Preterit Expansion and Perfect Demise in Porteño Spanish and Beyond

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Preterit Expansion and Perfect Demise in Porteño Spanish and Beyond

A Critical Perspective on Cognitive Grammaticalization Theory

By

Guro Nore Fløgstad

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For Liv and Sonia

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Abbreviations Used in Glosses

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
ADV	adverbial
IMP	imperative
INF	infinitive
IPFV	imperfective
NEG	negation
PFV	perfective
PL	plural
PRF	perfect
PRS	present
PRT	preterit
PST	past
PTCP	participle
REFL	reflexive
SBJV	subjunctive
SG	singular

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

How does grammar evolve? "The more it changes, the more it stays the same," states Bybee (2010: 1), and synthesizes a usage-based approach to language change, which forms the background for this book.[1, 2] In Bybee's view, languages constantly change but do so in certain ways formed by domain-general mechanisms. The idea is that results of these changes are observable in recurring linguistic patterns in unrelated languages. The real universals are diachronic. The goal of this work is to investigate verbal categories in Latin American varieties of Romance in the light of these assumptions, through an in-dept study of one case of grammatical evolution: the development of Preterits and Perfects in Porteño Spanish.

A major morphosyntactic change has occurred in Porteño Spanish, the urban vernacular of Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Perfect—here preliminarily defined as a past with current relevance—is practically absent from the language of young and adolescent speakers, as the Preterit—here used to refer to the language-specific past perfective category—has taken on the functions previously associated only with the Perfect.[3] Originally, Porteño Spanish had separate categories to express past imperfective and a past perfective and past with current relevance. In present-day Porteño Spanish, the Perfect category has virtually disappeared, and the Preterit expresses the functions previously restricted to the Perfect.

In this work, I take a prototypical approach to the perfect's semantics, meaning that I take a perfect to express four different subfunctions: experiential, resultative, recent past, and persistent situation. These subfunctions share the semantic notion of current relevance (CR), which is included, to different extents, in their semantic scope. In Porteño Spanish, the Preterit is currently polysemous and conveys both past perfective and, crucially, past with CR in young and adolescent speakers, as in example (1):

1 "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose" is the original quote from French novelist and critic Jean-Baptiste Alfonse Karr (1808–1890).

2 This work—based on the authors's Ph.D. dissertation (Fløgstad 2015)—was partly supported by the Research Council of Norway through its Centres of Excellence funding scheme, project number 223265.

3 Capital letter refers to the language-specific category.

(1) Past with CR (experiential)
(10:03/2)[4]

Probaste	chipá?	No	**probaste**	chipá?
Try.2SG.PRT	chipá	NEG	try.2SG.PRT	chipá[5]

'Have you tried chipá? You haven't tried chipá?'

Older and middle-aged speakers, on the other hand, appear to be in a transition stage in which both the Preterit and Perfect are used to express past with CR. No clear synchronic restrictions on their use are attested. What is found, however, is that the experiential function appears to be the first of the subfunctions associated with the Perfect to be expressed by means of Preterits.

Why is an expanding Preterit newsworthy? In a usage-based approach to language change linguistic structure is understood to be in constant flux. Change is understood to occur along certain paths of development. One such path involves the expansion of Perfects, and demise of Preterits. Perfects tend to become "something else," such as pasts or past perfectives, as Dahl (2004: 275) points out. In contrast, he argues, "past tenses and perfectives rarely develop into anything else: they seem to be, in a sense, the stable final point of that development." Dahl's claim is not compatible with the development in Porteño Spanish or with developments in a large cross-linguistic comparison of Romance languages, as I will show in the remainder of this work.

1.1 Competing Categories

The competition between a Perfect and a Preterit has, at least since Meillet (1958 [1912]), been known to end with the expansion of the former; the Perfect tends to gain terrain, and the Preterit tends to disappear. This development has occurred in, for instance, French, where the Perfect, or Passé Composé, has taken over the functions of the past perfective, or Passé Simple. In Porteño Spanish, however, the Preterit has spread, almost completely replacing the Perfect.

Much has been written about the "well-behaved" perfects (a term also used by Laca 2010), and their expansion to past or past perfective. Since Meillet's initial observation of the "invasion" of the perfect into the past's territories, this "drift" has been understood as an undisputable fact of historical linguistics,

4 These numbers refer to minute (10), second (03), and informant number (2), in order for the examples to be traceable in the electronic corpus. To consult the audio files, contact the author.

5 Only those forms relevant to the linguistic analysis will be glossed.

and, as Schaden (2012: 4) notes, it is one of the best known grammaticalization processes: a directional tendency, or "path of development" (Bybee et al. 1994: 105), called the perfective path, here presented in a simplified version:

be/*have* + participle → resultative → anterior → perfective/simple past

The expansion of perfects is relatively easily accounted for using insights from studies on morphosyntactic and semantic change, as well as from insights on processing of synthetic vs. analytic forms. Perfects are typically young analytic forms, easy to process, and their use can be explained by the speaker's desire to be clear or easily processible (Slobin 1977). Pasts/past perfectives, on the other hand, typically are synthetic and opaque; they are older forms. Semantically, the expansion of perfects is generally taken to occur due to an increase in frequency triggered by the CR component. Because the perfect expresses past with CR, the idea is that speakers use the perfect more often than necessary in order to present their contribution as relevant, "AS THOUGH it were highly relevant to current concerns" (Bybee et al. 1994: 86–87, capitalization in the original; see also Chapter 4).

Directional tendencies thus have their origins in usage patterns. This directionality is crucial to a usage-based approach to language. The same directional tendencies occur in unrelated languages because speakers of all languages share a common cognitive makeup, which includes, e.g., analogical thinking and categorization. The expansion of the perfect can be explained by alluding to the way in which language is used: communicative motivations, processing constraints, and the speaker's wish to be clear.

Surprisingly, however, the competing relationship between Perfects and Preterits appears to create very different outcomes, when one looks outside the well-known European examples. That is, in many languages where a Perfect and a Preterit exist, the Preterit is expanding.

Not only Porteño Spanish but also various other Spanish and Portuguese varieties spoken in Latin America have lost, or are in a process of losing, the Perfect. In these languages, the Preterit expands. It appears, then, that the competing relationship between a Perfect and a Preterit can lead to the expansion of either. But what triggers the expansion of a Preterit?

1.2 A Model for the Expansion of the Preterit

The focus of this study is on innovation—more specifically, on the generation of variation (Blythe & Croft 2012: 271), which causes the spread. Rather than focusing on the global decrease in the use of the Perfect, focus is on

the various subfunctions associated with the Perfect in order to propose a step-by-step model for the expansion of the Preterit, which is assumed to begin in transitional contexts (Fried 2009) in which the Preterit is used without temporal specification, that is, through contexts that are temporally indeterminate and lack temporal anchoring. These contexts are what Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos (2008) refer to as having irrelevant temporal location, that is, which cannot be queried by "when" (pg. 17); in addition to those referred to as indeterminate; where the analyst and possibly the interlocutor cannot resolve the temporal distance of the past situation with respect to utterance time. Interestingly, such contexts have also been suggested as the locus of the expansion of a Perfect (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008); a finding that only strengthens the assumption that these contexts are particularly prone to new uses. Infact, Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (ibid.: 33) suggest that indeterminate contexts may be the locus of change in temporal systems in general. I shall show how in these contexts, a functional overlap and the abstract CR component of the experiential function lead to this use appearing in contexts in which the Preterit is used in its place, eventually creating a pragmatic routine, and subsequently a conventionalization, of the novel use of the Preterit.

The model I propose is in accord with general principles of usage-based approaches, especially the nondiscreteness of categories, and the gradual nature of linguistic change. The proposed model has several advantages, especially because it operates with microsteps (Traugott & Trousdale 2010a, b; 2013). This term refers to the fact that language change can be traced back to small changes—microsteps—that take place in actual usage-events. Such microsteps illustrate the gradual nature of change. Change does not occur through abrupt saltations.

This model is particularly useful when it comes to accounting for the heterogeneous distribution of the Perfect/Preterit in Romance, and especially in Latin American varieties of such. By assuming that change occurs via microsteps, I can put forward a hypothesis of why the categories do not change abruptly but how certain subfunctions may survive. As I shall show, Latin American varieties of Spanish vary as to whether the subfunctions of the Perfect are expressed by means of Preterits. Operating with microsteps may provide an explanation of why, for instance, the Mexican Perfect is assumed to prevail as the conveyor of imperfective function. This may be because microsteps begin in the subfunctions semantically closer to the Preterit (such as the experiential mentioned above) and have not led to a macrochange in this variety.

The new uses of the Preterit arise as language is used. Linguistic forms always have an array of possible interpretations, very few of which are ever conventionalized (macrosteps are in fact rare). It is therefore important to note

that I assume no determinism in the steps taken. A microchange need not lead to a macrochange. For Porteño Spanish specifically, this means that an incipient change needs not come to completion, and may halt its development in the changing process. This assumption is in line with Traugott and Trousdale (2013: 112), who state that also very robust grammatical markers can become restricted and peripheral and may even disappear.

Consequently, I assume that the path metaphor frequently used to account for changes such as the opposite of the one occurring in Porteño Spanish (the widely studied expansion of a Perfect) needs reconsideration. Despite the growing number of publications on Latin American varieties in which Perfects are documented to clearly fall into disuse (see, among others, Rodríguez Louro 2009), this decline has had few consequences for the prevailing view in grammaticalization theory on tense and aspect; perfects still are assumed to develop into pasts/past perfectives (see Hengeveld 2011: 589–590 for a recent example). Why can this be? One possibility is simply that these studies often are conducted within the realm of grammaticalization theory (see, e.g., Torres Cacoullos & Walker 2011). Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008: 6) symptomatically observe that current analyses place the Meixan Perfect on a developmental stage prior to the Peninsular Perfect, implying its being, in fact, on a grammaticalization path. A second possibility is that paths of development are an essential part of grammaticalization—perhaps the most essential evidence in favor of grammaticalization's being a unified process, and not just a collection of separate phenomena well known to the historical linguist (as critics claim; see, e.g., Janda 2001; Joseph 2011). A third factor is that regular paths of development are taken to constitute diachronic universals (Bybee 2008; 2010), and it is assumed that reconstruction is possible on the basis of the path's presumed regular trajectories (Heine & Kuteva 2007). That is, if universals arise in use, it follows that the processes creating them must follow similar paths.

While grammaticalization has been subject to intense criticism, from both insiders and outsiders to the field (see, e.g., Börjars & Vincent 2011 for recent overview), the regularity of tense/aspect developments (also known as source determination; Bybee et al. 1994) has not been subject to a systematic criticism (but see Norde 2009; 2010). It is sporadically mentioned that paths need not come to completion (Bybee 2010: 77–78; Norde 2009: 32; Traugott & Dasher 2002: 87), and that "small steps may not be on a continuous unidirectional path" (Traugott & Trousdale 2013: 75). However, these acknowledgements have had few consequences for the framework, as the presumed regularity of the perfective path still prevails as a crucial tenet of grammaticalization theory and of source determination.

To sum up, it is the goal of this work to show the following:

1. The competition between a Perfect and a Preterit in Latin American varieties of Romance may create steps in the expansion of either.
2. Such diverse developments may stem from the functional overlap between the two categories, enabled in contexts that are temporally indeterminate.
3. Importantly, a crosslinguistic comparison uncovers a clear tendency: the tendency for the morphological expression of past with CR to disappear. Whether the remaining form is the former Preterit or the former Perfect varies.

The ultimate purpose of this book is thus to show that the instability exists at the level of the distinction, and is not form-specific.

This book is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 presents the diachronic, usage-based approach here employed, as well as an overview of the semantics of the temporal and aspectual categories in question. A usage-based view which acknowledges microsteps is taken, as well as a prototypical approach to grammatical categories which allows for gradience between members of categories, and categories.

Chapter 3 provides background information about the varieties in question and offers an overview of the sociolinguistic context in the relevant parts of Argentina and Uruguay and of the local linguistic varieties.

Chapter 4 treats the field of source determination, and approaches to the perfect's development in detail. It is argued that the assumption that the source meaning determines the path of the construction is not supported empirically.

Chapter 5 presents the methodology and discusses challenges associated with a semantic analysis of spontaneous speech data.

Chapter 6 goes through the results extracted from the available data: the gradual decrease of the Perfect in Porteño Spanish and the variation in the expression of past with CR, based on four types of oral and written sources.

Chapter 7 provides an analysis of the expansion of the Preterit. I argue that the possibility for the Preterit to expand begins in transitional contexts, in which the Preterit appears in an already-established time frame, which allows for it to occur alone. I further argue that a two-step process of pragmatic strengthening and reanalysis triggers morphosyntactic variation in the experiential function, and subsequently the change in the entire category, through microsteps.

Chapter 8 provides a synthesis of the findings and a discussion of their theoretical implications. It is concluded that the tendency is not for the perfect to expand, but for the morphological expression of perfect to disappear. The expanding category may be the former perfect, or the former preterit.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Background

This chapter provides an overview of the theoretical approach undertaken in this study. First, a sketch of the usage-based framework used in this work is provided, as well as its consequences for my approach to the nature of linguistic change. Second, brief definitions of tense and aspect are discussed, as well as of the semantic categories relevant for the specific case: the past, the past perfective, and the perfect, and to some extent, their intertwined semantic relationship.

2.1 Diachrony and Usage-Based Linguistics

In this study, I take a usage-based approach to language change (Bybee & Beckner 2009; Bybee 2010; Croft 2000; see also Tomasello 2000; 2003). A usage-based approach to language can be subsumed under a *cognitive* approach to language. In its broadest sense, the term "cognitive," referring to mental activities involved in gaining knowledge and comprehension, is also compatible with generative approaches to language (see, e.g., Geeraerts 2006: 3 for discussion). However, Cognitive Linguistics—with a capital C—is, as Geeraerts (2006: 2) puts it, a "theoretical conglomerate," or an "archipelago" consisting of various "islands" that have a shared perspective but are not yet brought together under the common rule of a well-defined theory. Geeraerts lists 12 fundamental parts of the so-called theoretical conglomerate:

- Cognitive grammar
- Grammatical construal
- Radial network
- Prototype theory
- Schematic network
- Conceptual metaphor
- Image schema
- Metonymy
- Mental spaces
- Frame semantics
- Construction grammar
- Usage-based linguistics

Here, I am concerned primarily with usage-based theory, although prototype theory will be relevant to the definition of the semantics of the perfect in 2.3.6, and the formalization of transitional contexts in Chapter 7 is inspired by microconstructional change as modeled in constructional approaches to change (Traugott & Trousdale 2013).

Which properties do theories associated with Cognitive Linguistics share? At least two guiding principles are common to all subtheories, outlined as follows. One is the so-called cognitive commitment; the other is the so-called generalization commitment (Evans 2012). The *cognitive commitment* refers to the commitment of providing principles for language that accord with what is known about other cognitive capacities. Bybee's view of semantic bleaching to be a result of habituation, which I return to in 2.1.2.1, is one such example. The *generalization commitment* refers to the commitment to refer to principles that hold for all aspects of language—namely, syntax, semantics, phonology, and morphology. There is no assumed dichotomy between lexicon and grammar. Language is therefore seen as a nonmodular, holistic framework in which no module is autonomous, or "core." The idea that frequency has an impact on both meaning and form is an explanation true to the generalization commitment.

More specifically, the crucial tenet to usage-based theory is, as its name indicates, that language structure is created as language is used and that domain-general processes (as exemplified in the cognitive commitment), such as categorization, chunking, memory storage, analogy, and the ability to make cross-modal associations, are crucial in the creation of grammar (Bybee 2010). This view is nonstructuralist in that language structure is not seen as a tidy system consisting of units that are defined by the oppositions they enter into. Instead, in a usage-based framework, language is taken to be in constant flux, and the changes produced are eventually the producers of grammatical structure. Novel forms are thus the result of how language is used. Tomasello (2000: 61–62) describes how grammar is conceived in a usage-based framework as follows:

> The linguistic skills that a person possesses at any given moment in time—in the form of a "structured inventory of symbolic units"—result from her accumulated experience with language across the totality of usage events in her life. This accumulated linguistic experience undergoes processes of entrenchment, due to repeated uses of particular expressions across usage-events, and abstraction, due to type variation in constituents of particular expressions across usage events.

Abstraction of semantic content, as well as entrenchment, is crucial also for the understanding of the development of grammar through historical processes. One such process is grammaticalization, outlined as follows.

2.1.1 *Grammaticalization*

On a usage-based view, grammatical structure is thought to arise through a process of grammaticalization. The term "grammaticalization"—in some works referred to as *grammaticization*—was originally coined by Meillet (1958 [1912]), was refined by Kuryłowicz (1976 [1965]), and originally referred to the process whereby a lexical item comes to serve grammatical function. A crucial insight, however, is that it is not the lexical item that grammaticalizes; rather is it "the entire construction, and not simply the lexical meaning of the stem, which is the precursor, and hence the source, of the grammatical meaning" (Bybee et al. 1994: 11). It may therefore be added to the definition that grammaticalization of lexical items takes place within particular constructions and, further, that grammaticalization creates new constructions (Bybee 2010: 106)—a construction here being understood as a form-meaning correspondence, which itself carries meaning (Goldberg 1995: 1). Grammaticalization has received considerable scholarly attention during the last decades and has arguably led to massive breakthroughs in usage-based grammar (Bybee 2011). Still, there is little consensus on how to define its scope. Traugott and Trousdale (2013: 32–33) synthesize the current different positions as follows.

In one view, grammaticalization is viewed as a diachronic change—grammaticalization is understood as "the change whereby lexical items and constructions come in certain linguistic contexts to serve grammatical functions and, once grammaticalized, continue to develop new grammatical functions" (Traugott & Trousdale 2013: 96).

The second view holds that grammaticalization is a research framework, rather than merely a description of a diachronic change. This research framework allows for "the study of the relationship between lexical, constructional, and grammatical material, diachronically and synchronically, both in particular languages and cross-linguistically" (Traugott & Trousdale 2013: 96).

As Bybee (2011: 69) observes, rather than usage-based theory's offering a particular perspective on grammaticalization, it is in fact research on grammaticalization that has led to the main breakthroughs in the study of frequency effects on language. Such frequency effects are crucial in the usage-based approach.

In a usage-based framework, therefore, grammaticalization provides an explanation for how grammar comes about, as well as for why it takes the form it does. Tomasello (2008: 245) writes the following:

> Although the basic steps in this sequence of different kinds of grammatical structuring must have taken place before human beings dispersed

> across the globe, after this dispersal different groups of humans conventionalized different ways of fulfilling the functional demands of simple, serious and fancy syntax. This structuring was embodied in grammatical constructions—complex patterns of multiunit utterances—which were conventionalized in different groups via grammaticalization and other cultural-historical processes.

Since grammars do not vary infinitely, and grammar is shaped by grammaticalization, it follows that in the usage-based view; grammaticalization is seen to be regular, shaped by the abovementioned domain-general processes.

Generative approaches to grammaticalization will not be treated here (but see especially Roberts & Roussou 2003). It is worth mentioning, however, that for those researchers within the generativist framework who do treat grammaticalization, the main locus of disagreement is whether grammaticalization should be viewed as epiphenomenal or as a distinct process. Generative approaches typically also criticize the assumption that grammaticalization is a unidirectional process and argue that a grammaticalization process cannot be transferred from the grammar of one speaker to the grammar of another (see, e.g., Van Gelderen 2011; also see Fischer 2007: 115–124 for good discussion). Note also that grammaticalization criticism is not confined to the generative camp; see especially work by Joseph (2006; 2011), also discussed briefly in Chapter 8.

2.1.1.1 Grammaticalization as Reduction vs. Grammaticalization as Expansion

Traugott and Trousdale (2013: 32–33) propose a useful division of the prevailing views of grammaticalization. The first view—which they label "grammaticalization as reduction," or GR—is compatible with the view of grammaticalization as a diachronic change discussed in the previous section, and focuses on the process. The second view—labeled "grammaticalization as expansion," or GE—is compatible with the view that sees grammaticalization as a research framework for studying the relationship between lexical, constructional, and grammatical material in language, both in particular languages and crosslinguistically. This view focuses on the result of a change. The two views furthermore have the following characteristics:

– Grammaticalization as reduction (GR): Sees grammaticalization as reduction and increased dependency. This view is associated with authors such as Lehmann (1985) and Haspelmath (2004). Grammaticalization is

conceptualized in terms of loss of semantic complexity and phonological substance. Focus is on the process of grammaticalization.
– Grammaticalization as expansion (GE): Sees grammaticalization as a loss-and-gain model. Semantic bleaching is accompanied by generalization of meaning and expansion of use and meaning. Bybee et al. (1994) were precursors for this view, since they precisely describe the loss of semantic properties, followed by expansion of use and meaning. Focus here is on the result of the grammaticalization process, not on the process itself.

2.1.1.2 Source Determination and Secondary Grammaticalization

A further distinction can be made between primary grammaticalization and secondary grammaticalization, which here will be defined in terms of semantic change, according to the definition by Hopper and Traugott (2003: 91). Primary grammaticalization is here referred to as the development by which lexemes in specific morphosyntactic constructions come to have more grammatical meaning, while secondary grammaticalization here is understood as the semantic development from grammatical to more-grammatical meaning, such as in the advanced grammaticalization of, for example, tense and aspect markers: perfect > perfective. Regarding the development of the possessive *habere* to perfect, it can be noted that the primary grammaticalization of this construction clearly has occurred in Romance. Its further semantic and functional development—the secondary grammaticalization—appears to have had a less uniform outcome. The nature of this outcome is the topic of the remainder of this work.

Here, I am primarily concerned with a concept that, when seen as a cline, involves both primary and secondary grammaticalization, namely the concept sometimes referred to as source determination (Bybee et al. 1994: 9–15) but more often referred to as the theory of paths (see also 4.1 for discussion). Source determination refers to the assumption that the source construction (i.e., the lexeme that begins to be grammaticalized in a specific construction) determines the way in which the construction will develop and consequently also determines which resulting grammatical meaning a grammaticalizing construction will acquire (see also Breban 2010 for discussion). The claim is that "the source meaning uniquely determines the grammaticization path that the gram will travel in its semantic development" (Bybee et al. 1994: 12) and therefore that source determination predicts that there will be cross-linguistically similar paths for the development of grammatical meaning (ibid.: 14).

Processes of grammaticalization are thus understood to include both formal and semantic changes. Typically, a periphrastic construction becomes synthetic through increased frequency and undergoes a bleaching of specific

semantic components (Bybee et al. 1994, see also Chapter 4) (as in, e.g., the spread of the Perfect to contexts not including CR in French; see section 4.2.1.1). As I showed in the previous chapter, grammaticalization includes the interaction of various otherwise-independent factors involved in linguistic change. In fact, it is often assumed that the autonomy of grammaticalization lies precisely in this interaction. This question—whether grammaticalization constitutes a unique kind of change or is epiphenomenal—is the locus of the debate on the status of grammaticalization and will be further discussed in Chapter 4.

The expansion of the Preterit in Porteño Spanish clearly is not a grammaticalization, since it does not involve a development from lexical to (more) grammatical status. Neither is it a degrammaticalization; it simply is a change in scope of a grammatical marker, similar to what Joseph (2006) refers to as a "lateral shift", a change that does not increase or reduce the grammaticality of a construction, but involves morphological endings that are equally grammatical before the change and after the change.

