’

**Current relevance**

Current relevance perfects are used to highlight the (temporal) relationship between the past situation in question and the time of speech (Comrie 1976: 60;
Schwenter 1994b: 999-1000). As mentioned before, current relevance is an essentially subjective notion which appears to overlap with all other perfect functions (since the present perfect is canonically said to encode present relevance). Schwenter explains that there may be reasons why a perfect is preferred over for example, a perfective, to signal the relevance of the past event. Example (3) illustrates a current relevance use of the perfect.

(3)  *Recién he visto* a Juan.
    I have just seen Juan.

**Experiential**

Experiential present perfects are non-specific in their time reference and present situations as having occurred at least once during the time leading up to the present. They resemble past tenses in that relation with the speech time is not a obligatory (cf. Comrie 1976: 59; Brugger 1997: 61; Pancheva 2003: 279). Further, experiential perfects encode an (animate) agent’s qualities or knowledge stemming from past experience (Bybee et al. 1994: 62; Lindstedt 2000: 369).

(4)  *Yo me he ido* de viaje muchas veces.
    ‘I have gone away on holiday many times.’

**Hot news**

Hot news perfects usually describe immediate events that speakers deem both significant and novel at speech time. They highlight the recency of the event itself, rather than its results (although researchers such as Pancheva (2003: 301 ff. 1) view these as variants of the resultative construction). Hot news perfects tend to appear in media where the reporting of news is expected (such as TV or radio programs, and (online) newspapers and magazines). Temporal adverbs such as *recién* ‘just’ and *ya* ‘already’ are common (Schwenter 1994b: 997).

(5)  *Un millón de refugiados han encontrado* ya patria y hogar.
    A million refugees have already found nation and home.
**Past perfective**

The PP is used to encode finished situation in the past. In this context the PP co-occurs with specific temporal adverbials such as ‘yesterday’, ‘on 4th April 2001’ to encode past perfectivity. It is not one of the canonical PP functions but occurs in some language varieties hence its inclusion in this section.

(6) **Hemos ido al cine ayer.**

‘We have gone to the movies yesterday’.

The following table summarizes the information presented above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Present Perfect</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Aspectual features</th>
<th>Co-occurring temporal adverbials</th>
<th>Expected occurrence</th>
<th>Other important info.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resultative (RES)</td>
<td>Signals a present state brought about by a past eventuality</td>
<td>Presupposes a “material bound” in that it collocates with telic predicates (Lindstedt 2000: 368); RES interpretation depends on aspactual makeup of participle</td>
<td>Combines with adverbs of limited duration such as todavía ‘still’ and ya ‘already’</td>
<td>*She has still gone but She is still gone</td>
<td>'TELOS is ‘turning point’ where eventualities transition into states (Pancheva 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implies that a result obtains as a consequence of a past action (Bybee et al. 1994: 65)</td>
<td>Resulting state must hold at utterance time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuative (CONT)</td>
<td>Refers to situation that began somewhere in the past but continues up until present time</td>
<td>Refers to past situations but requires a relation to present time Occurs in contexts that are aspactually durative or iterative (mostly atelic, or telic with iteration or relation to present made explicit)</td>
<td>Requires that temporal adverbials accompany predication (Iatridou et al. 2001: 196) Proximate adverbials are common</td>
<td>Simple Present used in Spanish to encode continuity of situation (e.g. <em>Hace X time that…</em>).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Current Relevance (CR) | Focuses on the relationship between a past situation and the time of speech (i.e. past situation is very recent) | Presupposes a temporal bound  
Present relevance does not imply recentness, but recentness may be a sufficient condition for CR (Comrie 1976: 60) | Recientemente ‘recently’ | - Resembles a tense as it does not affect the temporal constituency of the situation (Bybee 1985: 160)  
- Generalization of meaning from “current result” to “current relevance” seen in the spread of RES from telic to atelic verbs |
| Experiential (EXP) | Refers to situations that have held at least once during time leading up to present at some indefinite point in time (Comrie 1976: 58; Dahl 1985: 143) | Predominantly temporal  
Resemble past tenses in that relation with the present tense is not a prerequisite  
Non-specific temporal modification is common (as is indefinite past) | Narration of own’s or other’s personal (subjective) experience | - Agent tends to be animate (Bybee et al. 1994: 62)  
-“Type-focusing event reference (Dahl & Hedin 2000: 386-389)  
-Typically occurs in questions and negated assertions (Dahl 1985)  
-EXP historically derives from CR meaning (Lindstedt 2000: 370)  
Can be paraphrased as ‘I have had the experience of doing X’ (Iatridou et al. 2001: 191) |
| Hot news (HN) | Describes significant and novel events | Resembles resultatives but emphasizes recency of event, rather than resulting state (Schwenter 1994b: 995) | Ya ‘already’ and recién ‘just’ | Media headlines and exchange of novel information in interaction |
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271


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Rodríguez Louro, Celeste. (in prep.). A usage-based approach to the Preterit and the Present Perfect in Argentinian River Plate Spanish.


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