However, the fact that it is necessary to define why this change is *not* grammaticalization illustrates the way in which this framework has influenced a usage-based approach to language change. The focus has been on the change involved in grammaticalization, and there has been little focus on grammatical change not involving lexical-grammatical clines. Arguably, grammatical change not involving grammaticalization has received less attention in the usage-based framework than has grammaticalization (note the exception of Traugott & Trousdale 2013, who include lexical and grammatical sources in their model of grammatical constructionalization).

Mechanisms involved in grammaticalization are also crucial in grammatical change not involving grammaticalization, and the mechanisms involved, to which I now turn, (such as reanalysis and pragmatic strengthening) are not confined to grammaticalization changes only (see, for example, Traugott 1988 for the concept of increased informativeness in the development of English evidentials).

2.1.2 *Mechanisms of Change*

Change is a two-step process—a process that involves speakers and hearers in different ways. The first step, innovation, involves the speaker while the second, spread, includes the hearer and is based on the reanalysis that occurs in the hearer. Blythe and Croft, who propose a model of change in an evolutionary framework compatible with usage-based theories, differentiate between the first step, innovation, and the second step, diffusion (2012: 271).

Change is here understood to have occured once an innovation has spread to the community (Traugott & Trousdale 2010a, b). When a new use spreads

throughout the community, it becomes conventionalized. I understand conventionalization to refer to a change that is widely shared, and known to be shared, by members of the relevant speech community (Langacker 1987: 488). The way in which the spread of the Preterit has occurred in Porteño Spanish will not be treated in detail here, since the focus is on the innovation, or the generation of variation, in Blythe and Croft's (2012) words. The same authors provide a useful model for the way in which an innovation spreads into a community, especially since their model is compatible with a usage-based approach to language change.

In order to understand how a change comes about, it is common to distinguish between motivations and mechanisms. Motivations attempt to answer the question of "why" a change comes about, while mechanisms may answer the questions of "how." Despite their differences, these are often not clearly distinguished in the literature.

Traugott and Trousdale (2013: 35–39) discuss the distinction between motivation and mechanisms. They distinguish between cognitively based motivations, such as acquisition and analogical thinking; communicative motivations, such as wanting to present oneself in a certain way (e.g., as communicating something relevant); and sociolinguistic motivations, such as prestige. In this work, I am primarily concerned with cognitive and communicative motivations for change.

The motivations stand in contrast to mechanisms that occur while language is being used, defined by Bybee (2001: 190) as a "finite set of mechanisms attributable to human neuromotor, perceptual, and cognitive abilities." These mechanisms operate on change in general and not only on grammaticalization (Traugott & Trousdale 2010a: 3). Such mechanisms typically include weakening of semantic force, or bleaching; phonological reduction or fusion; increased autonomy; loss of semantic transparency; and increased entrenchment (Bybee 2003). Bybee (ibid.: 602) further notices that such mechanisms are associated with the dramatic increase in frequency which is typical of grammaticalizing constructions. Here, I am primarily concerned with semantic bleaching and generalization; reanalysis; and pragmatic strengthening, since these mechanisms directly concern the expansion of the Preterit in Porteño Spanish. For details on Bybee's proposed mechanisms, the reader is referred to Bybee (2003; 2010).

2.1.2.1 Semantic Bleaching

Bybee (2003: 605) observes that one of the earliest-mentioned mechanisms of change in grammaticization is bleaching, or generalization, meaning the process by which specific features of a meaning are lost with an associated

increase in the contexts in which the from may be appropriately used. Both generalization and bleaching involve loss of specific semantic content of the lexical item (or grammatical construction). Semantic reduction, or bleaching, involves the loss of specific meaning components (parallel to phonological erosion) (Bybee et al. 1994: 6). Bybee (2010: 167) further defines generalization of meaning as something that occurs as a construction gradually extends its distribution to occur with new lexical items and in new contexts.

Bybee explains the tendency to generalize words and concepts with the necessity to be able to extend concepts in order to be able to express novel ideas. Bleaching, on the other hand, occurs as a result of habituation. Habituation is the process by which an organism ceases to respond at the same level to a repeated stimulus. This is not only a linguistic phenomenon; rather, it refers to the mechanism that "depletes a cultural object or practice of its force and often its original significance as well" (Bybee 2003: 603). In this sense, we are dealing with a mechanism true to the cognitive commitment, referred to in section 2.1.

As I showed in 2.1.1.1, Traugott and Trousdale (2013: 32–33) note that the process of change typically includes bleaching, while the end result typically includes expansion. The development of the French Passé Composé is a good example that involves both mechanisms. In the process of change, it loses specific semantic components (the current relevance notion). The end result is a category that has a broader, more general meaning and can be applied to a wider range of contexts.

2.1.2.2 Reanalysis

The Preterit's expansion is initially likely to have been a case of reanalysis. Reanalysis, or neoanalysis (the latter term preferred by Traugott & Trousdale 2013: 36), is here understood in terms of Langacker's classical definition: a change in the structure of an expression or class of expressions that does not involve any immediate or intrinsic modification of its structure (Langacker 1977: 64). In reanalysis, the focus is on the difference from the source (as opposed to analogy, which involves the matching of the original source with some extant construction considered similar; see Traugott & Trousdale 2013: 35). The lack of modification in structure in reanalysis clearly applies to the Porteño Spanish Preterit's development, as it involves the broadening of a category's scope. However, as I shall show in Chapter 7, the Preterit changes in part due to a semantic reformulation, involving no modification in the form of the expression it takes (further discussed in 7.5.1). Langacker further distinguishes two subtypes of reanalysis: (a) resegmentation, boundary loss, boundary creation, and boundary shift, and (b) syntactic/semantic reformulation, the latter applicable to the present case. Note that reanalysis is taken to be compatible

with microsteps as well because they are abrupt but in a tiny way, as briefly discussed in 1.2 (see also Traugott & Trousdale 2010 a, b for discussion).

2.1.2.3 Pragmatic Strengthening

Linguistic innovation and spread are seen as products of language as it is used. One such usage-based process involves speaker-hearer interaction, as emphasized in the neo-Gricean historical-pragmatic approaches to change (Traugott & Dasher 2002; Traugott & Trousdale 2010a, b). In this view, it is assumed that semantic change occurs through the semanticization of inferences that first have become pragmatic routines. The basic idea is that speakers are able to shape their language and to instigate reanalysis and, further, that they can invite certain pragmatic inferences, volitionally imply the unsaid, and make it part of the information conveyed. The link therefore is not assumed to be between concepts but arises at the propositional level. The new meaning arises via a detour; the sentence may give rise to further information, and only via this detour can the new meaning arise. As Bybee (2010: 171) notes, this mechanism "allows inferences and meanings supplied by the context to become part of the meaning of a grammatical morpheme or construction." Bybee further notes that these types of changes do not produce smooth semantic gradience and may even create ambiguity.

The fact that context plays a crucial role in grammaticalization is established (see, among others, Diewald & Smirnova 2010: 112). Pragmatic strengthening has shown to be fruitful in accounting for the behavior of additive particles (Schwenter & Waltereit 2010), pseudoclefts (Traugott 2010), and clausal markers (Mosegaard Hansen 2012), to mention three. The scope of these approaches is not limited to grammaticalization; they can also be employed to account for, for instance, changes in procedural meaning and scope increase (Mosegaard Hansen 2012), which are precisely the two elements I shall demonstrate in the change of the Porteño Spanish Preterit.

2.1.3 *Constructional Approaches*

As shown in the preceding sections, this work assumes a usage-based approach to language, but, as will be further discuss in Chapter 4, problematizes the idea of predictable diachronic tendencies. In this respect, it is pertinent to mention constructionalist approaches to language change, such as that of Traugott and Trousdale (2013), whose approach attempts to model change in a view of language as made up of form-meaning pairings—constructions—organized in a network. The idea is to incorporate aspects of already existing theories on grammaticalization and lexicalization, in what they refer to as

a grammar of usage (ibid.: 21). The authors distinguish between constructional changes—changes that affect features of existing constructions—and constructionalization—changes that lead to the creation of new form-meaning pairings. In my opinion, this approach is attractive for several reasons. It explicitly takes a usage-based perspective, it acknowledges that the source of a constructionalization may be nonlexical (ibid.: 147), it operates with microsteps, and, importantly, it emphasizes how changing constructions "may become restricted and peripheral or may even disappear" (ibid.: 112). In this work, even though I do not take a constructionalist approach to grammar, the notion of gradual microchange is employed. I will also briefly return to Traugott and Trousdale's affirmation that expanded constructions may decrease in frequency in 8.3.

2.1.4 *Gradualness*

In a usage-based view, diachronic development is taken to involve gradualness (Brinton & Traugott 2005; Traugott & Trousdale 2010a, b, Traugott & Trousdale 2013). Figure 1, taken from Norde (2009: 16, citing Brinton and Traugott (2005: 6) and Hopper and Traugott (2003: 49)), provides a simple yet useful illustration of diachronic gradualness and its synchronic counterpart, gradience, to be treated in 2.1.5:

A > [A/B] > (B)

FIGURE 1 *A formalization of linguistic change.*

This cline represents the fact that in language change, the new form (here "B"), does not simply substitute the old form (here "A"). Rather, change is gradual and always involves a stage in which the old and the new forms coexist. Note also that the parentheses around "B" refer to the fact that a new form does not have to become accepted by the speech community and the change thus does not have to come to completion. Traugott and Trousdale (2013: 74) define gradualness as follows:

> We understand "gradualness" to refer to a phenomenon of change, specifically discrete structural micro-changes and tiny-step transmission across the linguistic system.

Gradualness is a diachronic phenomenon and springs from the assumption that categories do not change in the form of abrupt saltations with all semantic,

morphological, and syntactic criteria at once. Change is viewed not as schematic clines of distinct-seeming categories; rather, this view of change allows for microchanges, acknowledging the orderly progression of changes, as well as coexistence of new and old forms (layering), in individuals and speaker communities (Traugott & Trousdale 2010b: 25). Note that layering here is taken to refer to the persistence of older forms and meanings alongside newer forms and meanings, irrespective of whether they are derived from the same source or by renewal from different sources (the latter is the case for Porteño Spanish) (Hopper & Traugott 2003: 124). Successive microchanges may take place over many centuries, or they may be fairly rapid. In the case of the spread of the Porteño Spanish Preterit, the spread has been rapid, as I shall show in Chapter 7.

The concept of microsteps briefly mentioned above in 1.2 follows naturally from the view of change as gradual, not abrupt (see especially Traugott & Trousdale 2013; Brinton & Traugott 2005). When a change is taken to be gradual, it is assumed that it occurs via microsteps, not macrosteps.

Gradualness does not imply that there is no structural difference between lexical and grammatical elements; clearly, when change has occurred, the end points on the continuum (lexical or grammatical) may indeed be very different. However, the intermediate steps involved in gradual change illustrate the overlapping relationship between lexical and grammatical forms.

In 1.1, we saw a sketch of the perfective path, which involves the change from 'be'/'have' + participle to past/past perfective. It must be made clear that the unintended result of such schematic illustrations is that they overly simplify matters. To envisage change as a saltation from A to B—or from 'have' to auxiliary—clearly is an idealization. The development from resultative to perfect, for instance, is not made in a single step; microsteps must be taken before the macrochange occurs (Traugott & Trousdale 2010b: 25). Microsteps are ultimately compatible with synchronic polysemy, which I will also show to be crucial in understanding the end result of the change in the Porteño Spanish verbal system.

The findings in this work clearly favor a view of nondistinct categories (see 2.1.5) that do not change abruptly in acquisition only. The first, nondistinct categories (intersective gradience, to be treated below), may be contrasted with, for instance, Roberts' view (2010). He pursues a more traditional, in whis own words, notion of the grammatical category, which is not gradient, but in which category membership is viewed as an instance of being or not being members of the relevant category. The findings in this works provide no evidence of such memberships; rather, they provide evidence for a microstep expansion in which cognitive and communicative motivations are at play. In addition, the change observed from speakers of the same generation at two

distinct periods of time, suggest that categories that do not change abruptly in acquisition only.

2.1.4.1 Dead Ends

As the cline in Figure 1 shows, microsteps may be taken in diverse directions, and it is stressed that they need not come to completion or lead to a macrochange. This is represented through the parenthetic (B) in 2.1.4, which indicates that a change may come to completion but does not have to do so. Such incipient changes that never come to completion can be labeled "dead ends" (Traugott & Dasher 2002). In addition, Brinton and Traugott (2005: 26) similarly note that not all properties of an earlier lexical source are likely to change at the same rate. The introduction of a new form may thus have three possible outcomes: it may replace the old form; it may coexist with the old form, creating synchronic variation (i.e., gradience); or it may disappear in a "dead end."

These assumptions are relevant to the present case. In Porteño Spanish, not all subfunctions of the Perfect have been equally replaced by the Preterit, as I shall show in Chapter 6. In addition, it is important to note that such equal replacement might never happen; the first steps may never result in change in the sense of acceptance by speakers, as observed in early Porteño Spanish (see Chapter 6).

Note also that there is sporadic evidence in old Porteño Spanish texts for microsteps taken in the direction of the expansion of a perfect, which precisely did not take hold. This is also discussed in 7.6.2.1.

2.1.5 *Gradience*

The synchronic manifestation of diachronic gradualness is small-scale variation and gradience (Aarts 2007; Traugott & Trousdale 2010a; 2010b; 2013). The idea is that at any moment in time, changing constructions contribute to gradience in the system.

The concept of gradience is therefore crucial to the present case, as it refers to variation in synchronic systems. Traugott and Trousdale (2010a: 5) use "variation" and "gradience" interchangeably. They further stress that gradience is synchronic and can be, but does not have to be, stable for long periods. Crucially, they observe that stages of stable gradience often shape forthcoming changes. This shaping is important in order to understand the expansion of the Preterit in Porteño Spanish, as shown in Chapter 7.

Aarts (2007) treats the phenomenon of gradience in thorough detail. He distinguishes between subsective gradience and intersective gradience. Subsective gradience is intracategorical in that it involves a single category or a single set of properties. This is related to the concept of goodness of fit, a crucial tenet to prototype theory, which involves items within a category.

Intersective gradience, on the other hand, involves intercategorical resemblance and is defined as follows (Aarts 2007: 124). Suppose the existence of two form-class categories α and β. In addition, there exists a set γ that includes a subset of α-like properties and a subset of β-like properties. When there is gradience, these categories converge because there are elements that display properties of both categories, as in the members of the γ-set. Given this definition, grammatical categories do not overlap in intersective gradience. Rather, they are seen as strictly bounded. It is also important to note that in the original claim, Aarts (2007) argues that intersective gradience is less widespread than subsective gradience, presumably aiming at arriving at a position in which strict boundaries between categories are maintained (Traugott & Trousdale 2010b: 30).

This approach to the relationship between categories is different from that of, for example, Langacker, who views linguistic categories as being on a continuous spectrum of possibilities and further argues that segregating them into distinct blocks necessarily is artifactual (1987: 18).

Bybee (2010: 2) distinguishes gradience from variation. In her account, gradience can be defined as follows:

> Gradience refers to the fact that many categories of grammar are difficult to distinguish, usually because change occurs over time in a gradual way, moving an element along a continuum from one category to another. Continua such as that between derivation and inflection, between function words and affixes, between productive and unproductive constructions, illustrate this gradience.

Variation, on the other hand, is defined as follows (2010: 2):

> Variation refers to the fact that units and structures of language exhibit variation in synchronic use, usually along the continuous paths of change that create gradience.

Bybee's concept of gradience also differs from that of Aarts, and when discussing the English auxiliary as a case of gradience, she explicitly states that "the category itself has less than discrete boundaries" (2010: 5). Bybee further notes that items with similar structural properties express a wide range of meanings and that such categories are not unusual in the languages of the world.

I take the Perfect and the Preterit to be gradient, in the sense of Bybee, whereas the observed usage patterns of Porteño and Uruguayan Spanish speakers will be referred to as examples of variation.

The normal state of any language is a high degree of morphosyntactic variation, or, simply put, "different ways of saying the same thing." This variation can be uncovered by comparing how speakers express a meaning or experience being verbalized (Croft 2010: 7).[1] Such verbalizations are the topic of Chapter 6.

Variation can be seen as both the origin and end point of change because innovations create variation, while the completed change (the end point) may also entail variation. Variation over time involves the emergence of new grammatical constructions (Traugott & Trousdale 2010b: 39). The term "variation" is traditionally associated with sociolinguistics, in which variation long has been recognized both as a reason for and as a result of linguistic change (Labov 2001: 81), and scholars in the variationist sociolinguistic tradition typically see variation as structured either language-internally or externally (Tagliamonte 2012: 2; for a brief discussion on sociolinguistic issues, see Chapter 7). Here, I employ the term "variation" to refer to morphosyntactic variation without necessarily referring to patterns of social variation, however, not excluding the possibility that these may exist as well.

2.1.6 *Regularity*

It is a paradox that the usage-based approach allows for substantial synchronic and in-path variation (i.e., gradualness and gradience) but also makes strong predictions on the basis of source meanings. In a sense, though, this claim follows logically from the view of change as triggered by domain-general factors such as analogical thinking and parsing (Traugott & Trousdale 2013: 35). If change is conceptualized as the product of mechanisms of use common to all speakers, it follows that these mechanisms will operate in all languages and that the linguistic material will be formed according to the usage. Therefore, Traugott and Trousdale (2013: 100) point to the fact that unidirectionality is not a puzzle if the reasons behind the processes in language use are kept in mind.

However, as I will discuss further in Chapter 4, most grammaticalization scholars do indeed allow for counterexamples to unidirectionality and are open to the possibility that these changes need not come to completion. Traugott and Trousdale (2013: 75), for instance, affirm that "the 'small steps' (i.e. microsteps) may not be on a continuous unidirectional path, but links from one feature to another across nodes."

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1 Croft (2010: 3) distinguishes first-order variation, second-order variation, and third-order variation. First-order variation is understood as the variation manifested in occasions of language use. Second-order variation results from the gradual process of propagation (spread), while third-order variation involves the result of the fixing of different variants across dialects and languages. I will not employ these terms here.

Despite these acknowledgements, counterexamples are often viewed as "few" and "well-defined" (Bybee 2011: 77). However, the findings in this book will point to the importance of noting that diverging developments are not marginal and that the same competition (i.e., between a perfect and a past/past perfective) may lead to different developments. Clearly, grammaticalization exists as a diachronic phenomenon (see Joseph 2011), but judging from the Romance data presented here, I believe it is important to emphasize that grammaticalizing constructions (here: Perfects) may decrease in frequency and that this should not be viewed as a rare phenomenon.

Even though I am critical of the assumption of the diachronic regularity taken by some to be crucial in usage-based theory, I take a usage-based approach to language change. This approach is in line with Croft (especially 2010). He is explicitly usage-based in his approach but rejects the notion of directionality in the emergence of new expressions. Croft (2010), in a study of emerging expressions in English, finds no evidence for directionality in, for example, the development of synthetic versus analytic constructions but maintains that general usage-based processes (such as frequency) are responsible for change. He writes (ibid.: 43):

> The analysis of synchronic variation in verbalization presented in this article demonstrates that it contains the sources of diachronic change. However, it does not in itself demonstrate the directionality of innovation, in particular that periphrastic expressions replace shorter expressions in grammaticalization.

Instead, Croft refers to the source of morphosyntactic change as pervasive variation and constant innovation. In his view, innovation is not a rare event—spread is. This insight is useful in order to understand the initial microsteps in the expansion of the Preterit in Porteño Spanish. As I shall show, it is in fact argued that in the development of the past construction in Porteño Spanish, frequency of co-occurrence with the competing form is crucial in the expansion.

2.1.7 *Interim Summary*

In sum, it should be noted that the usage-based view conceptualizes change as gradual, involving diverse cognitive mechanisms and stages. Connected to this gradual nature of change is the assumption of nondiscreteness of categories. This is clear in the study of the Porteño Spanish Preterit, in which many informants (see Chapter 6) in fact use the different categories interchangeably. Bybee (2010) notes that languages are always changing, that

grammaticalization is gradual, and that it is also possible to admit that synchronic stages are not discrete.

In the following sections, I shall show that it is useful to view grammatical categories as nondiscrete and rather accept that they may enter into each other's domains. It is often noted that this intertwined relationship has a diachronic explanation; a perfect often develops into a past/perfective past. Here, I will show that the intertwined relationship is also such that it allows for expansions into the terrain of the perfect.

2.2 Tense and Aspect: General

Temporality is encoded in various ways in natural languages. Such ways may be through grammaticalized categories, such as tense and aspect; through inherent features of the verb, such as punctuality, durativity, and so on; and through temporal adverbials of various types, to mention some. Here, I am concerned with tense and aspect. The main function of tense and aspect operators is to specify the localization of situations in semantic space—"situation" here being used as a cover term for event, activity, and state—that is, notions covered by verbs (Bybee et al. 1994: 316; Comrie 1985: 27). Tense involves "grammaticalization of location in time," whereas aspect involves "grammaticalization of expression of internal temporal constituency" (Comrie 1985: 1); notably, using the term "grammaticalization" to refer to expressions of grammaticality, not to historical developments from lexical to grammatical, or from grammatical to more grammatical. I now turn to brief definitions of the concepts of tense, aspect, and Aktionsart.

Bybee and Dahl (1989) identify, on the basis of a large typological sample, a limited set of tense and aspect categories, which they call recurring "gram-types." "Gram" refers to grammatical morphemes in a broad sense and covers everything from affix to complex constructions (Bybee et al. 1994: 2).[2] In human languages, most tense-aspect grams can be reduced to a restricted set of gram-types defined by the profile of use, most importantly by their most prototypical member. Such gram-types include:

1. Perfective: the situation is viewed as bounded.
2. Imperfective: the situation is viewed as nonbounded.
3. Progressive: the situation is in progress at the time of the reference.

2 Here, "construction" is used in a pretheoretical way. Constructional approaches were briefly discussed in 2.1.3.

4. Future: the speaker predicts that a situation will occur after a speech event.
5. Past: the situation occurred before the speech event.
6. Perfect: the situation is being described as relevant at the moment of speech or some other reference time.

Here, I am concerned mainly with 1, 2, 5, and 6. When referring to the language-specific categories as, for instance, "Preterit" or "Perfect", they are thought to correspond to semantically defined gram-types. The Rioplatense Preterit therefore corresponds to a past perfective, while the Perfect correponds to the gram-type that refers to a situation as being relevant to the moment of speech. It is worth mentioning that the terminology regarding tense and aspect categories are notoriously confusing. This confusion is partly due to the fact that language-specific categories typically have different labels depending on the specific tradition in that language community and may even vary from author to author. What here is referred to as Preterit, for instance, is sometimes labelled Simple Past. What I refer to as Perfect is often called Passé Composé in French and Passato Prossimo in Italian, while some Latin grammars use the term Perfect for a past expressing both past with current relevance and past perfective, and so on.

The view of tense and aspect taken here largely draws on a typological tradition and can be subsumed under the "Bybee-Comrie-Dahl" approach. Although these approaches have important differences, they share significant similarities, especially when compared to structuralist approaches to tense and aspect. The Bybee-Comrie-Dahl approach may be described as a post-structuralist, substantialist approach to tense and aspect. In this sense, it is a reaction against the structuralist view in which tense and aspect is described independently in each language, as a system of forms and their oppositions (Lindstedt 2001: 769–770).

The first similarity therefore has to do with the general approach taken. Starting with Comrie (1976), cross-linguistic categories are the object of study, but they are treated as semantic categories, and grammatical categories of individual languages are expressions for universal semantic categories. In order to identify such universal semantic categories, the approach has to be largely inductive and includes a generalization over large language samples, such as in Bybee (1985), Bybee et al. (1994), and Dahl (1985), as well as Bybee and Dahl (1989), referred to above. The use of large samples has been done in slightly different ways; Comrie relied on grammars and descriptions of as many languages as possible in in his data-driven studies (Comrie 1985; 1976), where formal description was less essential. Dahl (1985) used questionnaires

based on actual speech data. Bybee et al. (1994) included a sample of grammars from 76 languages. This approach has the advantage of being able to identify universal tense and aspect categories empirically in what we may call a typological method of categorization; with the ambitious goal of creating a universally valid theory of grammatical meaning (Bybee & Dahl 1989: 53). By quantitatively comparing the distribution of tense and aspect categories, we may observe a large number of language-specific categories with significantly similar distributions. This way, it is possible to talk about universal categories, such as the gram-types discussed above.

A second similarity regards the prototypical approach to a category's semantics. In this view, a category's meaning is not defined based on necessary or sufficient conditions but is rather defined in terms of a prototype. A definition in terms of prototypes characterizes the most typical member of a set, and other members can then be classified in terms of their degree of similarity to or difference from this prototypical set member. This is particularly relevant to the definition of the perfect in 2.3.6, in which the central meaning is "current relevance." Related to the prototypical approach is the fact that a category may have more than one meaning, basic and secondary meanings (Comrie 1985: 18–23). The basic meaning can be understood as the prototypical meaning.

Third, it is crucial to the typological approach to tense and aspect that there is a correspondence between form and meaning. Bybee et al. (1994) state that the grams in the earliest stages of grammaticalization typically have periphrastic expression, whereas the grams at more advanced stages of grammaticalization have a strong tendency to be expressed by means of affixation. This insight is formulated in the "parallel reduction hypothesis," where perfage is assigned to grams, such as the following:

TABLE 1 *Perfages, after Bybee et al. (1994: 106)*

Perfage 1	completives[3]
Perfage 2	young anteriors[4]
Perfage 3	old anteriors
Perfage 4	perfectives
Perfage 5	simple pasts

3 A completive refers to "doing something thoroughly and to completion" (Bybee et al. 1994: 318).

4 "Anterior" is Bybee's term for what is here referred to as perfect.

Young grams—such as anteriors (here referred to as perfects)—typically have analytic expression, while old, grammaticalized forms typically have synthetic expression. Since the perfect is an unstable category, which frequently arises and disappears, it is expected to have analytic expression (Lindstedt 2000); it simply has no time to synthesize. Pasts/past perfectives are old, typically at the end-point of the grammaticalization path (but cf. section 7.7), and typically take synthetic expression.

2.2.1 *Tense*

Temporal reference (tense) relates the time of a situation to a distinguished time span, especially the time of the utterance. In Bybee et al.'s words, tense has to do with establishing the temporal setting of a situation with regard to the moment of speech (1994: 316). Temporality is encoded through grammatical categories or adverbials. In the case of absolute tenses, such as the past, it refers to a direct relationship between utterance time and the time of the situation. A relative tense, on the other hand, may select the tense locus from other than here-and-now so that some other situation or some other moment can be the tense locus (Frawley 1992: 341). This is further treated in 2.3.1.1.

Crucially, however, the location of events introduced by a tense does not express a relationship between some temporal zero point and the time of the situation described. Rather, tenses describe the relationship between speech time (S) and another interval of interest, labeled "reference time" (R) by Reichenbach (1947), whose terminology is useful as it places temporal and aspectual operators on a timeline; a stereotypical, ideal timeline is adequate for linguistic description (Frawley 1992: 337). Although Reichenbach's approach is different from the typological approach to tense and aspect taken here, his terminology resonates in typologically inclined work (see, e.g., Comrie 1985; Dahl 1985), even though "this does not imply that we necessarily swallow Reichenbach's whole theory of tense" (Dahl 1985: 29). It suffices to say that Reichenbach operated with three notions: S, the point of speech; E, the point of the event; and R, the point of reference, made clear in the following Spanish example:

(2)	Juan	se	**había ido**
	Juan	REFL	go.3SG.PST.PRF[5]
	'Juan had left'		

5 The glossing of Perfects deviates from the Leipzig Glossing Rules in the sense that *había ido* and other Perfects are treated as one compositional unit. This is to clarify that they are Perfects.

Here, S is the time when (2) is uttered. E is the time when Juan went away, and R is some time point between S and E that is provided by the context. Reference time is distinct from both speech time and event time (E), which is the time of the event that the speaker is describing. The initial appeal of Reichenbach's approach was that it captured complex tenses through the inclusion of R. Comrie (1976; 1985), however, proposed an improved version of Reichenbach's theory, compatible with his typological approach to tense and aspect. His main improvements included the following: rejection of the iconic S, E and R notions, replaced with a notion of "before," "simultaneous with," and "after," with which every simple tense complies; rejection of the idea that every tense must include all three coordinates S, E, R; introduction of the idea that the predicates (before, simultaneous with, after) combine with two arguments: E and S or R; and division between relative and absolute tenses, in which relative tenses include an unanchored reference time (R) while absolute tenses include S as their reference time.

The structure of absolute past tenses would then be [E before S], while the structure of a relative past tense would be [E before R]. Comrie's modified theory will not be further treated here but is helpful in order to understand the details of temporal categories (Comrie 1985: 2), to which I now turn.

2.2.1.1 Absolute vs. Relative Tense

The first distinction we must make is between absolute and relative tense. Absolute tense is speech-time oriented, while relative tense relates to other contextually salient times (Comrie 1985). This means that for absolute tenses, the relationship between the utterance time and the time of the situation described is direct. For relative tenses, on the other hand, this relationship is indirect. Here, the "reference point for location of a situation in some point in time is some point in time given by the context, not necessarily the present moment" (Comrie 1985: 56). Michaelis (2006: 220) uses the example of the English future Perfect. Consider the sentence 'I will have left [by the time you read this letter]'. Here, the leaving event is represented in the past relative to a point that is in the future and that is relative to utterance time.

Comrie (1985: 36) observes that an absolute tense is a tense "which includes as part of its meaning the present moment as deictic centre, whereas a relative tense refers to a tense which does not include as part of its meaning the present moment as deictic centre." Given this definition, we can define the three basic tenses: past, present, and future as describing, situations may thus precede, follow, or overlap with the time of the utterance, creating past, future, and present tenses, respectively. I describe the past tense in more detail in 2.3.4. For details on future and past tenses, the reader is referred to Comrie (1985) and Dahl (1985).

2.2.1.2 Token-Focus vs. Type-Focus

The concepts of type-focus and token-focus (discussed in more depth in relation to the expansion of the Preterit in Chapter 7) refer to the degree of definiteness of a situation. A type-focusing construction refers to a situation as indefinite and emphasizes one or more occurrences of an event, whereas token-focusing constructions refer specifically to the number of events involved (Dahl & Hedin 2000). Preterits typically express token-focus, while perfects typically express type-focus.

In a language such as English, the Simple Past typically expresses token-focus, whereas the Perfect typically expresses type-focus. Dahl and Hedin (2000: 387) exemplify the distinction using the following examples:

(3) Has John winked? (Type-focus)
(4) Did John wink? (Token-focus)

In the view of Dahl and Hedin (ibid.), the difference between these two sentences is analogous to the type-/token-focus distinction rendered through sentences such as the following:

(5) There are lions in the garden (Type-focus)
(6) There is a lion in the garden (Token-focus)

Furthermore, Dahl and Hedin argue that the similarities between the experiential (see also 7.3.2) and the type-focus it renders have to do with the experiential's being able to express that a unique, nonrepeatable event occurred. This is referred to as a repeatability constraint (see section 2.2.7.3 for further discussion of this constraint).

As I shall show in Chapter 6, the Porteño Spanish Preterit becomes able to express type-focusing events that are not anchored in the past. Its past perfective function prevails, and it continues to convey token-focus.

2.2.2 *Aspect*

Aspect involves the internal makeup of a situation and offers different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation (Comrie 1976: 3). Aspect refers to the expression of a perspective on a situation and whether the latter is considered to be, or presented as, stable in evolution or as undergoing a transition possibly leading to a result. Aspect is nondeictic, as opposed to absolute tense, which is deictic, as discussed above. Furthermore, aspect is nontemporal; that is, it is independent of the time at which the situation is located on the time axis. Aspect is concerned with the representation of the

time that is contained in the situation, such as whether the event involves transitions and so on (Frawley 1992; Michaelis 2006). Importantly, this means that an aspect views the situation from the inside (Comrie 1976: 3).

Aspects and tenses may interact. Spanish, for example, has a past perfective form that expresses both tense and aspect, as I showed in section 3.3.2.1. This phenomenon is referred to as aspectual sensitivity (Michaelis 2006: 222, citing De Swart 1998). Interaction may occur within a given grammatical construction (as in the Spanish past perfective). However, it is important to note that exponents of tense and aspect may also interact within a system of time reference, related to the concept of intersective gradience discussed in 2.1.5 Such functional overlaps will be shown to be crucial to the case of the Porteño Spanish Preterit.

It is also crucial to remember that in many cases, the overlap between, for example, a perfective past and a perfect comes about in the form of different use conditions. This is further treated below.

2.2.3 *Aktionsart*

A third way in which temporal relations may be distinguished is by means of Aktionsart, which will not be further dealt with here. It should be noted, however, that Aktionsart concerns the temporal characteristics of the lexical contents of verbs, such as durativity and iterativity, to mention two. The defining line between Aktionsart and aspect is often unclear. Comrie (1976: 7) notes that the distinction between aspect and Aktionsart is drawn in at least two ways. The first distinction is between aspect and the grammaticalization of the relevant semantic distinction (recall that Comrie uses the term "grammaticalization" to refer to grammatical expression of tense/aspect, and thus differently from how the term is used in this thesis), while Aktionsart represents the lexicalization of these distinctions, irrespective of how they are lexicalized. The second type of distinction is between aspect as the grammaticalization of the semantic distinction, and Aktionsart as the lexicalization of the distinction, provided that the lexicalization is by means of derivational morphology. Comrie employs the term "aspect" to include Aktionsart because of what he sees as ambiguities in the use of the term.

Several previous studies of Romance Perfect usage investigate the synchronic conditioning of its usage, with emphasis on the role of Aktionsart (Rodríguez Louro 2009, Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008). In this study, I take a different approach, above all because I look to the spread of the *Preterit*, and not to the usage of the *Perfect*. In addition, I argue that the main factor enabling the expansion of the Preterit is that of temporal indeterminacy in experiential contexts, reminiscent of Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008),

who, interestingly, find temporal indeterminacy to be the route by which *Perfects* expand.

2.2.4 *Past Tense*

Past reference time is unspecific in the sense that it may only localize a situation at some indefinite time in the past. Past sentences may be very general in nature and are typically employed for narration of sequences. Bybee et al. define pasts as describing situations that occur "before the moment of speech" (Bybee et al. 1994: 316). In fact, narration is sometimes seen as the prime function of a past (Dahl 1985: 11). When a Perfect expands, it acquires precisely this ability to express narrativity; it becomes a narrative tense (Dahl 2000: 461). Example (7) exemplifies a typical past use (in which the event time precedes speech time, following Comrie's terminology):

(7) It rained

Sentence (7) entails only an unspecific time interval in the past in which the rain took place. According to Comrie (1985), a past tense locates a situation before the speech time and adds no further details about the event. Crucially, all further information is added by contextual elements such as adverbs, phrases, and so on. The past does not say anything about whether the past continues into the future, but there is a conversational implicature usually concealing this possible reading. Pasts are all placed relative to the moment of speech, and absolute past tenses may be defined as deictic.

2.2.4.1 Temporal Adverbs and the Past

Recall that past reference time is unspecific; it appears to localize a situation only at some indefinite time in the past. Some past sentences are very general in nature. In languages such as English and Norwegian, there are clear restrictions on the types of adverbs that are allowed with Perfect and Past, respectively. Pasts may be restricted in several ways, such as through a combination with aspectual and evidential markers and through indications of current relevance or completion (Bybee et al. 1994). Temporal adverbials may also impose severe restrictions on the temporal interpretation of the past and place it on an exact interval on the temporal axis. Notably, temporal adverbs may also grammaticalize and take up fixed positions in the clause, as in, e.g., Ewondo, in which the temporal adverbial *ya* 'already' has become grammaticalized to a marker of anteriority, also labeled iamitives (Fischer 2007: 119; Olsson 2013). Frame adverbs like *today, yesterday, in my childhood*, and so on impose relatively specific right and left boundaries for the reference time interval, reducing

the scope of the situation of the rather unspecific time specified by the tense categories. Another group of frame adverbs—for example *previously, formerly, in the past*—has a less specific time reference and can be interpreted as denoting semantic past. Durative adverbials, such as *for ten years*, and terminative adverbials, such as *in ten years*, are interpreted to indicate that the event time interval has the same duration as the reference time interval. Universal quantifier adverbs like *always* and existential quantifier adverbs like *sometimes* are assumed to have similar functions, typically involving quantification over times and situation.

2.2.4.2 Hodiernality and Prehodiernality

The distinction between hodiernal and prehodiernal is frequently grammaticalized in the languages of the world. A hodiernal tense refers to "not more than one day away," whereas prehodiernal uses refer to "more than one day away" (Dahl 1985: 125). Hodiernal and prehodiernal distinctions are semantically more specified than general past categories in that they pick up a subset of the time intervals denoted by the general past and provide clear right and left boundaries. The concept of hodiernality is important in order to understand the expansion of a perfect category, as it is often claimed that as it expands, it becomes compatible with prehodiernal uses. In many systems, such as Catalan and Occitan, hodiernality is expressed by means of Perfects, while prehodiernality is expressed by means of the Preterit (Dahl 1985: 125). Clearly, this is not the case for Porteño Spanish, as will be made evident throughout this book.

2.2.5 *Perfective*

The perfective is an aspect denoting completed, punctual actions, as opposed to the imperfective aspect, which denotes continuous situations, possibly setting the scene for further discourse. In many respects, the perfective aspect is the mirror image of the imperfective aspect. It is crucial to define the difference between past and perfective, also because the two tend to develop from the same sources. According to Bybee et al. (1994) and Bybee (1985), the difference lies in whether they co-occur with the imperfective. A past does not co-occur with an imperfective, while a perfective does. The main element introduced by the perfective is that an action is complete (not completed), as stressed by Comrie (1985). This is due to the lack of explicit reference to the internal temporal constituency of a situation (rather than its implying the lack of such constituency).

As we saw above, tenses may be aspect sensitive; a past may be, for instance, combined with perfective and imperfective marking. Given that the most typical tense distinctions in the languages of the world are past, present and future,

and the most frequent aspectual distinction is perfective and imperfective, this would, theoretically, yield at least six tense/aspect combinations. A present perfective exists in certain languages, such as Russian, but not in Spanish, as discussed in 3.3.2.1. Dahl does also repeatedly claim that the Russian system is atypical (1985: 84–86).

The typical system is thus assumed to be tripartite, in which the perfective appears only in the past, and where the tense distinction is relevant only in the imperfective, as seen in Table 2.

TABLE 2 *Tripartite past tense/aspect system, after Bybee et al. (1994: 83)*

perfective	imperfective	
	present	past

Such a system exists in Spanish (not considering the Perfect for now), and there exists a distinction between perfective and imperfective, as exemplified in (8) and (9), in which (8) expresses perfective and (9) an imperfective:

(8) **Llovió** ayer
Rain.3SG.PRT yesterday
'It rained yesterday'

(9) **Llovía** sin parar
Rain.3SG.IPFV without stop
'It rained continuously'

(from Bybee 1985: 142)

The perfective/imperfective distinction is thus an aspectual distinction, which further describes the internal makeup of events placed in time through tense. Note, however, that perfectives rarely appear describing events in the present (see Table 2); rather they describe events in the past (Dahl 1985), presumably because the main content of perfectives, their describing events as bounded, is more naturally compatible with the past than with the present or the future. Therefore, many systems are tripartite, in which the tense distinction is relevant only in the imperfective, as seen in Table 2. This is precisely how the standard Peninsular Spanish system operates.

The past and the perfective are very similar, however, as they both are used in the narration of past events, and they can both be used to express completed events in the past. The simple past is more general, though, since it is also used to express events that are seen as imperfective, such as continuous/habitual (as in Norwegian). Note that when there is no morphological imperfective in a language, a simple past may still interact with the notion of imperfectivity, such as in the following ways: (i) used in combination with imperfective grams (e.g., *was sleeping*) or (ii) used for all actions, without any notion of imperfectivity.

2.2.5.1 Telicity

Past perfective forms of atelic verbs typically express the fact that a situation has been terminated at speech time (Dahl 2010). Furthermore, it has been noted that an important function of the perfective aspect is to derive telic situations from atelic ones. That is, a verb that is atelic in the present tense may become telic when combined with perfective morphology (see De Swart 1998). While many scholars criticize this notion, arguing that it blurs the distinction between aspect on verb phrase level and on sentence level, there appears to be consensus that in at least some cases, the perfective aspect induces telic interpretation (see Dahl 2010: 73–74 for discussion and examples).

2.2.6 *Perfect*

Defining the perfect is one of the most discussed problems in the literature on grammatical categories, and the literature on the perfect category is vast (see, e.g., Klein 1992, McCawley 1971; McCoard 1978). There has also been skepticism as to whether the perfect should even count as a universal category. Dahl (1985: 129) claimed to establish with "some confidence" that the perfect does exist as a cross-linguistic category, and his insights will be followed here.

Even the most basic form of categorization—that is, whether the perfect is an aspect or a tense—is subject to debate, the latter advocated by, for instance, Bybee (1985) and also discussed in Brinton (1988: 15). Comrie, who defines the perfect as an aspect, still admits that it "partakes of both the present and the past" (1976: 52). Bybee, on the other hand, who defines it as a tense, argues that the perfect does not really express the internal temporal contours of a situation, which is what we would expect of an aspect. It clearly is difficult to define the perfect as either tense or aspect; in fact, some scholars avoid this classification altogether (cf., e.g., Dixon 2012: 31–32). Still, I define it as an aspect and not as a tense, especially taking into account the fact that the perfect cross-classifies with tense; that is, it can appear with both present and past marking in, for instance, Spanish (see section 3.3.2.1). I thus follow Comrie's definition

(1976: 52), in which he concludes that the perfect is an aspect, albeit one that is very different from other aspects. It is worth mentioning, however, that the definition in itself does not really have consequences for my analysis. When the object of study is the semantically defined gram-type, answering questions such as "Is the Spanish Perfect an aspect or a tense" does not add anything signifant or new to the analysis, as Lindstedt (2001: 770) points out. At the centre of our attention are the features shared by the cross-linguistic gram-type "perfect", to which I now turn.

So what do perfects express? The complicated status of the perfect has to do with the fact that it is used to express very different semantic notions. There does appear to be certain consensus, though, that what the many contexts that trigger the use of the perfect have in common is the existence of some sort of protomeaning defined as current relevance, and it is commonplace to state that a perfect relates a past situation with the present state (Comrie 1976), which all the different uses of the perfect share. Crucially, as I shall show, this relevance is manifested to various degrees in the different subfunctions of the perfect in a language such as English. An experiential has an abstract, almost psychological relevance, showing no visible results of the past action, as in *I have been to Argentina*. The resultative, on the other hand, represents the verbalization of concrete results of previous actions, as in *I have baked a cake* (but see 2.2.7.1).

2.2.6.1 Temporal Adverbs and the Perfect

Perfects are typically not able to combine with specific past-referring temporal adverbs, making sentences such as *I have been in New York in 2010* unavailable. This constraint may disappear as the Perfect expands, however, an example of which development is the French Passé Composé. Note that for a language such as English, in which this restriction clearly applies, temporal adverbs such as *just* and *recently* are allowed, probably alluding to the fact that these adverbials refer to a past so recent that it is interpreted as currently relevant (see section 2.2.7.4 on the semantics of the recent past) (Comrie 1976: 61; Klein 1992: 525, inter alia). The fact that Perfects in a language such as English may not appear with past temporal specification has received substantial attention in the literature and is often referred to as the perfect puzzle (Klein 1992). Consider example (10), clearly not acceptable in English:

(10) *Yesterday at ten, Chris has left York

Here I will not go into further detail about the restrictions on adverbs; it suffices for now to say that as the Porteño Preterit takes on meanings of the Perfect, it

becomes compatible with all temporal adverbs (see also Chapter 6). It is also important to note that as a Perfect expands, such as in French, it becomes compatible with a wider range of temporal adverbials.

2.2.7 *Approaches to the Semantics of the Perfect*

The perfect is among the most studied and controversial of verbal categories, and a range of different accounts of the semantics of the perfect have been proposed. In the extended now theory (XN) (McCawley 1971; McCoard 1978), the perfect is taken to introduce an interval that extends back from the reference time and is assumed to be true at reference time. In a sense, the perfect is here understood as a past including a present, indifferent to then versus now. Anteriority theory (Klein 1992; 1994; Reichenbach 1947) takes the perfect to locate the event time (E), the time during which the event obtains, prior to the reference time (R). The perfect's general structure is thus E–R (recall Reichenbach's timeline outlined earlier in this chapter, but note that the perfect's subfunctions vary as to how they relate the event structure to the temporal structure; see, e.g., Kiparsky 2002). Result state theory (Giorgio & Pianesi 1997) analyzes the perfect in terms of the meaning that the result state of the underlying event obtains at reference time.

As we saw above, the approach taken by most functionally or usage-based–inclined linguists toward the perfect's semantics is the current relevance view (Bybee 1985; Bybee et al. 1994; Comrie 1976). This view will be adopted here. The idea has its roots in prototype theory, in which categories are defined not in terms of necessary or sufficient features but rather in terms of their members sharing a central meaning to differing extents. In the case of the perfect, this common meaning is current relevance.

There is, however, some grain of truth to Dahl's claim (2000) that "everybody knows that the perfect implies current relevance but nobody knows what that is supposed to mean," but the consensus appears to be that one can assume that the different readings of the perfect (see below) share a protomeaning. This view is in contrast with views that assume that the different subfunctions of the perfect are semantically different (McCawley 1971). The conception of a perfect's having a protomeaning is a reflection of its imprecise category boundaries (Dahl 1985: 3–4); members of the category share—to different extents—the protomeaning, here taken to be current relevance. This is reflected in the ways in which the perfect's subfunctions express current relevance, as I shall show below.

The perfect's subfunctions may be expressed by means of distinct morphological categories in the languages of the world. In Vedic Sanskrit, for instance, the recent past and resultative are expressed by means of an Aorist, while the

experiential, universal, and stative readings are expressed by means of Perfects (Kiparsky 2002: 2). It is, however, typically a young gram; it easily disappears, and reappears, and therefore typically has analytic expression.

There is no consensus as to the terminology of the subfunctions of the perfect, which is illustrated in the list below (adapted from Brinton 1988). The terms employed here are marked in bold.

Type A: Permansive present, retrospective variety of the present (Jespersen 1924)
Resultative (Comrie 1976; Dahl 1985)
Resultative past (Leech 1971)
Stative perfect (McCawley 1971)
Perfect of result (Comrie 1976)

Type B: Inclusive past and present (Jespersen 1924)
State up to the present, habit in a period leading up to the present (Leech 1971)
Universal perfect (McCawley 1971)
Persistent situation (Comrie 1976)

Type C: Indefinite past (Leech 1971)
Existential perfect (McCawley 1971)
Experiential perfect (Comrie 1976)

Type D: Recent indefinite past (Leech 1971)
Hot news perfect (McCawley 1971)
Recent past (Comrie 1976)

The current relevance notion undoubtedly is vague, and difficult to test empirically (Torres Cacoullos 2011). Despite criticism of current relevance as the defining criterion of perfects (Howe 2013; Dahl 2000), this subdivision will be employed in this work, in line with Brinton (1988: 14), who argues that, despite the fuzziness of the term "current relevance," it has to be retained. As I shall show in Chapter 7, this subdivision has also proven crucial to the understanding of the change in question.

An additional argument in favor of retaining the notion of current relevance stems from the development of the Preterit category in Porteño Spanish. We shall see that all four subfunctions of the Perfect have come to be expressed by means of the Preterit. Why would this be so if the subfunctions shared no common features? In my opinion, the fact that resultativity, experientiality, recent

past, and, crucially, persistent situation are expressed by means of the Preterit in young and adolescent speakers strongly suggests that they share a semantic feature, such as current relevance. In the next section, I provide an overview of the subfunctions of the perfect. Focus will be on the experiential, since this subfunction will be the locus of the analysis in Chapter 7.

2.2.7.1 Type A: Resultative

The resultative perfect provides the clearest manifestation of the present relevance of a previous situation, as it indicates that a present state is the result of some past situation, and asserts that the result state of the event holds at the reference time (Comrie 1976: 56–57). The resultative thus indicates that the results of the previous action still hold, without giving any further indication of the conceptual background to the speaker's making such a statement.

For the present case, it is important to keep in mind that the current relevance of a resultative is very concrete in nature—hence Comrie's definition above, which depicts the resultative as the subfunction that most clearly manifests the notion of current relevance. Bybee et al. (1994: 54) similarly define the resultative as signaling that a state exists as the result of a past action. It is often seen to be a special "statal" variant, or simply defined as a stative (Lindstedt 2000: 367). Lindstedt (ibid.) also proposes that a means of distinguishing resultatives from perfects is to test whether they combine with adverbials of limited duration, such as *still*.

The difference between a resultative and an experiential is clear in a language such as English, in which He is gone is a resultative, whereas He has gone is an experiential. Only a resultative indicates that a state still holds at reference time (Bybee et al. 1994: 63). Clearly, this is the reason why adverbs such as *still* are compatible with resultatives.

As will be argued in 5.4.1.1, sentences in Spanish may be ambiguous between resultative and experiential interpretation, and the clues to understanding such sentences generally lie in the immediate context. Example (11) illustrates this ambiguity, shown in the different English translations. Such ambiguity is not restricted to Porteño Spanish.

(11) (14:55/10)

No	**has ido**	a	Uruguay	Tony
NEG	go.2SG.PRS.PRF	to	Uruguay	Tony

'Haven't you gone to Uruguay, Tony?' (Resultative)

Or

'Haven't you been to Uruguay, Tony?' (Experiential)

To define a phrase as either resultative or experiential may be tricky in a language such as English for other reasons as well. Nishiyama and Köenig (2004: 102), describe what they call "lexically entailed resultant states", and exemplify them with phrases such as *Ken has broken his leg*, where the meaning of break forces a resultative reading, whereas a sentence such as *Ken has broken his leg, but he is ok now* forces an experiential reading.

2.2.7.2 Type B: Persistent Situation

The persistent situation function of a perfect asserts that the event holds throughout an interval, delimited by the reference time and a certain time prior to it.

Languages such as English and Norwegian use the Perfect to describe a situation that started in the past and that continues (persists) into the future, such as in the English *We've lived here for ten years*, or its Norwegian counterpart *Vi har bodd her i ti år*. It is perhaps more common for languages to use present-tense constructions to express this content (Comrie 1976: 60), but Spanish (both older Porteño speakers, and standard Peninsular varieties), as we shall see, in fact uses both:

(12) (05:55/12)

Siempre	**he vivido**	acá
Always	live.1SG.PRS.PRF	here

'I have always lived here'

Porteño Spanish also expresses persistent situation by means of the Preterit:

(13) (49:36/12)

Yo	siempre	**tuve**	la idea	de	hacer	un	libro
I	always	have.1SG.PRT	the idea	to	make	a	book

'I have always had the idea to make a book'

Note also that Spanish can express persistent situation by means of Present constructions, such as the one in (14):

(14) HABCULT: 65[6]

Hace	**22 años**	**que**	**reside**	en	Buenos Aires
Do.3SG.PRS	22 years	that	live.3SG.PRS	In	Buenos Aires

'He has been living in Buenos Aires for 22 years'

6 HABCULT, an acronym for *El Habla Culta de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* (1987), is a corpus consisting of transcribed interviews with spontaneous speech. The number refers to page. For details, see Chapter 5.

2.2.7.3 Type C: Experiential

The experiential function is crucial to understanding the expansion of the Preterit and will therefore be discussed in further detail here and in Chapter 7.[7]

The experiential is a way of referring to a past action without referring to a specific occurrence. It is thus characterized by non-specific past time reference (Lindstedt 2000) and denotes simply that an action holds prior to reference time. The experiential refers to an indefinite time span, and the adverbs that typically co-occur with it are nonspecific frequency temporal adverbials (TAS), such as *never, any, ever*, and so on. The experiential typically occurs in personal (or other's) narration (which explains its relative frequency in the available corpora, as compared to other subfunctions) and, because of this, it often has an animate subject. Note, though, that animacy is not a clear requirement of the experiential; the use of the Perfect in a sentence such as *Has it ever snowed in Buenos Aires*? must clearly be analyzed as an experiential construction, but the sentence has a nonanimate subject (Östen Dahl, personal communication).

Example (15)is a typical experiential:

(15) (22:21/11)
Conociste Punta del Este?
Know.2SG.PRT Punta del Este
'Have you gotten to know Punta del Este?'

Furthermore, the experiential is associated with the possibility of reiteration of the situation in question. This means both that the agent involved must be alive at the time of the utterance (making **Einstein has visited Princeton* ungrammatical, quoting a famous example from, among others, Portner 2003; see also 7.3.1.3) and that the event must be of a repeatable type (making **Fred has visited Nazi Germany* ungrammatical if uttered today). Do note that this restriction does not hold for the other functions of the perfect such as recent past; *He has just eaten the last doughnut* is not ungrammatical, for example.

The experiential appears as a separate category in some languages, such as in Fulfulde and Mandarin, as well as Japanese (Inoue 1975; Haspelmath et al. 2005: 777). English differentiates between experiential and resultative in rare cases, such as in the following:

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7 Before continuing, it is important to note that the term "experiential" also is used to refer to a different type of experiential construction (Verhoeven 2009)—that is, expressions of experiential contexts, not necessarily situated in the past, but rather experiences of perceptual, sensory, cognitive, volitional, and emotional situations. These types of constructions are not included in the scope of the present study, and "experiential" is here used to refer to the perfect's subfunction only.

(16) Mary **has gone** to Paris (resultative)[8]
(17) Mary **has been** to Paris (experiential)

Therefore, being able to express experientiality is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for a gram to be called a perfect, since languages may have separate experiential categories that are not perfects.

2.2.7.3.1 *The Experiential's Tense-Like Features*

Experientials are more tense-like than the other subfunctions of the perfect, being an indefinite past tense that typically occurs in questions and negated assertions with *ever*-like adverbials. However, CR and experientiality do not exclude each other, and in many sentences, elements of both can be discerned (Lindstedt 2000: 369).

An experiential is more indirectly relevant to the present state of affairs than, for example, a resultative, so (16) above entails, for example, that Mary is not present, whereas (17) is more indirectly relevant, presumably through Mary's knowing what Paris is like. The CR component in experiential perfects is thus more abstract, or weak, than in, for example, resultative perfects, in which the result state is more tangible. The experiential expresses intangible relevance, abstract or even psychological. This element—the intangibility of the result—has led many researchers to reject the result interpretation of the experiential function of the perfect. However, according to Brinton, (1988) tangibility is a result within the realms of experience, memory, and feeling. The experiencer has been affected internally by the situation and bears the result of that change.

2.2.7.4 Type D: Recent Past

Type D, recent past, is used where there is simply a relation of temporal closeness between the present and past situations. Like the experiential, it denotes that a situation holds prior to reference time, but unlike the experiential, it also asserts that a situation holds sufficiently close to reference time. It appears, therefore, that current relevance does not imply recentness (the perfect may be used to talk about situations that are not temporally recent but are still perceived as relevant, as in experiential uses), but recentness appears to be a sufficient condition for current relevance (Comrie 1976: 60). Klein (1994: 113) also notes that some uses of recent past appear to have past-tense function, and notes that this often is the beginning of a frequent development from perfect

8 A reviewer has pointed out that such phrases may also have experiential meaning in the appropriate contexts.

which is crucial in the expansion of a perfect to become a general past tense. This is because in some varieties, such as in some types of Peninsular Spanish, the Perfect's expansion occurs as it gradually becomes compatible with contexts which are less recent, such as in (18), from Comrie (1976: 61). Note from the translation that English typically uses Preterits in these contexts:

(18)	La	**he visto**	esta	mañana
	She	see.1SG.PRS.PRF	this	morning
	'I saw her this morning'			

This usage has led many researchers to the analysis that the expansion of a perfect to past/past perfective is a relaxation of the degree of recentness necessary, as discussed in detail in 4.2.1.1. In any case, it is important to note that the recent past function represents a relevance of a more distinct type than does, for instance, the resultative; it clearly is less concrete and tangible, and the recent past may be seen as more similar to a pure tense in this respect (Croft 2012: 142–143).

2.2.8 *Summary*

This chapter has provided an overview of the theoretical approach undertaken in this study. I have presented some of the crucial tenets to a usage-based view of language change, and I have argued that factors involved in grammaticalization should not be confined to such. In addition, I have discussed the temporal and aspectual categories relevant to this study and pointed to the ways in which they can interact.

CHAPTER 3

Porteño Spanish: Background and Previous Research

This chapter offers background information regarding the linguistic varieties in question, Argentinean and Uruguayan Spanish. A brief sketch of the sociolinguistic contexts is provided, as this is relevant to the discussion on contact-induced change in 7.8. In addition, I provide a summary of linguistic features idiosyncratic to these two varieties, as opposed to the remaining Latin American varieties.

3.1 Sociolinguistic Context

Porteño Spanish is the urban vernacular spoken in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Buenos Aires Spanish is sometimes also referred to as River Plate Spanish, Rioplatense Spanish, and Bonaerense (but should not be confused with Lunfardo or Cocoliche; see section 3.3.2.5). When referring to the Uruguayan variety, this will be specified.

There is a tradition in Hispanic linguistics to encompass linguistic varieties from both the Uruguayan and the Argentinean parts of the Río de la Plata under the same umbrella, titling the area the *River Plate zone* (Lipski 1994). This tradition may be due to a lack of studies on the Uruguayan variety. Lipski's claim (ibid.: 337) that "Uruguayan speech is simply an extension of the Porteño speech of Buenos Aires" stands as a representation of similar claims and is itself a huge simplification. Uruguayan Spanish differs from Argentinean in prosody, morphology, and morphosyntax (Elizaincín 1981).

Porteño Spanish has an estimated 16 million speakers.[1] As we shall see, Porteño Spanish is a relatively well-studied variety of Spanish, and it is known to have lexical, phonological, prosodic, morphological, and syntactical idiosyncrasies. Some of these idiosyncrasies have roots in sociolinguistic factors unique to the area, while others do not. In the following section, I provide an overview of the sociohistorical context in which Buenos Aires developed

1 No official number exists. The proposed number comprises the provinces of Buenos Aires and Entre Ríos (see indec.gov.ar).

before I present a more detailed description of the linguistic features of Porteño Spanish itself.

3.2 Sociohistorical Context

Argentina was colonized by the Spaniards in the early 16th century, and Buenos Aires was first established in 1536 by Pedro de Mendoza. The estuary in which the rivers Paraná and Uruguay converge was named Río de la Plata, Silver River, since it was assumed that the river hid great mineral wealth. The native indigenous population was hostile to the Spanish advances and managed to force the population of Buenos Aires to evacuate to Paraguay a few years after its first establishment. These attempts delayed the permanent settlement of Buenos Aires, and it was reestablished in 1580. Despite the initial attempts at resistance, the native indigenous population—called the querandíes—were few in number and were eventually forced to evacuate the Pampas, leaving Buenos Aires an area with minimal indigenous presence and linguistic influence, except for a few loans (Lipski 1994: 164; see also 7.8). In 1617, Buenos Aires became the capital of the colonial province of Río de la Plata. Its importance grew steadily as the route over the Atlantic from Buenos Aires to Europe was a short and economical way to transport goods. Eventually, Buenos Aires grew to full importance in 1776, when the Viceroyalty of Río de la Plata, comprising present-day Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia, was established. Buenos Aires soon became a social and cultural focal point of South America, owing to a growth that would only increase throughout the centuries to come.

Argentina received African slaves throughout the colonial period, most of whom resided in Buenos Aires. Even though their impact on Argentine society was important at one point (through, e.g., music, and also reflected in loanwords, such as the typical Porteño Spanish word for 'maid', *mucama*), they declined immensely in number starting in the early 19th century. Today, they are a largely invisible group, even though more than 4% of the Argentine population has African ancestors. There is no consensus concerning how to interpret the African population's decline, but explanations such as warfare, emigration to countries with larger African communities (such as Uruguay and Brazil), epidemics, and even state-induced genocide have been proposed (Fejerman et al. 2005).

Argentina was declared independent in 1816. The first constitution, dating to 1819, allowed for immigration from all countries that were not at war with Argentina, and the eventual constitution even promoted immigration "by all possible means." Immigration was promoted to populate the land and to

introduce labor, but also to impose European culture on the local population. European and Anglo-Saxon immigration were seen as the carriers of civilization and progress. Note, however, that once the immigrants arrived, the politics to assimilate them into local national culture was strong, as reflected in, e.g., the monolingual (Spanish) education and their rapid shift to Spanish (see also discussion in 7.8). Immigration policies induced massive waves of immigrants to Argentina, and especially to the port capital Buenos Aires. Between 1856 and 1932, Argentina received 6.5 million immigrants. In 1887, the majority (53%) of Buenos Aires's inhabitants were immigrants. Of them, approximately 32% were Italian, 9% Spanish, 5% French, and the remaining 7% of different nationalities (Armenian, Russian, Polish, English, etc.) (Conde 2011: 149). Italians made up the overwhelming majority of the immigrants.

Both Italian and Spanish immigrants' assimilation into Argentinean society and culture is assumed to have proceeded with relative ease (Conde 2011; Fontanella de Weinberg 1979; Klee & Lynch 2009: 185–186). For Spanish immigrants, speaking the same language as the descendants of the colonizers was an obvious facilitator in the assimilation, in addition to the many cultural and religious similarities.

For Italians, the shift to Spanish occurred rapidly. As with the Spanish immigrants, cultural and religious similarities are assumed to have contributed to the Italians' rapid shift to Spanish. These immigrants were in fact seen as vital contributors to the society's development, and their adaptation into Argentinean society was rapid—and so was their shift to the majority language. Three factors are assumed to have contributed to this rapid shift (Klee & Lynch 2009: 185–191): (1) the lack of uniformity in the immigrants' Italian varieties—the immigrants did not speak standard Italian but different, often mutually unintelligible dialects and so had no lingua franca; (2) the genetic and typological proximity to Spanish—it was not a difficult task for them to learn Spanish; and (3) pressure from the free and obligatory monolingual education system.

Galician speakers also shifted rapidly to Spanish—again, presumably because of the stigma associated with the Galician language, because of the proximity to Spanish, and also because Galicians were subject to mocking and degradation in Buenos Aires society. Others shifted with differing speed: German-speaking Russians, for example, preserved their language to a much greater extent than did Italians. Among Yiddish speakers, one could find a difference between those in agriculture and those from urban centers: the urban dwellers were less likely to preserve their language. French and Occitan speakers shifted rapidly—again, possibly due to cultural, religious, and linguistic proximity—while English speakers largely preserved their language (see Fontanella de Weinberg 1979 for an in-depth analysis).

Overall, the speed at which assimilation occurred was largely facilitated by the education system, which was imposed on all citizens through *Ley 1420 de educación común*, from 1884, providing public, monolingual, obligatory, and free education. The law had the explicit aim of assimilating immigrants, and it succeeded, resulting in widespread literacy. It was common for illiterate parents to see their children go on to pursue university careers. Argentina thus represented the possibility for rapid upward social mobility. There was a motivation to speak Spanish in order to ascend socially, and many parents wanted their children to learn Spanish precisely because they knew that knowing the majority language would increase their children's possibilities for successful lives and careers.

3.2.1 *Río de la Plata Today*

Buenos Aires still is the economic, cultural, and political center of Argentina and of the Río de la Plata region. In 2010, Argentina had approximately 40 million inhabitants, of which Buenos Aires (the greater metropolitan area) contained 13 million.[2] At a much smaller scale than at the turn of the 20th century, Argentina continues to receive immigrants. In the 1990s, a substantial number of immigrants arrived from Korea (North and South), China, and Vietnam (Mera 1998), establishing educational and religious institutions as well as a vibrant Chinatown. Today, the largest immigrant group comprises illegal immigrants, consisting of approximately 700,000 people. Most are of indigenous origins and come from neighboring countries, and since they speak Quechua, they make up the largest group of speakers of languages other than Spanish in Argentina.[3] The large majority of the population is, however, monolingual. The Spanish spoken today largely reflects the country's immigrant past. As I shall now show, many idiosyncrasies in Porteño Spanish can be traced back to contact with languages spoken by immigrants. Other features of the language, however, follow patterns also observed in other Latin American varieties.

2 Numbers available on the web pages of the national Institute of Statistics and Censuses (indec.gov.ar).

3 Ethnologue (www.ethnologue.com) reports that 24 languages other than Spanish are spoken in Argentina. After Quechuan, Mapundungun, spoken in southwestern Argentina (and neighboring Chile), is the language with most speakers (100,000).

3.3 The Porteño Spanish Variety

Porteño Spanish is a relatively thoroughly studied variety of Spanish (see, especially, Colantoni & Rodríguez Louro 2013). Since the early description of the variety by Abeille (1900 [2005]), numerous works have been published, and their emphasis may be described as follows:

a. Those describing the Porteño Spanish lexicon, from the more obscure studies (Terrera 1968) to the important *Diccionario del Habla de los Argentinos* (Academia Argentina de Letras 2008).
b. Those discussing the nature and impact of the varieties that appeared as a result of the massive immigration (Annecchiarico 2012). Lunfardo (to be discussed in detail below) is by far the most studied from a linguistic point of view (Carisomo et al. 2005; Conde 2011; Gobello & Olivieri 2005), but its impact on literature has also been extensively studied, as in Borges and Clemente (1968) and Furlan (1995; 2006), to mention just two (see also Di Tullio & Kailuweit 2011 for an overview). Cocoliche (also to be discussed below) has also received substantial attention, albeit less than Lunfardo has, presumably because the latter is still in use (Cara-Walker 1987; Kailuweit 2007; Meo Zilio 1964).

3.3.1 *Previous Research on the Porteño Spanish Perfect and Preterit*

As is well-known, what now functions as a Perfect in a majority of Romance languages arose in Latin, through a well-documented grammaticalization development, compatible (at least in its first stages) with the perfective path, which sketches the development from possessive to perfect and eventually past/past perfective. The perfective path is seen as a particularly good example of the existence of diachronic paths. A construction with the lexeme *habere* 'to have' gradually developed from possessive construction, to resultative, and eventually came to express perfect.[4] In some languages, such as French, the Perfect has further developed into a past perfective and has thus followed the so-called perfective path (also mentioned in Chapter 1):

be/*have*+ participle → resultative → anterior → perfective/simple past

FIGURE 2 *Perfective path, after Bybee et al. (1994: 105).*

4 Note that there also existed a construction formed with the verb *esse* 'to be', used with intransitive verbs, which still exists in, e.g., French (Harris & Vincent 1988: 229).

In French, then, the Passé Composé expresses both past perfective and past with CR and has taken over for the Passé Simple in the spoken language. The latter is alive and well in the written language.

The French and Spanish Perfects stem from a grammaticalized construction that began its development in Latin. Originally, Latin had a synthetic verb form, somewhat confusingly labeled Perfect, which was used to express both past and past with CR (Comrie 1976: 53).

(19) **Cantavi**
Sing.1.SG.PAST. PFV
'I sang/I have sung'

This form evolved into the Romance Preterit, as in *canté*, which in many Romance varieties has past perfective meaning, as in 'I sang'.

Crucially, however, the Porteño Spanish Preterit expresses both past perfective and past with CR, as was the case in Latin. In what follows, I provide an overview of previous research on the origins and distribution of the Porteño Spanish Preterit.

The distribution of the Perfect and Preterit in Porteño Spanish has to some extent received scholarly attention (see, e.g., Squartini 1998: 182 for a short overview; see also Fontanella de Weinberg 1987). While the general tendency is agreed upon—the frequency of the Perfect to express past with CR is low relative to frequencies in other Spanish varieties—the details of this distribution remain unclear. First, there appears to be a lack of consensus as to the origins of this low frequency; it has been proposed that in certain Latin American varieties, the original dual function of the Latin *cantavi* form (as discussed above) is retained, so the use of the Preterit to express past with CR is understood as an archaic feature (Penny 2000: 158–161).

The second question regards the time span of the change. Most approaches see the decrease in the use of the Perfect as a recent development. Kubarth (1992) notes a significantly lower frequency of Perfect use in young speakers (13–30 years) than in middle-aged users (30–49) and argues that the Perfect may be on its way to extinction (ibid.: 565). Burgos (2004) similarly notes that the Perfect is falling into disuse but argues that other constructions and temporal adverbials make up for the lack of a grammaticalized perfect. It should be noted that the studies that point to a decrease in Perfect usage are compatible with Abeille (1900 [2005]), who surprisingly notes the frequency of the *Perfect* and its expansion in Porteño Spanish around 1900. This early use of the Perfect adds to the evidence that the Perfect did indeed exist in Porteño Spanish around 1900. This development will be discussed as a possible "dead end" in 7.6.2.1.

Third, and importantly, still debated are the semantic restrictions that condition the sparse Perfect use in Buenos Aires Spanish. One line of argumentation holds that Buenos Aires Spanish follows a "Latin American norm," in which the Perfect is restricted to durative and iterative situations that encompass speech time (i.e., persistent situation). This is the view held by Squartini and Bertinetto (2000: 413), who maintain that this pattern holds for Buenos Aires Spanish, as well as, for instance, Mexican Spanish. It will be made clear in Chapters 6 and 7 that this is not the case for present-day Porteño Spanish (see also McKenzie 1995 for critique of the "Latin American norm"; Rodríguez Louro 2009 for discussion).

Schwenter (1994), similarly to Squartini and Bertinetto, sees the use of the Perfect as following aspectual restrictions in Porteño Spanish; those situations that are not bounded (i.e., durative and iterative situations) require Perfect use. Howe and Rodríguez Louro (2013) also provide an analysis with focus on the expression of persistent situation in Porteño Spanish and other Spanish varieties. Schwenter and Cacoullos (2008) find that in Mexican Spanish, not only duaritivty, but also absence of temporal anchor triggers Perfect use. Again, in the present study; this will be shown not to be the case for Porteño Spanish speakers.

Kubarth (1992) argues that the sparse use of Perfect in young speakers is random, as opposed to Rodríguez Louro (2009) who, in line with a sociolinguistic variationist approach, argues that the variation follows structured patterns, for example, in the Perfect's being conditioned by unbound situations.

A more general observation is that (1) none of these approaches have a clear explanatory approach—that is, they make no attempt to account for the "why" of the change; and (2) they typically operate within the realm of a combination of grammaticalization theory and variationist approaches (see especially Rodríguez Louro 2009; Howe & Rodríguez Louro 2013). In my opinion, the variation observed in the language of certain speakers of present-day Porteño Spanish has more in common with what Kubarth (1992: 565) claims is "random"—at least superficially. By this I mean that we observe remnants of what is an expansion beginning in the experiential function. Both grammaticalization and variationist approaches fail to provide a clear picture of the origins of the change in question, a gap that will be the topic of this work.

Despite this difference in approach, this study makes reference to previous studies, especially that of Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008). In their study, several factor groups are included to account for the distribution of the Perfect and Preterit, among which temporal reference (rather than temporal distance) will be given special importance in this study. As we shall see in 7.5.1,

the similarities between the arguments made in the two studies are remarkable, and this study further explores the relationship between temporal indetereminacy and experiential.

3.3.2 *Linguistic Features: General*

In what follows, I summarize linguistic features characteristic of the Porteño Spanish variety of Spanish. Emphasis is on tense and aspect, but I also schematically go through other defining features of the variety in question.

3.3.2.1 Tense and Aspect

In this section, I provide an overview of the relevant tense and aspect categories in Porteño Spanish. A detailed discussion of tense and aspect was provided in Chapter 2.

Spanish has inherited a rich verbal morphology from Latin. A first division can be made between nonfinite forms and finite forms. Nonfinite forms are infinitive, gerund, and perfect participle. The finite forms refer to five verbal categories—namely, tense, aspect, mood, person, and number:

- Tense: present, past, and future
- Aspect: perfective and imperfective (tense distinctions made only in the imperfective), as well as perfect
- Mood: indicative, subjunctive, conditional, and imperative
- Person: first, second, and third
- Number, singular and plural, for each person

As discussed in section 2.3, aspect typically focuses on the internal contours of the situation, while the perfective aspect focuses on the initial and final boundaries of an event. Many languages express both tense and aspect through the same verb form; they are *aspect sensitive* (see 2.2.2). Spanish is one of those languages; Spanish grammatical tense and aspect are thus fused in the same morpheme and, in this way, configure the verb-inflectional system of Spanish (see Hodgson 2003 for details on acquisition of the perfective aspect in Spanish). For example, in example (20) below, the morpheme *-ó* in *Llovió* carries both the temporal value of occurring prior to the moment of speech and the aspectual value of presenting the act as complete through the perfective's ability to mark the situation's initial and final end point. When no distinct markers for tense or aspect may be morphologically segmented, we are dealing with joint marking (Lindstedt 2001: 779).

(20) **Llovió** mucho
Rain.3SG.PRT much
'It rained a lot'

(Bybee 1985: 142)

To sum up, it is important to note that standard Peninsular Spanish has a system in which perfectivity/imperfectivity is distinguished only in the past (there is no present perfective). This is a very common type typologically, as identified by Dahl (1985), and is different from, for example, the Slavic tense and aspect systems, which have a perfective/imperfective that cross-classifies with the past and present tense completely.

As observed above, Spanish distinguishes between perfective and imperfective aspect in the past (past perfective vs. past imperfective). In addition, there is a progressive aspect that may be combined with past and present morphology.

Spanish forms Perfects through an auxiliary, which may be present or past, to form present perfects and past perfects, respectively. Notably, in section 6.4.5, I will show that the Past Perfect still is in use in Porteño Spanish, despite the demise of the Present Perfect. Traditionally, the Spanish Perfect expresses the four typical subfunctions associated with it: experiential, resultative, recent past, and persistent situation (see Chapter 2). In older sources of Porteño Spanish, this canonical use has been documented (Fløgstad 2007; see also Burgos 2004 and Rodríguez Louro 2009 for frequencies in older texts). In addition, it is important to note that persistent situation is also expressed by means of Present constructions in all varieties of Spanish, including Porteño Spanish. As discussed in 2.2.7.2, this is not uncommon. In fact, expressing persistent situation by means of Perfects, as in, for instance, English and Norwegian (in sentences such as *I have lived in Oslo for 15 years* and its Norwegian counterpart, *Jeg har bodd i Oslo i 15 år*), appears to be more rare (Comrie 1976: 60). In Spanish, then, persistent situation can be expressed by means of constructions such as the following:

(21) Perfect
HABCULT: 195

Nacido	en	Buenos Aires	donde	siempre	**ha residido**
Born	in	Buenos Aires	where	always	live.3SG.PRS.PRF

'Born in Buenos Aires, where he has always lived'

(22) Present construction
(07:15/4)

Desde	octubre	hasta	el	día	de	hoy
Since	October	until	the	day	of	today
no	**tiene**		trabajo	no	encontró	
NEG	have.3SG.PRS		job	NEG	find.3SG.PRT	

'She hasn't had a job since October; she hasn't found (one)'

Present constructions also exist to express recent past; such are typically formed with *acabo de* + infinitive. Note that the use of *haber* as possessive verb disappeared in Spanish, probably before the beginning of the 17th century (Olbertz 1991). This is different from, for instance, French, in which *avoir* still has a possessive meaning, and exemplifies the way in which grammaticalization affects the lexeme in a certain construction; see Chapter 2.

Given the grammaticalization of *haber*, it should be noted here that there exists a lexical expression of possession that has not been grammaticalized (but notably has been in Brazilian Portuguese; see 7.3.1.2): *tener* 'to have', as in the following:

(23) HABCULT: 208

La	tesis	mía	**tenía**	una	parte	muy	buena
the	thesis	mine	have.3SG.PST.IPFV	one	part	very	good
que	era	el	prólogo				
that	was	the	prologue				

'My thesis had one good part that was the prologue'

3.3.2.2 Morphosyntax

Porteño Spanish uniformly uses *vos* 'you' as the second-person singular pronoun instead of *tú*, a phenomenon referred to as *voseo*.[5] *Vos* is used by speakers of all social levels and in all contexts (but note that usted is the polite form of the second-person singular) (see Moyna 2009 for a discussion on the evolution and acquisition of the *voseo*). The use of *vos* instead of *tú* also entails a different conjugation of present verbs in second-person singular, as seen in (24), in which stress is on the last syllable in *contás*:

5 Note that the use of the *voseo* has been attested as early as in the 19th century and has been taken as evidence for a growing standardization and acceptance of the Porteño Spanish norm (Rodríguez Louro 2009: 2).

(24) HABCULT: 198

Por	qué	no	me	**contás**	lo	de	tu	pensionado
For	what	NEG	me	tell.2SG.PRS	that	of	your	pension
de	Villa devoto							
from	Villa Devoto							

'Why don't you tell me about your pension from Villa Devoto?'

The Peninsular Spanish counterpart of (24) would be *cuentas*, with stress on the initial syllable. Furthermore, as in all of Latin America, *ustedes* 'you' is the second-person plural and has the same conjugation as the third-person plural masculine/feminine, *ellos*/*ellas* 'them'.

In addition, like most other Latin American varieties, Porteño Spanish has clitic doubling of definite personal direct-object nouns, as in (25), whereas *lo* would be incorrect and ungrammatical in other varieties (Gabriel & Rinke 2010).

(25)

Lo	conozco	a	Juán
Him	know.1SG.PRS	to	Juán

'I know Juán'

Subjunctive verbs in subordinate clauses appear in the present tense, even though the verb in the main clause may require past tense reference, as in (26):

(26)

Me	pidió	que	le	**haga**	un	favor
Me	ask.3SG.PRT	that	him	make.1SG.PRS.SBJV	a	favor

'He asked me to do him a favor'

(Lipski 2012: 14–15)

3.3.2.3 Phonology

Two phonological features are typical of Porteño Spanish. *Yeísmo* refers to the loss of the traditional palatal lateral approximant phoneme /ʎ/ (written ⟨ll⟩) and its merger into the phoneme /ʝ/ (written ⟨y⟩). In Porteño Spanish, however, this phoneme is realized as [ʃ]. The original sound was voiced, but the devoicing is spreading throughout Argentina, and younger residents of Buenos Aires now pronounce it [ʃ].

A further phonological characteristic is the reduction of preconsonantal /s/, which is typically reduced to [h] (aspirated) in the contexts _C and _##C. In this respect, Argentinean Spanish is assumed to be at a less advanced stage than, for instance, Cuban Spanish, in which /s/ is also reducing at the end of words (Bybee 2001: 140–141).

3.3.2.4 Prosody

Porteño Spanish differs from Peninsular Spanish in that the peak of the rising pitch movement in broad-focus declaratives occurs earlier in Porteño Spanish: it reaches its peak at the beginning or at the center of the stressed syllable and not directly after the stressed syllable, as in Peninsular Spanish (Benet et al. 2012; Colantoni & Gurlekian 2004). This property of Porteño Spanish is assumed to be due to the "Italianization" of Porteño Spanish as a consequence of the massive Italian immigration to the area, as discussed in sections 3.2 and 7.8. Note that this feature is unique to the Buenos Aires variety and is not found in, for example, Uruguayan Spanish, which also experienced influences from Italian immigration (see 7.8 for discussion of the linguistic consequences of immigration).

3.3.2.5 Lexicon

The Porteño Spanish lexicon is heavily influenced by the considerable immigration to the area, and it is particularly Italian that has made its mark on the variety (Conde 2004; Gobello & Olivieri 2005). The Italian loanwords generally restrict themselves to the intimate sphere: food, family, ordinary life, and so on (Conde 2011: 82–83). Of the Italian varieties, it is the Genovese variety that is assumed to have had the most influence on the Porteño Spanish lexicon (Conde 2011; Gobello & Olivieri 2005) (but note that the Southern Italian varieties are seen to have had most impact on the prosodic system; see discussion in 7.8.1). As observed above, the most-studied outcomes of the lexical impact Italian exercised on Porteño Spanish are the varieties known as Lunfardo and Cocoliche.

Lunfardo is defined as a vocabulary used by many Porteño Spanish speakers in addition to, or perhaps in contrast to, the standard Porteño Spanish variety (Gobello & Olivieri 2005), resembling a stylistic variety more than a distinct language. Its origins are disputed; some claim it was created as a criminal argot in which words were deliberately substituted with non-Spanish counterparts to misinform the non-natives. The Lunfardo lexicon is most typically Italian, and Italian immigrants were indeed instrumental in creating it at the turn of the 20th century. It also, however, includes loans from other varieties, such as English, French, and so on. As for today, it is unclear whether this use of Lunfardo is actually found in spontaneous speech (in this way resembling, e.g., Para-Romani varieties; see Matras & Bakker 2003: 7). It is not, as often claimed, the language of outlaws; rather it has Northern Italian dialects as its lexical base (ibid.: 11). Above all, Lunfardo reflects the lexical impact Italian dialects had on the Porteño Spanish language. Lunfardo is still in use, today more as a preferential use of a particular lexicon, often associated with

intonational and segmentational pronunciation that typifies tendencies of the lower classes.

The literature on Lunfardo is particularly rich; see Annecchiarico (2012), Carisomo et al. (2005), Conde (2011), Di Tullio and Kailuweit (2011), and Gobello and Olivieri (2005), to mention a few recent publications. The literature seems inconclusive, however, when it comes to drawing a line between actual Lunfardo and the Italian impact reflected in the now-standard Porteño Spanish variety (Conde 2011). It is also sometimes claimed that literature was crucial in the spread of Lunfardo (as argued by, e.g., Gobello & Olivieri 2005; but cf. Conde 2011: 126).

Cocoliche was a hybrid of Northern Italian and Spanish spoken in the port areas of Buenos Aires more than 100 years ago. While Lunfardo was used by immigrants and the native population alike (and is still today), Cocoliche was used by Italian immigrants only and was their rule-governed interlanguage on their way to acquiring Spanish (for more on the notion of interlanguage, see Sankoff 2001: 639). As they acquired Spanish, their use of Cocoliche disappeared. Its name, "Cocoliche," stems from the name of a fictional character, Antonio Cocoliche, in a dramatized performance of a novel by author Eduardo Gutierrez. Antonio Cocoliche's way of speaking—a broken, lower-class Italian—became popular among Argentineans, to the extent that the term "Cocoliche" now refers not only to the actual way in which immigrants spoke but also to a literary "genre," *mock Cocoliche*, a stereotyped and exaggerated version of the actual variety (Cara-Walker 1987).

Whinnom (1971) defines Cocoliche as a modified version of Italian that immigrants spoke, ranging from nonstandard Italian to nonnative Porteño Spanish, including different adjustments to the Spanish spoken in the area. Among these adjustments were import into the Italian morphosyntactic and phonological system without adjustment of the latter (ibid.: 98).

Although its resemblance to a pidgin has been discussed, the majority of scholars have concluded that several factors make Cocoliche *not* so. Whinnom (1971) and Bickerton (1976: 171) seem to agree that Cocoliche does not constitute a pidgin as it was too transitory and unstable to be identified as a distinct language.[6] More importantly, Cocoliche shows no signs of grammatical or lexical simplification otherwise associated with pidgins (Conde 2011: 174). A more pertinent definition is therefore that Cocoliche resembled the interlanguage of Italian immigrants adjusting to Spanish, as mentioned above. Similarly, Gobello and Olivieri (2005) argue that Cocoliche was Italian immigrants' first attempt to adjust to the majority language (hence *interlanguage*),

6 Note the absence of Spanish Creoles; see, for example, McWhorter (2000).

while Lunfardo was the second variety that emerged and is also a variety that survived. Note also that other immigrant varieties emerged at the peak of the immigration; *Valesco* was the interlanguage—or language of transition—of the thousands of immigrants who came from the Valaquian province in southern Romania.

3.3.3 *Uruguayan Spanish*

The interviews with Uruguayan informants were conducted in Dolores, a small town of 14,000 inhabitants in the department of Soriano; and in Montevideo, the country's capital, with 1.5 million inhabitants, approximately half of Uruguay's population.[7] These cities both belong to what is referred to as the Río de la Plata zone. Here, I provide a short overview of the socio-historical context and previously conducted research.

3.3.4 *Uruguay: Historical and Demographic Profile*

Uruguay—sometimes referred to as "the Switzerland of South America"—is situated between Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay and has a population of only 3.3 million.[8] After recovering from intense civil wars and political instability in the early 19th century, it soon became a country of wealth and democratic values. In 1917, it was one of the first countries to allow divorce and, similarly, one of the first to allow female suffrage. As early as 1877, Uruguay established a free, obligatory, and secular educational system. In addition, 68% of the Uruguayan population has been estimated to belong to the middle class, which is an unusually high number compared to other Latin American countries having larger class differences and smaller middle classes.

Perhaps precisely because of this wealth and relative political stability, Uruguay became a destination for European immigrants before Argentina did, which created a flow of immigrants from Italy, France, and Spain. In 1860, Montevideo's population consisted of 48% foreigners (compared to only 36% in Buenos Aires). At that time, 28% of immigrants were Spanish, 27% Italian, and 22% French, mainly Basques. Immigrants tended to cluster in the capital. These numbers are strikingly similar to those of Buenos Aires in 1887 (see 3.2). It has been claimed, therefore, that the differences between immigration to Uruguay and Argentina were mostly quantitative rather than qualitative and that the importance of immigration has been similar in the development of Uruguay as in that of Buenos Aires (Di Tullio & Kailuweit 2011:15).

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7 Interviews were conducted in Buenos Aires, Dolores and Montevideo, and they are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

8 Numbers available at the Uruguayan Insituto Nacional de Estadistica; ine.gub.uy.

Similarities aside, there were also differences between the two countries in the way in which immigrants settled and lived. Uruguay soon failed to maintain its position as a top choice of European immigrants. It soon became a country of transit rather than of permanent settlement. Between 1874 and 1901, only 1,596 foreigners became Uruguayan citizens. Immigration to Uruguay was small in relative numbers compared to that of neighboring Argentina. In the decade between 1905 and 1914, the ratio of new immigrants to the total population of Uruguay was only one-tenth of that for Argentina (Finch 1981). As will be discussed in Chapter 7, this fact may be important in understanding the rapid spread of the Preterit in Buenos Aires Spanish as opposed to in Uruguayan Spanish.

3.3.5 *Previous Research*

Uruguayan Spanish has largely been ignored by scholars of linguistics and Latin American Spanish. To the extent that it has been addressed, what little has been written is generally defined by two important generalizations: first, treating "Uruguayan Spanish" as a homogeneous entity, and second, assuming that its similarities with Buenos Aires Spanish are such that they may well be treated as one. Lope Blanch (1968) states that works on Porteño Spanish are also applicable to Uruguayan Spanish. The same is argued by Lipski (1994), who maintains that Montevideo Spanish is indistinguishable from Buenos Aires Spanish. Tullio and Kailuweit (2011) similarly include Uruguayan Spanish in an otherwise thorough edition on the Porteño Spanish variety. Thus, from the viewpoint of a majority of scholars, Uruguayan Spanish has been treated as indistinguishable from Buenos Aires Spanish (but cf. Bertolotti 2011 and Elizaincín 1981 for notable attempts in the opposite direction).

The one Uruguayan variety that has been most extensively treated is Portuñol (also referred to as *Portunhol* and *Fronterizo*) (Carvalho 2004; Klee & Lynch 2009; Lipski 2006; Rona 1960). Portuñol, spoken around the border between Uruguay and Brazil, incorporates both Portuguese and Spanish elements. Carvalho (2004) reports that Fronterizo differs from standard Brazilian but mainly in phonology, in the lexicon, and in the retention of rural features (which ones are not specified) otherwise not present in urban Brazilian Portuguese. Lipski (2006), in an informative discussion on the genesis of Portuñol, does not discuss tense/aspect; neither do Klee and Lynch (2009). Lipski (ibid.) does provide an extensive collection of Fronterizo texts, in which the Perfect is absent. He also notes the existence of Spanish verb endings attached to Portuguese verb stems, as in the following Preterit example, in which the verb 'play' is formed through a combination of the Spanish past perfective suffix *-é* attached to the Portuguese stem of *jogar*:

(27) **Joguê**
Play.1SG.PRT
'I played/I have played'

This indicates that the Preterit indeed exists in this variety, but more sources are needed to establish its distribution and meaning.

3.3.5.1 Previous Research on Preterit/Past Perfective in Uruguay

The Preterit/Perfect distinction in Uruguayan Spanish has received minimal attention. Lipski (1994) maintains that Montevideo Spanish is indistinguishable from Buenos Aires Spanish and argues that there is nothing in the syntax or morphology that makes Uruguayan Spanish different from other Latin American varieties. Whether this should be taken to mean that Montevideo Spanish shares all traits with Buenos Aires Spanish, even the restricted use of the Perfect, is unclear. Recent sources are rare, but Henderson (2010) notes that the Perfect is used rather frequently to express past with CR in Montevideo Spanish and that this usage differs from that of Buenos Aires speakers in its mere frequency in current relevance contexts.

The study of Uruguayan Spanish is thus a field that requires more research in all aspects of the language. It is likely that this lack of research on Uruguayan Spanish stems from its proximity to Argentine Spanish, both geographically and linguistically.

It is important to note that even though Montevideo Spanish is considered Rioplatense Spanish, and does share important features with the language spoken across the river, there are important differences. The falling pitch typical to Buenos Aires Spanish is absent from Montevideo Spanish. The use of the personal pronoun *tú* is widespread in various varieties of Uruguayan Spanish but rare in Buenos Aires Spanish (Elizaincín 1981). When it comes to the use of the Perfect and Preterit, the distribution is different from that in Buenos Aires Spanish. As we shall see, and as has also been confirmed by Henderson (2010), the Uruguayan speakers in this study employ the Perfect far more frequently than do Buenos Aires speakers. This study is therefore a much-needed contribution to the study of a largely neglected linguistic area.

CHAPTER 4

Source Determination, Diachronic Regularity, and the Development of Perfects

In the preceding chapter, I showed that the expansion of a Preterit in Porteño Spanish and Uruguayan Spanish have received scholarly attention to differing extents. This chapter provides an overview of the existing literature on the diachronic developments of Perfects and, to some extent, Preterits. Section 4.1 offers insights into general theories of the development of perfects and past perfectives, with an emphasis on the various conceptions of grammaticalization clines. Section 4.2 offers an overview of the literature on the Preterit and its expansion and status, with an emphasis on Porteño Spanish and Romance. It is not the purpose of this chapter to question the validity of the observed grammatical trajectories, but rather to question their status as unique diachronic tendencies. As will be shown in the remainder of this book, alternative developments are not marginal, but in the perfect/past perfective domain, such developments occur as often as those referred to as regular, predictable, and typical to Romance.

4.1 Source Determination and the Development of Perfects

As we have seen, it is common in historical linguistics to claim that a perfect tends to develop into a past or past perfective. Some authors emphasize how this development is common in Romance languages, such as Dahl (1985: 139), who notes that "it is not uncommon for a PFCT to develop into a PFV. (…) This has happened in a number of Romance languages."[1] Hengeveld (2011: 592) similarly states that the resultative construction, which originates in the Latin possessive, *haber*, has evolved into an absolute tense expressing recent past in "most Spanish dialects."

Others go further, claiming that findings from research on particular languages illustrate universal, cross-linguistic paths. Bybee and Dahl (1989: 56), for instance, claim that an "actual diachronic relation can be demonstrated between pairs of grams: a perfect tends to develop into a past or perfective

1 PFCT is Dahl's abbreviation for "perfect," PFV his abbreviation for "perfective."

as in Romance languages." This means that there is an observed tendency for perfects to develop in certain ways. However, once this development has begun, its further development is taken to be determined; Bybee et al. (1994: 9) argue that "the actual meaning of the construction that enters into grammaticization uniquely determines the path that the grammaticization follows, and consequently, the resulting grammatical meaning." Traugott and Dasher (2002: 3) also ascertain that "the greatest degree of semantic regularity has so far been found in conceptual structures the lexemes of which are typically associated with grammaticalization (. . .) e.g. (. . .) aspect, 'have', 'finish'."

If a perfect tends to expand and eventually generalize to become a past or past perfective, and subsequently erases the existing past/past perfective category, what then happens to the past/past perfective? It follows—implicitly—that it tends to fall into disuse. This assumption has been put forward in numerous publications (see below for details) but perhaps most explicitly so in the theory of paths (Bybee et al. 1994). As we shall see, most mentions of the past/perfective in this framework and others are implicit assumptions based on the expected trajectories of perfects. A notable exception is Dahl (2004), who, as we saw in the introduction, explicitly argues that the past/past perfective generally is the end point of a development.

The assumption that a trajectory is expected, and that the development of grammaticalizing constructions is predictable, was early treated in detail by Hopper and Traugott (1993) to explain the development from lexical item to grammatical auxiliary. While grammaticalization makes predictions about the development lexical > grammatical (see the discussion on unidirectionality below), the concept of paths involves more specific predictions about the expected developments of construction. This approach to morphosyntactic development—source determination (Bybee et al. 1994: 9–15)—makes predictions of a more specific nature than, for instance, those of the unidirectionality hypothesis. Here, I will not go into detail about the nature of and counterexamples to traditional grammaticalization. I will, however, go into detail about the nature of the paths, a subfield that has been studied and challenged to a lesser extent.

The linguistic paths of development—or clines—were first defined as a "natural pathway among which forms evolve, a kind of linguistic 'slippery slope' which guides the development of forms" (Hopper & Traugott 1993: 6). Norde (2009: 54–55) points to the fact that in the second edition of the handbook by Hopper and Traugott (2003: 6), the definition of cline was altered, the "slippery slope" was now absent from the picture, and the cline was now conceived as a natural pathway along which forms evolve, a schema which models the development of forms. Note that this definition is more in tune with the

work of Bybee et al. (1994), in that it implies naturalness to the development along paths.

From the very beginning, the nature of the paths has varied in degree of abstraction. The most abstract path level is exemplified in a precursor to Givón's classic saying "Today's morphology is yesterday's syntax" (Givón 1971: 413), a "meta-cline" (Norde 2009: 55) first described in Givón (1979):

Abstract level:
Discourse > syntax > morphology > morphophonemics > zero
(Givón 1979: 209)

Hopper and Traugott's first descriptions of the clines also varied from descriptions of the abstract level, as observed in the following path:

Less abstract level:
content item > grammatical word > clitic > inflectional affix
(Hopper & Traugott 2003: 7)

It is also described with more concrete examples, such as in the following clines:

Part of phrase	>	part of compound	>	derivational affix
A basket full (*of eggs*)	>	*a cupful of water*	>	*hopeful*[2]

(Hopper & Traugott 2003: 7)

Paths of development—of both abstract and concrete nature—play the center role in Bybee et al.'s influential (1994) work on tense, aspect, and modal categories in the world, also described in 2.3. In the historical linguistics literature, this work provides the empirical and theoretical basis for the source determination hypothesis, and this is where it was first explicitly formulated. The typological base is broad: from a sample of 76 languages from different phyla, the authors identify regularities and commonalities in the meanings expressed by closed-class grammatical morphemes or constructions. Importantly, they also attempt to identify how these similar classes came to be, assuming that grammar is created through usage (recall discussion in Chapter 2). They give examples from categories of both tense, aspect and modality and sum up the

2 Note that the addition of the grammatical terms in line one stems from Norde (2009: 54), not from the original source.

findings as follows (ibid.: 105), in paths of development leading to simple past and perfective grams. This, the perfective path, offers a more concrete level of prediction:

Concrete level:

be, *have*	> resultative	> anterior	> perfective/simple past
come		> anterior	> perfective/simple past
finish, directionals	> completive	> anterior	> perfective/simple past

One much-studied instance of a path of development is precisely the perfective path, as outlined above. As an empirical basis for this path, Bybee et al. (1994) list the following:

a. The *have*-Perfect of Romance has developed into past perfective in French.
b. The *have*-Perfect of Modern Colloquial South German has developed into a simple past, used for, for instance, narration, without any sense of anteriority.
c. In Mandarin, the sentence-final particle *le* (derived from *liao* 'to finish') originally had only perfect function but has developed into denoting perfective function and appears directly after the main verb (whether or not the verb is sentence final). According to Hopper and Traugott (2003: 86), it is "clear that the sentence-final function developed earlier than, and gave rise to, the verb-final function, even though they coexist in the language today."
d. In the Dahome dialect of Ewe, the verb 'finish' has developed from anterior into past-tense marker (based on Westermann 1907: 139).
e. In Atchin, the auxiliary *ma* 'come' merges with pronominal forms to make a past-tense auxiliary. In neighboring varieties, this is still used as anterior.
f. In both Eastern and Western Kru, there exists a Perfect auxiliary that is used as perfective in the Eastern Kru language Lozoua Dida.

Consequently, Bybee et al. (1994: 86) conclude that the "evidence for the passage of anterior to perfective or past is quite strong and distributed across various language families". They also suggest, somewhat surprisingly, based on example (d) above (Ewe), that all pasts and perfectives from sources meaning 'finish' in their material may have gone through an anterior stage, though the "evidence for the anterior stage may be missing" (ibid.). It should be noted

that Westermann nowhere states that the lexeme meaning 'finish' has ever had anterior function. To have this serve as an illustration of a path appears weakly founded empirically, in addition to being circular: the Ewe case is supposed to count as evidence for a path, while the evidence itself is being reconstructed on the basis of the path it is supposed to instantiate.

Bybee el al. (1994: 104) argue that the evidence from the frequency of occurrence in their data points to the main path of development being that of resultative or completive leading to perfect and then to simple past. Now, if we return to the examples cited by Bybee et al., we find that "the frequency of occurrence" of the resultative path is restricted to Romance (French) and Germanic (South German), while the evidence for the completive path is restricted to Ewe and Mandarin. Note, however, that this development arguably also has occurred in Slavic languages (Östen Dahl, personal communication). It is unclear why this evidence is not included in the empirical support presented by Bybee et al. above. In addition, the evidence from Atchin and Eastern Kru suggests 'come' as lexical source.

It is pertinent here to remember that we have records for only a tiny fraction of language history. It is thus alarming when Romance, one of the most intensely studied of all language families, turns out to show substantial variation in its development of Perfects and Perfectives when studied in detail, as will be shown in 4.3.1.1. What then about other, less studied language families, such as Eastern Kru above? I return to the discussion of whether this empirical basis appears suited to constitute a diachronic universal in Chapter 8.

4.1.1 *Why the Regularity Postulate in Cognitive Approaches to Grammaticalization?*

Why would linguistic change repeat itself in history? Why are regular pathways of change conceived of as so important in the otherwise flexible usage-based frameworks, with such an emphasis on idiosyncrasy in the synchronic domain?

This formulation appears paradoxical. However, recall from Chapter 2 that grammaticalization may be seen not merely as a diachronic phenomenon but rather as the main creator of grammar. In a sense, this view of emergent grammar (Hopper 1998) is usage-based theory *par excellence*: grammatical categories arise through processes of use, and the real universals are thus diachronic (Bybee 2008; 2010). Note that in later works, Bybee goes even further and argues that the real universals lie not in the paths but in the mechanisms that create the paths—that is, in domain-general mechanisms such as chunking, harmony, bleaching, and so on (Bybee 2010: 220). In this sense, universals are not linguistic but purely cognitive.

Bybee (2011: 78) concludes that the mechanisms of change involved in grammaticalization have their basis in processing mechanisms. Since such mechanisms are common to all speakers, they are operating "whenever people are speaking the world over." Therefore, they are universal. Linguistic structure is not universal; mechanisms of change are, and they create common paths of development.

It is important to note here that as the "grammaticalization" term came to be used in different ways (for instance, both for processes that broaden and for processes that tighten a lexeme's scope, for pragmatic bleaching as well as for pragmatic enrichment, etc.; see Chapter 2), the reaction from the grammaticalization community was to widen its field of application, not tighten it (Fischer 2007: 119–120). It is possible that as grammaticalization worked its way from being a description of linguistic change to becoming a framework (Fischer 2007: 61) or theory (see discussion in Faarlund 2008), the importance of the paths became even greater.

The impact of the pathways' regularity can thus be repeated as follows:

– *To generate grammatical structure*: In a usage-based model, linguistic structure is assumed to arise via use. Because speakers follow the same domain-general processes of use (absorption, harmony, frequency, etc.; see also Chapter 2), the same linguistic categories arise in languages from different phyla. The radical expression of this is the idea of an emergent grammar (Hopper 1998).
– *To reconstruct prior stages of language*: For instance, aspect is assumed to be placed prior to tense in the evolutionary scenario outlined by Heine and Kuteva (2007: 110–114), because the meaning of an aspectual category (such as perfect) is assumed to be more specific and less abstract than the highly grammaticalized tense category.

4.1.2 *Grammaticalization: Epiphenomenal?*

In addition to having major synchronic implications, the paths of development also serve as evidence for grammaticalization's being a separate phenomenon—and not an epiphenomenon of independent changes. Recurring pathways are essentially the prime example of the composite nature of grammaticalization because grammaticalization is precisely this, the interaction between otherwise independent processes (Diewald & Smirnova 2010: 98). Diewald and Smirnova (ibid.: 98) argue that this interaction is why grammaticalization has an explanatory power, which general processes such as analogy and phonological change lack, and see paths as the ultimate example of the unique nature of grammaticalization:

> The distinctive and unique feature of grammaticalization is generally seen in this particular combination and serialization of several processes and stages, which among other things are reflected in grammaticalization scales and paths and complex scenarios of successive contexts and constructions.

This is further illustrated in, for instance, paths that show regular semantic and functional developments (Davidse et al. 2012: 6).

Apparently, this serialization of several processes and stages is necessary for grammaticalization to constitute a unique process. This theoretical motivation may thus have led eager grammaticalization scholars to identify regular paths where the empirical basis is less than impressive. As I have shown, the empiric basis in favor of the perfective path is limited to three Romance languages, colloquial German, and five rather dubious non–Indo-European sources. But according to Bybee et al. (1994), the assumption that certain grammaticalization paths are common in unrelated languages points to the existence of common cognitive and communicative patterns underlying the use of language. As also seen in Chapter 2, this is a crucial claim to cognitive theories of language; it is a claim not about diachrony only but about synchronic states of grammar as well.

It is clear, however, that the primary grammaticalization (the semantic change lexical item > auxiliary; see 2.1.2 for discussion) of the possessive construction has occurred in certain Romance (and other Indo-European) languages; this is not to question the validity of the European examples of the grammaticalization of, for instance, the Latin *habere* construction. There clearly also is evidence for the path *finish* > anterior, as well as support for the development possessive > auxiliary (e.g., in the Portuguese verb *ter* 'to have'; cf. Amaral & Howe 2009). However, the fact that this is far from the only possible outcome of a competition between perfects and Preterits is overlooked in the literature. Clearly, this competition can motivate both types of expansion. These outcomes will be discussed in the following section.

4.1.3 *Counterexamples*

Identifying counterexamples to the unidirectionality hypothesis is a popular enterprise, and numerous counterexamples have been identified from different phyla and linguistic categories (Janda 2001; Joseph 2011; Norde 2009; 2010 for overview). Here, I am concerned with another type of unidirectionality—namely, the specific claims of regular paths in the development of tense and aspect, associated with "secondary grammaticalization" (see Chapter 2 for discussion of this term). Recall from section 4.1 that one can distinguish two levels of prediction in grammaticalization theory: the abstract lexical >

grammatical level, and the more concrete presumed instantiations of these clines, the paths. When it comes to these paths, the most vehement criticism is conceptual rather than empirical and concerns questions about the very nature of unidirectionality, such as questioning whether it is a principle or a hypothesis. Is it a generalization over a strong tendency? Alternatively, is it an inherent feature of grammaticalization, as argued by, for example, Hopper and Traugott (2003)?

It is worth mentioning that when it comes to counterexamples, grammaticalization scholars typically acknowledge their existence but argue that they do not illustrate exact reversals of the grammaticalization processes. Bybee (2011: 77–78) rightly notes that as a grammaticalized form ceases to rise in frequency, such as when English *shall* decreased in frequency due to the rise of *will* and *be going to*, this is not a precise reverse of the process. Note that I agree that decreases in frequency of a grammaticalized form do not constitute a reversal of the grammaticalization path (as argued by Bybee above). So, as we shall see, when the Perfect decreases in frequency in Porteño Spanish, this decrease is not a degrammaticalization. It is not, however, uncommon, which I will stress in the remainder of this work.

Such acknowledgements may be observed—albeit to a lesser extent—in the counterexamples to the paths. As a general tendency, it appears accepted that paths need not come to completion and that they are not compulsory "road maps" (Eckardt 2006: 26). In Traugott and Dasher (2002), we can similarly observe the claim that the largest degree of regularity is found in domains such as aspect (*have*, *finish*). They accept, though, that these regularities are not absolute. However, the authors argue that counterexamples are more likely to occur in the nominal domain, since they are more susceptible to extralinguistic factors such as change in the nature or the social construction of the referent. They further argue that microchanges are unique and less predictable but that macrochanges still tend to follow predictable paths. Traugott and Dasher further conclude that one does not expect (or need) 100% regularity in paths such as these, which are the product of human interaction. But they admit that a large number—say, a quarter of the instances—certainly would discredit the hypothesis. They maintain that until today, the number of counterexamples to semantic unidirectionality would remain small. Similarly, Ariel (2008: 122) states that lexical items being recruited to become grammatical is a more reasonable innovative step than the other way around, that historical changes are virtually always unidirectional, and that these developments are not random or reversible.

However, even though scholars tend to accept the existence of counterexamples, and also tend to accept that unidirectionality may not be more than a statistical tendency, the term "grammaticalization" continues to be used as if

unidirectionality still were a 100% reliable feature of it. It appears, then, that despite the massive body of work on counterexamples (see, e.g., Janda 2001), unidirectionality continues to be viewed as a defining criterion of grammaticalization more than as an empirical generalization.

Despite this, however, the insight that regularities are not absolute and that alternative developments may in fact be as common as the expected developments (as we shall see for Latin American Spanish) has been scarcely reflected in the literature. While the literature on unidirectionality and degrammaticalization is vast, the source determination hypothesis has largely remained unchallenged and is rarely counted among the "problem areas" in grammaticalization (see Diewald 2010 for discussion).

There are exceptions; Janda, in a vehement critique of grammaticalization theory (2001), argues that grammaticalization theorists are too preoccupied with fixed grammaticalization pathways as putative guarantees for accurate reconstruction. Reconstruction is a subfield in which pathways of change have been given extensive explanatory load. Observable pathways of change are used to reconstruct prior stages of language. This view has been criticized above all for its obvious circularity; reconstructed pathways serve as evidence for universal pathways, which in turn serve as the basis for further reconstruction (Newmeyer 1998: 279), as is precisely the case in the use of Ewe's putative prior stages, discussed above. Lehmann (2004: 156) similarly states that a case of diachronic variation where an earlier form is reconstructed does not count as historical evidence.

While more conceptual critiques of source determination clearly exist, empirically based path criticisms are more restricted; see, however, Howe (2013), Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008), and Squartini (1998), all of whom discuss Romance, and Romaine (1999), who discusses Tok Pisin.

4.2 The Diachronic Development of Perfects

The literature on the perfect and its diachronic development is substantial. Here, a summary of approaches is included because they are relevant to the present case for two reasons. First, they generally ignore the fate of the past/past perfective, but second, they still make strong implicit claims about its development, given the predictions about the Perfect's presumed expansion.

In the reference work *World Lexicon of Grammaticalization*, Heine and Kuteva (2002) refer to perfect > past and perfect > perfective as two well-traveled grammaticalization paths. For the perfect > past, they list the same examples as do Bybee et al. (1994): colloquial German and Dahome, the latter

based on the same source that Bybee et al. use, namely, Westermann (1907). As for the perfect > perfective path, this is referred to as a process that has been described "especially by Bybee et al. (1994)" (Heine & Kuteva 2002: 232). They also maintain that "perfect has given rise to perfective in some European languages" (ibid.: 232), and list (as do Bybee et al.) French as an example of this development. Note that Heine and Kuteva (2002) do not provide other examples than those provided by Bybee et al.

Heine and Kuteva (2006: 140–182) devote a chapter to the rise of possessive Perfects (those referred to as *have*-Perfects above). They use a number scale (0–5) to place the *have*-Perfects in terms of their development. The starting point 0 is the stage in which the *have*-construction retains its original lexical meaning (of possession), while 5 is the stage in which the possessive perfect is generalized as past time marker. According to their definition, no European languages have yet reached stage 5, but some have reached stage 4. At this stage, the construction is largely established as marker of past-time reference, with the effect that the old past time marker declines. The authors place Northern Italian and Southern German at this stage. They place French, Standard German, and Standard Italian at stage 3, implying that in these languages, the competition between the *have*-Perfect and the already existing markers of past is stronger.

It is interesting to note the accounts of the phenomenon in sources written prior to the emergence of the important works on paths of development. What is notable is that in these earlier accounts, the expansion of the perfect seems to be assumed to be restricted to certain European languages, while after the investigations of Bybee and colleagues, the paths are taken to be well traveled and to recur in a number of languages, and are seen as instances of a "diachronic universal."

4.2.1 *Proposed Explanations for the Expansion of a Perfect*

In addition to the general accounts of predictable pathways of change, much has been written on the motivation behind the expansion of a perfect. This section provides an overview of these approaches, judged relevant because they illustrate one possible end point of the competition between a perfect and a perfective. The many approaches to these developments can roughly be divided into two different types, with different arguments: namely, relaxation of degree of recentness and bleaching of the CR component due to frequency. I now discuss these approaches.

4.2.1.1 Relaxation of Degree of Recentness Required

The first approach to be discussed here assumes that a gradual relaxation of the degree of recentness of the perfect makes it expand from being able

to refer to recent-past context, to gradually being able to refer to hodiernal, later to prehodiernal, and eventually to all past contexts (Comrie 1976). This approach overlaps somewhat with the next line of argumentation, as in Schwenter (1994), who suggests that the perfect can become a past/perfective only after having acquired its "hot news" function (his term for recent past; see 2.2.6) by speakers. This is because this function is the one that most resembles the perfective/past semantically. The expansion of the Perfect in Peninsular Spanish is thus seen to happen not through the relaxation of the semantic scope of the constraints on the perfect but through contexts that are temporally indeterminate.

Some scholars argue that the spread of a perfect constitutes a gradual loss of the semantic relationship with the present moment and a consequent gain of the expression of pure perfective meaning. Klein (1994), for instance, states that recent past is a tense and that this function is presumably where the change from aspect to tense starts in the typical expansion.

According to Dahl (1985), the choice between perfect and simple past is bound up with the information structure in that the probability for using the simple past grows as the time of situation becomes more definite or presupposed. For example, in Swedish, the Perfect is compatible only with indefinite time adverbials. When the Perfect expands, we observe a pattern spread in which the most important semantic element (time of reference) becomes backgrounded.

4.2.1.2 Frequency-Induced Bleaching of CR Component

A somewhat different approach assumes that the perfect expands as the current relevance (CR) component is lost (Bybee et al. 1994: 86–87). In this view, the perfect expands because of how language is used. The idea is that the CR component triggers a more frequent use of the perfect, on the premise that speakers want to express themselves as more relevant (in line with usage-based explanations to language change discussed in Chapter 2). This increased frequency leads speakers to use the perfect in contexts previously not associated with current relevance. This overuse makes the specific semantics bleach, and the CR component eventually disappears. This view is compatible with the idea of semantic bleaching outlined in Chapter 2.

Serrano (1994) similarly argues that the expansion comes about as the speaker wishes to make relevant in the present an action that the Preterit presents as concluded and perfective. Detges (2000) argues that the expansion has to do with the fact that the form that expresses past events with CR eventually loses this feature as it becomes frequently used to refer to events lacking relevance; the use becomes conventionalized and extends to other contexts. Croft

(2000: 133) relies on pragmatic inference; the past value is viewed as inherent to the perfective marker, and the aspectual value is thus lost.

Common to both accounts above is that they assume that the interaction between the perfect and the past/past perfective, and subsequently the loss of the CR component, are responsible for the expansion of the perfect. These approaches thus presuppose the following: (1) It is the CR component that indirectly triggers the expansion of the perfect, since it is this factor that makes it increase in frequency; (2) this same component is lost precisely because of the increase in its frequency. What is striking, though, is that these approaches appear to assume that the CR component is lost, not that the perfective past reading is added to the scope of the category. If one assumes that the CR component is lost, the change fits easily into a usage-based picture of frequency-driven semantic change. However, as we shall see in Chapter 7, it is here assumed that the Porteño Spanish Preterit becomes broader in that it acquires the possibility to express CR but also retains the possibility to express simple perfectivity in the past.

Note that the expansion neither of a perfect nor of a Preterit has been explicitly approached from the viewpoint of historical pragmatics, an approach that has seen a considerable increase during the last decade and that seeks explanations for change in actual context, building on Grices's implicatures, more specifically his assumption that "it may not be impossible for what starts life, so to speak, as a conversational implicature to be conventionalized" (1989: 39). The neo-Gricean approach was most explicitly converted into a hypothesis of semantic change in Traugott and Dasher's Invited Inferencing Theory of Semantic Change (IITSC) (2002); it has been refined and employed in various works by Schwenter and Waltereit (2010) and Diewald (2002), to mention two.

4.2.1.3 Perfect Spread: An Areal Phenomenon?

Studies on perfect expansion existed prior to the accounts of similar phenomena that emerged in the 1990s; see, for instance, Heine and Kuteva (2006) for discussion. *Oberdeutscher Präteritumschwund* (Upper German Preterite Loss), or simply *Präteritumschwund* refers to a change in the verbal system of southern dialects of German, in which the Preterit tense was lost and replaced by the Perfect, a change often assumed to have occurred around 1500 (Sapp 2009). It is therefore worth mentioning that the Perfect's spread in European languages can also be viewed as an areal phenomenon; that is, the *have*-Perfects did not arise independently but rather did so because of contact (Heine & Kuteva 2006). This is based on the geographical distribution of the Perfect on the European mainland. The full expansion of the Perfect has occurred in a geographically continuous area covering parts of France, Germany, and Italy.

The Perfect/Preterit distinction is retained in certain areas only; this original distribution is sometimes referred to in terms of the Perfect as a "peculiar maritime category" (Lindstedt 2000: 371). This is so because most languages that preserve the distinction are situated on the fringe of the European continent: Baltic Finnic languages, Scandinavian, North Germanic, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Southern Italian, Greek, Albanian, and Macedonian, to mention a few.

This theory reflects the fact that the distribution of grammatical elements such as articles, case markings, tense, and aspect categories are usually highly skewed geographically, suggesting that grammaticalization processes are highly sensitive to contact influence. In addition, this theory draws on the assumption that what is borrowed in grammar is periphrastic constructions and free markers, rather than fused material and affixes. This assumption is consistent with Heine and Kuteva's assumption (2003) that grammatical replication is constrained by grammaticalization principles such as unidirectionality and that the order of borrowing can actually be reconstructed by means of the relative maturity of the borrowed material. Here, I will not go into detail about the discussion of whether the Perfect's spread in mainland Europe is an areal phenomenon.

4.3 Accounts for Developments of Past/Past Perfective

In sharp contrast to the vast literature on the perfect within a grammaticalization framework, stand diachronic accounts of the perfective. While the range of proposed explanations for the expansion of a perfect is broad indeed, very little has been written on the past/past perfective's development or on the outcome of its competition with the perfect. Brinton (1988: 15) rightly notes that there has been little debate on the function of the simple past in English.[3] Note, however, that a number of studies do discuss the historical development of past tenses in Indo-European and the development of past tense forms in, for example, English (Bybee 1995).

As seen above, the massive literature on the perfect's trajectories provides strong implications about the development of pasts/past perfectives; if a perfect tends to expand, it follows that the past/perfective past tends to disappear. To the best of my knowledge, the past/perfective past is not accounted for in

3 But note the existence of Preterit-present verbs; see Fischer (2007: 162–163).

any approach reminiscent of paths (except as semantic/functional end point of the perfect). Nor do there exist, to my knowledge, any semantic/diachronic models accounting for the further diachronic development of pasts/perfective pasts.

The notion of *perfage* introduced in 2.2 is relevant to this discussion. The synthetic past/past perfective is old as a gram and typically falls into disuse in competition with an analytical, new construction (Bybee et al. 1994). From the view of source determination, an expanding gram is assumed to bleach semantically parallel to its losing phonological substance. In Porteño Spanish, however, what we observe is an old, synthetic gram that expands semantically and functionally but does not (yet) lose phonological substance.

Viewed synchronically, several accounts within not typologically oriented frameworks do emphasize the competing relationship between perfects and Preterits. Schaden (2009) proposes a formal/pragmatic model to account precisely for the expansion of the Preterit in varieties of English and of Latin American Spanish, while Dickey (2001) suggests that the semantics of the Preterit do indeed include experiential readings. Such matters are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

4.3.1 *Empirical Studies*

Two types of empirical sources will be discussed here. First are those that make explicit reference to the development of perfectives/perfects, and second are language descriptions that illustrate how heterogeneous the perfect/perfective distribution appears to be in Romance. I now turn to the former.

Before continuing, it is important to note that, as noted in 4.1, there clearly has occurred a possessive > perfect development. It will be stressed, though, that this path is not the only end point possible for a past/perfective versus perfect opposition. I shall argue that the real tendency is for a formal opposition between perfect and past/perfective to disappear. Which formal structure survives appears to vary. Apparently, pragmatic and dialogical forces may motivate the survival of both.

Empirical approaches to source determination exist; Squartini (1998), for instance, notes that the development of the Perfect in Brazilian Portuguese does not follow the expected pathways. In this variety, the Preterit is used to convey past with CR, the adverb *já* 'already' also combines with the Preterit, and the *já* + Preterit construction may be in a process of grammaticalization (see also Fløgstad 2014 for evidence of a similar process in Porteño Spanish). In addition, Brazilian has a grammaticalized construction expressing past with CR with the lexical source *ter* 'to have':

(28) Eu **tenho morado** no Rio por três anos
I live.1SG.PRS.PRF in Rio for three years
'I have lived in Rio for three years'

(Howe 2013: 77)

Harris (1982), in a seminal article, notes that "the ultimate stage" (the loss of the past simple paradigm) has been reached by French, Northern Italian, and Rumanian. He nevertheless argues that evidence from other Romance languages is at best suggestive when it comes to whether these varieties will follow the same path. According to Harris, the evidence renders a change in Peninsular Spanish neither imminent nor inevitable.

One tradition, however, typically approaches the Preterit/Perfect distribution in Romance from a variationist, grammaticalization-based point of departure (see, e.g., Rodríguez Louro 2009; Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008; 2010). These approaches rely largely on assumptions about morphosyntactic change put forward in the grammaticalization framework, and their use of large corpora provides particularly valid evidence. In my view, these approaches to a small extent acknowledge that the behavior of the Perfect in many Latin American varieties stands in sharp contrast to assumptions about regularity and predictability in secondary grammaticalization.

Howe (2013: 7), on the other hand, refers to the perfect > perfective path as "rather problematic" and questions whether the Perfect in Peruvian Spanish is in fact grammaticalizing at all. However, in his approach, he explicitly uses the typical Peninsular development (the perfect > perfective path described in Bybee et al. 1994) as the primary mechanism in his approach to the Peruvian Perfect/Preterit distribution. Howe's study (2013) provides the most extensive account of Perfects and Preterits in Spanish varieties. The following table, from Howe and Rodríguez Louro (2013), provides an overview of the use of Preterit versus Perfect in a CR function in three Spanish varieties:

TABLE 3 *Perfect/Preterit distribution in three Spanish varieties, after Howe and Rodríguez Louro (2013: 50)*

	Preterit	**Perfect**
Peninsular Spanish	46% (N = 827)	54% (N = 956)
Mexican Spanish	85% (N = 1903)	15% (N = 331)
Argentinean Spanish	94% (N = 783)	6% (N = 47)

The Argentinean data in Table 3 stem from Rodríguez Louro (2009), and their overall distribution is remarkably similar to that of age group I in this sample, as will be shown in Chapter 6, more specifically, in Table 11.

Kany (1945 [1970]: 198–202) notes that the Preterit is preferred over the Perfect in a majority of Latin American varieties and that frequent Perfect use is restricted to certain Northern Argentinean varieties (as noted above), in addition to Bolivian and Peruvian varieties. Despite the tendency to use the Preterit over the Perfect, he does stress that the distinctions are not rigid. Note, however, that Kany's descriptions are rather schematic, and they ignore, for instance, intralanguage variation as well as subfunction variation. However, his early account provides yet another piece of evidence in favor of the demise of the Perfect in these varieties.

Penny (1991; 2000: 197) notes that the distinction between Preterit and Perfect is not equal in the entire Spanish-speaking world. In the northeast of the Spanish Peninsula, as well as in practically all of Latin America, Penny argues that the Perfect can be used only for situations that can be prolonged into the future (i.e., persistent situations), thus adhering to the so-called "Latin American norm." Several studies treat the Mexican Perfect/Preterit opposition (see, for instance, Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2010), and it has been claimed that the Latin American norm applies in this variety as well, as the Perfect is reserved for imperfective contexts (Squartini & Bertinetto 2000).

As I demonstrated in 3.3.2.1, it is an established fact that Buenos Aires Spanish uses the Perfect less frequently to express past with CR than do other varieties of Spanish. Note also that in northern parts of Argentina, a tendency opposite of the one found in Buenos Aires is observed; the Perfect is preferred over the Preterit (Vidal de Battini 1966). Summing up, Howe (2013: 55) shows that the Perfect is used less in Argentinean Spanish than in both Mexican Spanish and Peninsular Spanish, in accordance with the numbers presented in this book.

For Uruguayan and Paraguayan Spanish, Henderson (2010) notes that the Perfect is used more frequently in these varieties than in Porteño Spanish. Howe (2013) notes the same tendency for Peruvian Spanish. The Perfect/Preterit distinction behaves differently in Portuguese than in most Romance varieties (Squartini 1998) and is also argued to constitute a counterexample to the theory of paths (ibid.). In this sense, it constitutes one of the few explicit critiques of the source determination hypothesis.

It appears to be well known that in American English, the simple past is gaining terrain and can, in certain contexts, be used to express past with CR (Elsness 1997). However, this gain has received surprisingly little attention in

the grammaticalization literature (but cf. Schaden 2009 for a formal account that explicitly takes American English into account).

4.3.1.1 Perfect and Preterit in Other Romance languages

Table 4 provides a schematic overview of the Perfect/Preterit distinction in a selection of Romance languages and in other Indo-European languages, in total 50 languages, restricted to—available descriptions of the Perfect/Preterit distinction in a selection of European and Latin American languages.

The columns in Table 4 indicate preference for either Perfect or Preterit, or indicate that the opposition is alive. In those languages where there isa preference for either Perfect or Preterit, this preference is further specified in the language-specific description, indicating, for example, an ongoing change ("Expanded") or an already occurred change ("Expanded").

TABLE 4 *Perfect/Preterit in a selection of Romance languages*

		Opposition alive[4]	Perfect preference	Preterit preference	Source
	Europe				
1.	Asturian			Expanding Preterit	Penny 2000
2.	Canarian			Expanding Preterit	Piñero Piñero 2000
3.	Catalan		Expanding Perfect		Hualde 1992: 304
4.	Franco-Provençal		Expanding Perfect		Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 405
5.	French		Perfect has expanded		Bybee et al. 1994
6.	Friulian		Expanding Perfect		Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 405
7.	Galician			Expanding Preterit	Penny 2000; Zamora Vicente 1967
8.	Northern Italian		Expanding Perfect		Squartini 1998

4 A Perfect/Preterit opposition is taken to be the prototypical distribution found in, e.g., English (Comrie 1976, Chapter 2).

		Opposition alive	Perfect preference	Preterit preference	Source
9.	Judeo-Spanish			Expanding Preterit	Varol 2008
10.	Leones			Preterit preferred (archaism)	Penny 2000; Zamora Vicente 1967: 208
11.	Lombard		Expanding Perfect		Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 405
12.	Milanese		Expanded Perfect		Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 405
13.	Norman	Distinction alive			Liddicoat 1994
14.	Occitan		Expanding Perfect		Harris & Vincent 1988; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 405
15.	Piemontese		Expanded Perfect		Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 405
16.	Portuguese			Expanded Preterit	Oliveira & Lopes 1995: 100
17.	Romanch		Expanding Perfect		Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 405
18.	Romanian		Expanding Perfect		Daniliuc & Daniliuc 2000: 157
19.	Sardinian		Expanding Perfect		Jones 1993
20.	Sicilian			Preterit preferred (archaism)	Centineo 1991; Harris & Vincent 1988: 301; Squartini 1998
21.	Standard Spanish	Distinction alive	Expanding Perfect		Comrie 1976
22.	Venetian		Expanding Perfect		Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 405
	Latin America				
23.	Bolivian Spanish		Expanding Perfect		Kany 1945 [1970]: 200
24.	Chilean Spanish	Distinction alive			Henderson 2010

TABLE 4 *Perfect/Preterit in a selection of Romance languages* (cont.)

		Opposition alive	Perfect preference	Preterit preference	Source
25.	Colombian Spanish			Expanding Preterit	Kany 1945 [1970]: 201
26.	Costa Rican Spanish	Distinction alive			Quesada Pacheco 2009
27.	Cuban Spanish			Expanding Preterit	Kany 1945 [1970]: 202
28.	Ecuadorian Spanish			Expanding Preterit	Kany 1945 [1970]: 201
29.	Mexican Spanish			Expanding Preterit	Lope Blanch 1972
30.	Panamanian Spanish			Expanding Preterit	Kany 1945 [1970]: 202
31.	Paraguayan Spanish			Expanding Preterit	Henderson 2010
32.	Peruvian Spanish	Distinction alive			Howe 2013
33.	Brazilian Portuguese			Expanded Preterit	Oliveira & Lopes 1995: 100
34.	Portuñol	Distinction alive[5]			Lipski 2006
35.	Salvadoran Spanish	Distinction alive		Preference for Preterit in certain contexts	Hernández 2006; Kany 1945 [1970]: 202
36.	Venezuelan	Distinction alive		Preference for Preterit in certain contexts	Kany 1945 [1970]: 202; Sedano & Bentivoglio 1996

5 Source difficult to interpret.

What does Table 4 show? Clearly, it illustrates a substantial variation in the distribution of the Perfect and Preterit in a selection of Romance languages. Importantly, the Latin American varieties exhibit a slight preference toward the expansion of the Preterit; of the 14 languages in the sample, the Preterit is used in contexts previously restricted to the Perfect in eight. Seven of the 22 Romance varieties spoken in Europe exhibit a tendency in the same direction.

These findings have important implications. Recall Dahl's claim, quoted in the introduction: "Past tenses and perfectives rarely develop into anything else: they seem to be, in a sense, the stable final point of that development" (2004: 275). In the languages in which the Preterit has expanded, the older, synthetic form—with past-perfective function—has gained terrain. This means that in a competing relationship between a Perfect and a Preterit, it appears impossible to predict which category will expand; both appear as likely to do so. The generalization emerging from this is one I will return to: what tends to disappear is the morphological expression of past with CR. The surviving form varies, as illustrated through this selection of Latin American varieties. The selection of Germanic languages shows less of a tendency toward the expansion of Preterit, as shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5 *Perfect/Preterit in a selection of Germanic languages*

37.	Afrikaans		Perfect has expanded to past		Van Marle & Smits 1993
38.	Danish	Distinction alive			Haberland 1994: 334
39.	Dutch	(Distinction alive)[6]		Perfect expanding to general past	Heine & Kuteva 2006: 39; Hewson 1997: 337

6 There is disagreement in the sources as to what regards the distribution of Perfect in Dutch. Heine and Kuteva (2006) place Dutch at "Stage 0" of the model to describe the major traits in the development of possessive perfects in European languages. Stage 0 is defined as the stage where perfect expresses past with CR and has "no aorist/Preterite function" (Heine & Kuteva 2006: 37). Hewson (1997), on the other hand, notes that Dutch Perfects may appear with, for instance, certain adverbs typically associated with pasts.

TABLE 5 *Perfect/Preterit in a selection of Germanic languages* (cont.)

40.	American English			Preterit accepted in certain CR contexts	Elsness 1997
41.	British English	Distinction alive			Elsness 1997
42.	Faroese	Distinction alive			Thráinsson et al. 2004
43.	Frisian	Distinction alive			Tiersma 1985
44.	South German		Perfect has expanded to past		Heine & Kuteva 2006: 37
45.	North German	Distinction alive, Perfect entering past domain			Heine & Kuteva 2006: 39
46.	Icelandic	Distinction alive			Thráinsson 2011
47.	Norwegian	Distinction alive			Faarlund et al. 1997
48.	Swedish	Distinction alive			Larsson 2009
49.	Yiddish		Perfect has expanded to past		Jacobs 2005
50.	Pennsylvania German		Perfect has expanded to past		Van Ness 1994: 431

Here, the Preterit is used to express past with CR in one language, and in this language, American English, this is only so for restricted contexts. In this group of languages, the majority preserve the opposition between the two categories. In only four languages (Yiddish, Pennsylvania German, South German, and Afrikaans) has the Perfect expanded to past.

As a general observation, then, we see a substantial variation in the distribution of the Preterit and Perfect in Romance, and particularly so in Latin

American varieties, in which the Preterit has expanded in a majority of languages. This is not so for the Germanic languages.

It should be noted that several of the cited sources provide very limited detail about the nature of the distinctions in question (they typically ignore the microsteps; see Chapter 7), and these tables clearly are a simplification. Nevertheless, this overview provides a manifestation of the heterogeneous distinction of Preterits and Perfects in what has been thought of as the language family in which the perfect > perfective past development is most common.

4.4 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the diachronic development of perfects and perfectives. The emphasis has been on directionality, and its prominence as evidence for the complex and serial nature of grammaticalization has been questioned, based on available empirical material. I have pointed to substantial variation in the distribution of perfects/perfectives but also to the paradox that the empirical studies referred to nevertheless have lacked theoretical consideration as real counterexamples to the source determination hypothesis.

The material reviewed has been of two types: descriptions and discussions of Romance and, to some extent, those of languages from other families, making up a total of 50 reviewed languages. The results are striking. In Romance, the competition between Perfect and Preterit clearly enables the expansion of both, with a slight preference for the Preterit in the Latin American varieties. When reviewing the evidence on which the universality of the perfective path is based, one might speculate about how such conclusions could have been drawn on such a small empirical sample. Could the point of departure have been French and other European languages? The fact that the Romance language family exhibits such variation is worrying. What about other, less documented (and studied) language families?

CHAPTER 5

Method

5.1 General

In this study, the data are approached by attempting to uncover different verbalizations of the same linguistic function. Here "sameness" will be defined through a definition of the envelope of variation (see section 5.4), which will allow for the identification of forms that cover the same function.

Since no electronic corpus of Porteño or Uruguayan Spanish exists (to my knowledge), data from field interviews were obtained as a means to study the semantic functions in question as they appear in natural discourse, thus omitting the use of both written sources and questionnaires. The number of analyzable tokens is 538. The corpora from which the tokens were extracted include three types of sources.

1. Semistructured interviews: 19 speakers, collected in Buenos Aires and Uruguay. The number was initially higher, but three interviews were excluded because they did not include any CR tokens. Phrases that include relevant CR tokens were transcribed and tagged in order to be traceable in the electronic files.
2. Transcribed interviews: Tokens extracted from a written corpus of spontaneous speech; *El Habla Culta de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* (1987). This corpus consists of semistructured interviews of informants whose background information is provided in short introductory texts that follow the same structure. In this section, the distribution of the Perfect and Preterit in the speech of six informants from this corpus is accounted for and discussed. This source is referred to as HABCULT.
3. Introductory text, also taken from *El Habla Culta del Idioma de Buenos Aires*: Each transcribed interview in the corpus is introduced by one such text. This source is different from the preceding ones in that it is written and hence does not include spontaneous speech.

5.2 Method and Semantic and Grammatical Change

It is a challenge to find an empirically accountable way to study how grammatical categories change their meaning over time. In the field of semantics, focus appears to be on pure lexical change or, more often, on meaning change involved in grammaticalization.

When it comes to grammaticalization, the success of this approach over the last decades has led to extensive studies and breakthroughs but also to empirical studies with a lack of clear and systematic application of recognition criteria (Breban et al. 2012: 2), and it has been suggested that grammaticalization scholars should tighten up their scrutiny of method (Givón 1995). Pragmatic and semantic aspects may, as we shall see, be difficult to employ as main formal evidence and may lead to vacuity (Van Gelderen 2011). When it comes to attempts to formulate formal criteria, Lehmann's (1995[1982]) parameters still stand out as authoritative. In this account, grammaticalization affects the degree of freedom with which a linguistic sign can be used in terms of three principal aspects: weight, cohesion, and variability. Since these properties define signs only synchronically/statically, they are dynamized into processes (Lehmann 2002; see also Norde 2012) in order to account for the diachronic/changing aspect also.

The availability of large digitized historical corpora has also played a crucial role in the development of a grammaticalization methodology (obviously because frequency and frequency-driven entrenchment and routinization are seen as driving forces in grammaticalization; see Chapter 2). The same goes for larger typological studies of the development of tense and aspect, which generally rely upon large corpora of written language, as well as grammars. Together, these data are combined and subject to quantitative methods (such as Bybee et al. 1994). It is worth mentioning that this method—the inclusion of a large number of languages from different phyla—is also the locus of discussion between formalists and functionalists, where the stereotype is that the former tend to rely on fewer languages but in more depth, and the latter rely on larger numbers of languages but often subject them to less in-depth analysis (see Newmeyer 2005 for an entertaining discussion).

5.3 The Choice of Method

I choose a methodology that enables the observation of change in progress, as it isolates variables in order to capture morphosyntactic change as it happens.

The approach is onomasiological, and employs basic insights from the variationist methodology (Tagliamonte 2012).

5.3.1 *Natural Discourse vs. Elicited Sources*

Natural conversation was recorded as opposed to using elicitation in the form of, for instance, questionnaires. Questionnaires arguably do generate a larger amount of relevant tokens, which is an obvious advantage when employing this method. However, questionnaires leave no room for context. Natural discourse allows for the spontaneous use of tense and aspect in context, as opposed to the isolated sentences generated in questionnaires. As I shall show in Chapter 7, however, the context has proven crucial in understanding the initial cases of the Preterit's expansion in Porteño Spanish. In addition, questionnaires would not have allowed for the expression of the variation observed in individual speakers, as questionnaires typically leave room for one answer only. Variation is thus most readily observed in vernacular, everyday speech. Natural discourse is therefore the preferred source here, even though this approach admittedly generated fewer tokens than a questionnaire would have.

5.4 Factors and Variables

Insights from a variationist framework are well suited for the present study, as the framework emphasizes linguistic structure as inherently variable and is in this sense compatible with the assumption made in cognitive theories about the emergent nature of grammar and its being in constant flux.

The variationist methodology has recently seen an increase in the approach to grammaticalization and other morphosyntactic changes, presumably because it is ideal for capturing form-function asymmetry (i.e., more than one form expressing the same function, or one form expressing more than one function), a phenomenon referred to as *layering* in the grammaticalization literature (Hopper & Traugott 2003). This goes hand in hand with the increased interest in quantitative methods, owing to the abovementioned availability of large digitized corpora.

Studies on grammaticalization in Romance using the variationist framework span from accounts of the future tense and the progressive aspect (Torres Cacoullos 2011) to the distribution of the Preterit category in Spanish varieties (e.g., Schwenter 1994 for Alicante; Piñero Piñero 2000 for Canarian). This range is an obvious advantage since it allows for the introduction of a comparative element: Porteño Spanish compared to Tenerife Spanish, and so on.

The departure point in any semantically driven variationist analysis is to define the envelope of variation, the variable context or broadest environment

in which speakers have a choice between different forms—in simpler terms, to define the limits of the context in which speakers may alternate between forms. This onomasiological approach clearly is not restricted to sociolinguistic approaches (see, e.g., Croft 2010; Geeraerts 2002). Croft argues that only such approaches enable the observation of first-order grammatical change and grammaticalization. In this case, the variable context, or how speakers grammatically encode the same thing (Croft 2010: 7–8), was restricted to past actions with current relevance (CR) (for details on this notion, see below and 2.2.7), and each instance was carefully extracted from the corpus. The envelope of variation has further been specified by identifying the four subfunctions typically associated with the perfect and the restrictions each of these have when it comes to, for example, temporal specification and iteration. The formal criteria—compatibility with adverbs, for example—were employed when possible but were not judged obligatory for the verbal construction to be included among the relevant tokens. Table 6 presents simplified table of the four subfunctions for the sake of clarity.

TABLE 6 *Subfunctions and typical co-occurrence with adverbials*

	Experiential	**Resultative**	**Recent Past**	**Persistent Situation**
Typical TAS	*alguna vez* 'ever', *ya*[1] 'already'	*ya* 'already'	*recién* 'just'	*siempre* 'always', *nunca* 'never', *toda la vida* 'all (my) life'
Reiteration restrictions	Yes	No	No	No
Aspectual value	Perfective	Perfective	Perfective	Imperfective

The subfunctions and their semantic restrictions are discussed in detail in 2.2.7, but here I go through the criteria by which a form was included in the envelope of variation. Note that Preterits with specific time adverbials were excluded, as were Preterits used for foregrounded events in narration, as well

1 Note that this adverb is showing signs of early grammaticalization; see, for example, Rodríguez Louro (2009) and Chapter 7.

as imperfectives expressing persistent situation. Four contexts were delimitated on the basis of the following descriptions:

1. A temporally unspecified past with psychological, "abstract" relevance. Requires reiteration possibility, and often (but not necessarily) animated subject (corresponds to *experiential* in Table 6).
2. A past whose resulting action still holds, as a result of the past action. They are statal; should be compatible with adverbial *still*. May be ambiguous with experientials; in which cases they are verified by means of context (corresponds to *resultative* in Table 6).
3. A past occurring sufficiently close to reference time for it o be perceived as currently relevant (corresponds to *recent past* in Table 6).
4. A past action that continues into the future (corresponds to *persistent situation* in Table 6).

These correspond to the four subfunctions associated with the prototypical perfect, and their identification led to the insight on the distribution of the Perfect and the Preterit in the different data sets in this study. Following the principle of accountability (Tagliamonte 2012: 9–10), all nonoccurrences are reported alongside the occurrences, which in this case means including all CR tokens, both Preterits and Perfects. The main challenge in this case, however, is that there already exists a traditional use of the Preterit that is not to be included in the variable context. For example, a hypothetical sentence such as (29) illustrates a typical past perfective use of the Preterit and should not be included in the variable context:

(29) Past perfective use of Preterit

El	año	pasado	**conociste**	Uruguay
The	year	passed	know.2SG.PRT	Uruguay

'You got to know Uruguay last year'

On the other hand, sentence (30)—in which the Preterit is also employed—expresses past with CR (experiential) and should be included in the variable context:

(30) Past with CR (experiential)
(15:03/2)

Fuiste	al	sur?	Bueno	es	bastante	parecido
Go.2SG.PRT	to.the	south	well	is	sufficiently	similar

'Have you been to the South? Well it is pretty similar'

This in itself excludes the possibility of approaching the data using form as the point of departure.

Within the tokens included in the envelope of variation, tokense were also analyzed with respect to their having indeterminate or irrelevant temporal reference, in line with Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2009: 18–19).

Present constructions expressing persistent situation were excluded from the extraction of tokens, considering their more complicated status as grammaticalizing constructions, but were taken into account in the sense that the global past system of Porteño Spanish was considered (Burgos 2004), a system in which the use of Present constructions to express, for instance, persistent situation is reported.[2] In this sense, the fact that young and adolescent speakers unanimously use Preterits to express persistent situation was surprising, especially considering claims that this particular function is not expressed through Preterits in Latin American Spanish varieties (Squartini & Bertinetto 2000). This finding is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

5.4.1 *Current Relevance: An Empirically Intractable Notion?*

Torres Cacoullos (2011) describes the use of CR as a semantic point of departure to analyze the perfect/perfective functions as "empirically intractable" (ibid.: 160). Instead, she relies on a factor group of temporal reference in a study of the Mexican Preterit/Perfect, such as hodiernality, prehodiernality, and past, in a form-/function-based approach to the Perfect/Preterit variation in varieties of Spanish (for a definition of the hodiernal/prehodiernal distinction, see 2.2.4.2). Even though I agree that the identification of a semantic function involves a great deal of intuition, I also see the attempt at formalizing the inclusion criteria as problematic. Rodríguez Louro (2009: 117), for example, classifies Preterit combined with the TA *ya* 'already' as a construction with resultative function. Such a classification would clearly be misleading if employed on the present data, precisely because this semantic function appears with a different form. Using co-occurrence with TAS as an inclusion criterion would be erroneous. As I will show in Chapter 7, for example, it is the tokens with no specific time frame that are crucial to understanding the competition between the Perfect and the Preterit.

There is no getting around that to completely quantify the analysis of morphosyntax when taking semantics as a point of departure is a challenging, if not impossible task (see Lavendera 1978 for discussion on the semantic variable). First, any interpretation necessarily relies on interpretation.

2 Note that Chapter 6 provides evidence from old written sources that Present constructions have been used to express persistent situation, alongside Perfects.

Second, attempts to carry out a completely formal analysis have failed, in so far as their formal inclusion criteria have excluded relevant and valuable tokens, as demonstrated above. The criteria for identifying the relevant semantic context in this study therefore draw on the insights outlined in Chapter 2 on the semantic subfunctions typically associated with the perfect.

5.4.1.1 Interrater Agreement and Cohen's Kappa

There is always a degree of subjectivity at play when interpreting semantic data, and this study is no exception. In order to verify the interpretations, a second rater was used to confirm interrater agreement. This second rater was presented with a nonannotated part of the corpus and was asked to classify the tokens according to semantic subcategories of the perfect.[3] The overall agreement level turned out to be 84%. However, since there is always the possibility that two raters agree by chance, a tool for measuring this agreement, correcting for chance, was employed. A widespread means for measuring interrater agreement by stripping chance away is the kappa statistic (Cohen 1960). This test compares the observed proportion of agreement with the expected proportion of chance agreement and indicates whether the level of agreement is at a satisfactory level. As a rule of thumb, a kappa coefficient must be above 0.67. A value between 0.67 and 0.80 allows for tentative conclusions, while only a value of 0.80 or above allows for definite conclusions of interrater agreement (Carletta 1996).

I performed a kappa test using SPSS[4] on a subpart of the data (the interview with informant 14). The test revealed an agreement level of 0.761, which allows for the tentative conclusion that the agreement is beyond chance.

Note that some discrepancy in the rating of experientiality/resultativity was expected. These subfunctions may be ambiguous in Spanish (as in English; see Haug 2008: 293), so a sentence such as (31) may have both experiential and resultative meaning, depending on the context:

(31) (14:53/11)

No	**has ido**	a	Uruguay,	Tony?
no	go.2SG.PRS.PRF	to	Uruguay	Tony

'Haven't you been to Uruguay, Tony?' (Experiential)

Or

'Haven't you gone to Uruguay, Tony?' (Resultative)

3 Rater 2 is a linguist who is familiar with the subfunctions of perfects.

4 SPSS is a software package used for statistical analysis.

In phrase (31) only context determines whether the phrase should be interpreted as being resultative or experiential in meaning, and it is not unexpected that two annotators analyze such phrases differently. 2[3] of the classified tokens for which there is no interrater agreement involve experiential/resultative. Given the ambiguity of such phrases in Spanish, such a discrepancy was expected in the analysis of these two subfunctions.

5.4.2 *The Apparent-Time Construct*

The extralinguistic factor chosen was that of age. This choice was made on the basis of two elements:

a. the existence of previous research indicating that the Porteño Spanish system is indeed in flux and that the variation is an indication of a change in progress—and not of a fixed synchronic system with specific semantic restrictions governing the Perfect/Preterit use;
b. the aptness of apparent-time studies in revealing these changes.

Apparent time is a useful analytical tool for the analysis of variation and has been in use since the early 1960s. Real-time approaches to diachronic developments, on the other hand, include the use of either existing evidence from older periods or evidence from restudies (reconducting previous surveys to convey change) as comparison (Bailey 2006: 325–329). No suitable surveys exist of the varieties here, thus ruling out these types of approaches. It was Labov, in his iconic study of language in Martha's Vineyard (1963 [1972]), who developed a set of methodological innovations—among them, the apparent-time construct, a surrogate for real-time examination of data at different points in history. The apparent-time construct has since come to be a keystone of variationist sociolinguistics (see Bailey et al. 1992; 2006; Sankoff 2001).

When using the apparent-time construct, it is assumed that generational differences compared at a single point may allow us to make inferences about how the change has occurred in the recent past. The differences detected in the age groups are assumed to be temporal analogues that reflect different historical changes (Tagliamonte 2012), and the decrease/increase of a linguistic feature is interpreted as evidence for a change in progress, thus allowing a synchronic study of language to provide the basis for historical-linguistic research. Note that results from apparent-time studies and differences in usage on the basis of age may be due to other factors; for example, the speakers may change their language when they grow older, so their language does not necessarily reflect the way it was spoken at the time of their acquisition of it (see next section). For the present investigation, this is unproblematic; the age factor has revealed that the use of the Perfect is practically absent in the younger

speakers, and thus whether the older speakers acquired their current variable system during childhood or as a result of a change later in life is irrelevant for the present study.

If we assume that the use of the Preterit to express past with CR is novel (which is likely; see also discussion in 7.8), there is a putative stage in which the amount of past with CR that is expressed by means of the Preterit is 0%. The apparent-time study would then reveal a typical generational change and a typical S curve; the change would appear to have occurred at a faster pace in the speech of the younger informants. This is referred to as the adolescent peak and describes the tendency for young adults to lead change and to be more extreme in their linguistic choice until the age of 17 (Tagliamonte 2012: 49). In the youngest speakers in this sample, the Perfect occurrences are indeed rare and left to marginal, undefined contexts. This rarity is discussed in further detail in 6.3.6.

Three factors are seen to possibly blur the accountability of an apparent-time study (Bailey 2006). One is the question of the generality of apparent time, the extent to which apparent-time data are compatible with real-time data and whether they contradict each other. A second problem deals with the (in)stability of individual vernaculars. The apparent-time assumption appears to be that individual vernaculars remain stable throughout the course of an adult lifetime. While this has been assumed in, for instance, generative frameworks, as well as in variationist approaches (Bailey 2006), cognitive approaches seem to allow for more flux in the grammars of adult speakers as well as those of adolescent speakers. For the present case, while one might hypothesize the scenario that young users would return to a frequent use of the Perfect, this is both unlikely, since the semantic change has already taken place, and irrelevant for the present case, since the emphasis here is on the qualitative transition in the semantic scope of the Preterit. A third problem associated with the apparent-time construct is the possibility that what appears to be a reflection of a time in history in the present case is really a result of the phenomenon of age grading, which refers to the fact that speakers may use language differently at different stages in their lives. This possibility, however, is unlikely since historical sources strongly suggest that the Perfect was in fact more frequent around 1900 than now (see Chapter 6; see also Rodríguez Louro 2009).

5.5 Creating a Corpus: Oral Data/Interviews

The oral data stem from interviews with 14 informants from Buenos Aires, four informants from Dolores, Uruguay, and one informant from Montevideo, Uruguay. The written sources stem from interviews with eight individuals

whose information was disclosed in *El Habla Culta de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires*, making a total of 27 individuals. Table 7 provides a list of the informants from Buenos Aires.

TABLE 7 *Informants from Buenos Aires*

Informant nr.	Age[5]	Gender	Spanish monolingual	Educational level
1	16	F	Yes	High school
2	17	F	Yes	High school
3	34	F	Yes	University
4	26	F	Yes	High school
5	26	F	Yes	High school
6	28	F	Yes	University
7	34	F	Yes	University
8	30	M	Yes	University
9	50	F	Yes	High school
10	50	F	Yes	High school
11	50	F	Yes	High school
12	83	M	Yes	High school
13	86	F	Yes	High school
14	80	M	Yes	University

Note that there is a clear female majority in the Buenos Aires informants, as seen in Table 7. It should be mentioned that because of this female bias, it is possible that the data may reflect the so-called gender paradox (Labov 2001: 292–293), which refers to the fact that women conform more closely than men to sociolinguistic norms that are overtly prescribed, but conform less to norms that are not. In this case, this could mean that the women in this sample use the Preterit in new functions more readily than do men. This could explain why the Perfect is used with so little frequency in this sample, as opposed to the sample of Rodríguez Louro (2009)s, for instance, which has a more balanced gender distribution. Table 8 provides information concerning the Uruguayan informants.

5 Age in 2009, when the interviews were conducted.

TABLE 8 *Informants from Uruguay*

Informant nr.	Age[6]	Gender	Spanish monolingual	Educational level	City of origin
15	87	F	Yes	No education	Dolores
16	59	F	Yes	Lower	Dolores
17	35	M	Yes	High school	Dolores
18	25	F	Yes	High school	Dolores
19	27	M	Yes	University	Montevideo

Table 9 provides a list of HABCULT informants.

TABLE 9 *HABCULT informants, from Buenos Aires*

Informant nr.	Age[7]	Gender	Spanish monolingual	Educational level
20	69	M	Undisclosed	University
21	62	M	Undisclosed	University
22	67	M	Undisclosed	University
23	70	M	Undisclosed	University
24	49	M	Undisclosed	University
25	46	M	Undisclosed	University
26	37	F	Undisclosed	University
27	30–40	F	No information provided[8]	

The interviews were conducted by the investigator in 2009, usually in the informants' or the researcher's home—that is, in a presumed relaxed setting. The interviews were semistructured (Silva-Corvalán 1994) in the sense that the interviewer intended to lead the informants both to talk about topics

6 Age in 2009.

7 Age in 1987.

8 No information provided by the source as this speaker eventually was not included in the sample; I do suppose that she fulfills the requirements of other informants as she was intended to be included (*El Habla Culta de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* 1987: 215).

that would include the use of CR contexts and to avoid simple narration. In this sense, the interview structure differed from typical sociolinguistic interviews in which the interviewees are encouraged to tell narratives. In this case, plain narratives were precisely what I wanted to avoid; recall from 2.2.4 that the perfective/past is the typical narrative tense, and this use is undisputed in Porteño Spanish. In some accounts, asking what the informants have done that day and the day before has been assumed to yield relevant tokens as it would induce uses of hodiernal and prehodiernal nature (for definitions, see 2.2.4.2; see also Schwenter 1994; Serrano 1994). This is not the case for the present study, because hodiernal/prehodiernal states trigger Preterit tokens, often in combination with temporal adverbials (*Esta mañana me levanté a las 8* 'This morning I got up at 8', etc.).[9]

The goal was to obtain data in which interviewees pay minimal attention to their own speech (see Labov's vernacular principle 1972), through different strategies to trigger the use of vernacular speech (see, e.g., Labov 1972 on the transformation of experience into narrative syntax); "vernacular" here understood as the least self-conscious style of speech, in which minimal attention is given to the monitoring of speech (Labov 1972: 208). As is often the case, vernacular speech is typically found at different stages throughout the interactional context of the interview; in the present case, interruptions such as phone calls and unexpected visits were shown to be excellent generators of relevant past with CR tokens. In addition, the "group style" (Schilling 2013: 102) proved particularly useful; the interaction between the informants then created more dialogue, which in turn generated relevant tokens, especially experiential tokens; see example (32) in which the informant's brother's presence creates a dynamic dialogue:

(32) (35:40/10)
Context: Informant's brother imitating Uruguayan Spanish
Interviewer: Me hace acordar a como hablan en Dolores
'It reminds me of how they speak in Dolores'
Ella **vivió** en Dolores en Uruguay en el interior
She live.3SG.PRT in Dolores in Uruguay in the interior
'She has lived in Dolores in Uruguay in the interior' (Lit.: 'She lived in')

9 Note, however, that such an approach would yield relevant tokens in the study of an expanding perfect because in this type of expansion, the perfect's being used in nonhodiernal contexts is precisely an indication of its broadening its semantic scope (see Chapter 4 for details).

In addition to spontaneously generated tokens such as (32), the use of present-tense constructions such as (33) were ideal.

(33) Que **conocés** de Argentina?[10]
What know.2SG.PRS of Argentina?
'What of Argentina do you know?'

These types of constructions were ideal for two reasons; they triggered experiential tokens, and they did not lead the informant into using the Perfect/Preterit, because the interviewer used a present-tense construction (*Qué conocés de*). Using Present constructions instead of Perfect/Preterit was done throughout the interviews in order to minimize the influence of the interviewer's choice of form and adaptation to the interviewer's style (talker adaptation; see, e.g., Dahan et al. 2008). Initially, it was assumed that hypercorrection (using Perfects more frequently in order to comply with a Peninsular norm) would be an issue. This appeared not to be the case. Quite the contrary: when making metalinguistic comments on their own choice of Preterit/Perfect forms, speakers appeared to associate the expanded use of a Preterit with positive aspects of their identity as inhabitants of Buenos Aires—Porteños—and speakers of Porteño Spanish, distinguished from speakers of other Spanish varieties, as illustrated in (34):

(34) Usan otros tiempos verbales el ***he visto***
use other tenses verbal the see.1SG.PRS.PRF
he conocido Nosotros acá en capital ni
know.1SG.PRS.PRF we here in capital not
en pedo lo usamos
in fart it use
'They use other verbal tenses the *I have seen*, *I have known*. No frickin way we here in the capital would use them'

5.5.1 *Ethical Issues*

The privacy of the informants is protected according to the guidelines of Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). The informants agreed that they would be interviewed, that the interviews would be used for academic

10 Porteño Spanish follows a 2SG verbal conjugation paradigm different from Peninsular Spanish. This was discussed in 3.2.2.2.

purposes, and that the purpose of the study was academic. They were not informed of the specific topic of the study (see the discussion on hypercorrection above) but rather that the study that was being conducted was on the Porteño Spanish variety as a whole. This unawareness of the specific topic in question created certain interesting observations from some of the interviewees, as illustrated in example (34) above.

5.5.2 *Preexisting corpora*

In addition to the oral corpus, data were extracted from a public written corpus made available through the Linguistics Department at University of Buenos Aires (UBA). *El Habla Culta de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires*, published in 1987, consists of two volumes of transcribed semistructured interviews with anonymous individuals. Crucially, the book provides information on age, birthplace, gender, and profession (though not on second-language proficiency). The oldest informants in this corpus can be assumed to have been born between 1910 and 1920 (see Table 10), and therefore the corpus casts additional light on the initial moments of the spread of the Preterit and thus also on the possibility of age grading. The extraction of the tokens from the written corpus was effectuated using the same semantic criteria as for extracting tokens from the spoken corpus.

As mentioned above, when available, natural speech is preferred over, e.g., questionnaires as sources. *El Habla Culta de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* is not a questionnaire but a collection of transcribed interviews, combined with introductory texts describing the informants. Clearly, written sources may be problematic since they do not necessarily provide straightforward evidence of a change or of a system shared by an entire community, for several reasons (Traugott & Dasher 2002: 45–48).[11] Written data may reflect conventions that are not shared by the speech community at large. In addition, certain text types may serve as locus for innovation, this way providing a skewed image of a given development. Written text is also less spontaneous than speech and may focus on precision, politeness, or on following a standard written norm (in this case, the Peninsular Spanish norm). These factors may cause a text to provide a skewed image of the language as a whole and must be taken into account when using written sources as data. In addition, written records generally contain

11 Note that Traugott and Dasher (2002: 17–18) argue for the important and active role of the writer/reader, not only hearer/speaker, and claim that the reader may make inferences and exploit these inferences, as does the writer. The reader in this framework is taken to have a less passive role than what is often assumed.

sparse information about the situational context (Jacobs & Jucker 1995: 7). For the transcribed interviews in the written corpus, these considerations do not apply, but for the introductory texts, the issue of correction toward a Peninsular norm should be taken into account. However, the tokens relevant to our case are precisely those novel Preterit uses that do not follow the standard norm. There is thus little reason to doubt the validity of these tokens.

5.5.3 *Further Research*

Not taken into account here are sociolinguistic questions relating to the community and the spread therein, and extralinguistic factors such as gender and class (but cf. 7.8). The lack of emphasis on such variables does not mean that they have been judged less important but is rather a choice of emphasis. For studies on Porteño Spanish relating to societal issues, see Fløgstad (2014), who discusses the expansion of the Preterit as a postcontact phenomenon, and Rodríguez Louro (2009), who takes gender and linguistic attitudes into account. Some sociolinguistic issues are discussed in more depth in Chapter 7.

5.5.4 *A Note on Corpus and Method*

As discussed above, in this study, I use insights from the sociolinguistic variationist method (Tagliamonte 2012) to quantify the data extracted from the corpus. Still, I would like to stress that the present does not pretend to give a full synchronic picture of Porteño Spanish. For a larger corpus study on Porteño Spanish, the reader is referred to Rodríguez Louro (2009).

Two things should be mentioned in this respect, however. First, despite the relatively low overall frequency of tokens, the results from the corpus presented here are strikingly similar to those presented in Fløgstad (2007). Second, while informants are relatively few, interviews were long, approximately one hour. Similar approaches use radically shorter interviews, approximately 20–30 minutes (see, e.g., Henderson 2010: 119). Long interviews proved crucial in this study in order to generate spontaneous past with CR tokens. It is thus important to keep in mind that this study is data driven and uses quantitative methodology to a degree, but above all provides a combination of theoretically informed approaches with qualitative and, to some extent, quantitative data.

CHAPTER 6

Results

6.1 Overview

This chapter provides a description of the findings in the corpora used in this study. Part one deals with the findings from the oral corpus, while part two describes the findings from the written corpus. For each source, I describe the general tendency, the replacement of subfunctions, and the variation in the expression of these subfunctions (if present).

As discussed in Chapter 5, the envelope of variation was defined as past with current relevance (CR). Recall that co-occurrence with temporal adverbials is not taken as an absolute inclusion criterion, but note that in some cases, their existence supports the interpretation of the token in question: for instance, persistent-situation tokens in combination with temporal adverbials *siempre* 'always' and *nunca* 'never'. The tokens are further analyzed on the basis of their subfunctions (experiential, recent past, resultative, and persistent situation; see section 2.2.7) and adverbial co-occurrence. Two findings crystalize:

a. The general decrease in Perfect tokens from the older informants in the oral corpus and from the informants in the written corpus (the latter henceforth referred to as HABCULT), to the young and adolescent informants. I see this decrease as evidence of an ongoing change, as discussed further in Chapter 7.
b. The variation observed in the older informants from both written and oral sources, and how this variation clusters to one function, the experiential. These features are interpreted as evidence that this function is the locus for the change because of its semantics, as discussed further in Chapter 7.

Here, I am primarily concerned with the behavior of the Preterit. Other approaches have largely taken the Perfect as their point of departure (Henderson 2010; Rodríguez Louro 2009; Schwenter 2011). I focus on the Preterit for two reasons:

1. The Perfect is practically absent from the speech of young and adolescent speakers.

2. The Preterit co-occurs with the Perfect in older/middle-aged informants, and this coexistence is taken to provide evidence for understanding the nature of the change.

Before continuing, it should be noted that given the relatively low overall frequency of relevant tokens, this study does not pretend to give a full synchronic picture of the distribution of the Porteño Spanish Preterit. This has been done on larger data sets in works such as Rodríguez Louro (2009) and Burgos (2004), with the explicit goal of providing a synchronic picture. Instead, the present study uses a smaller data set in order to be able to give a full qualitative analysis of the relevant tokens and contexts. I now turn to the findings in the oral data.

6.2 The General Decrease in the Preterit to Express Past with CR

Figure 3 illustrates the increase of the use of the Preterit to express past with CR in the oral Porteño Spanish sources—that is, both interviews with age groups I and II and numbers from the HABCULT corpus, including also a 19th-century stage in which the Preterit was never used to express past with CR.

Figure 3 clearly shows an increase in the use of the Preterit to express past with CR. The variation in the expression of past with CR (between Perfect and Preterit) in the HABCULT informants increases in age group II before it practically disappears in age group I. In age group I, the variation is replaced by a system in which past with CR almost unanimously is expressed by means of the Preterit. I now turn to the details of the oral sources.

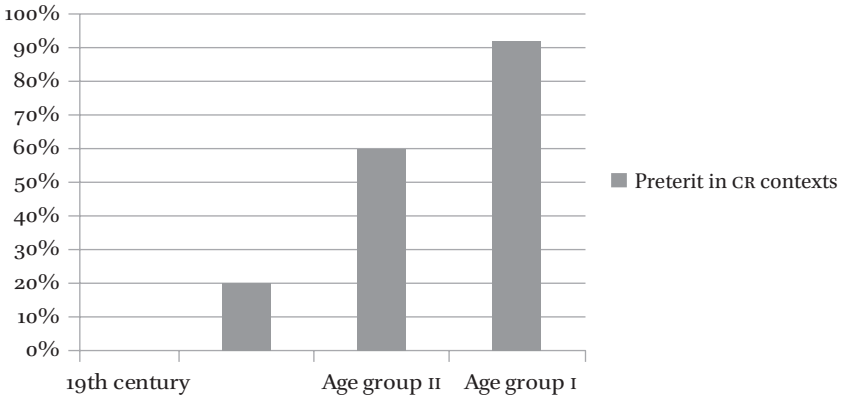

FIGURE 3 *Percentage of CR tokens expressed by means of Preterits.*

6.2.1 *Oral Sources*

Recall from Chapter 5 that the extralinguistic factor included was that of age, and the informants were collapsed into two age groups: I: young/adolescent (14–34 years) and II: older/middle-aged (35–86 years). The absolute numbers of their uses of the Perfect and Preterit are illustrated in Table 10.

TABLE 10 *Distribution of Preterit and Perfect, absolute numbers*

	Age group II	**Age group I**	**Total**
Preterit	59	87	146
Perfect	40	8	48
Total	99	95	194

Total N: 194, $p < .05$[1]

Figure 4 further illustrates the distribution of Perfects and Preterits to express past with CR in the two age groups.

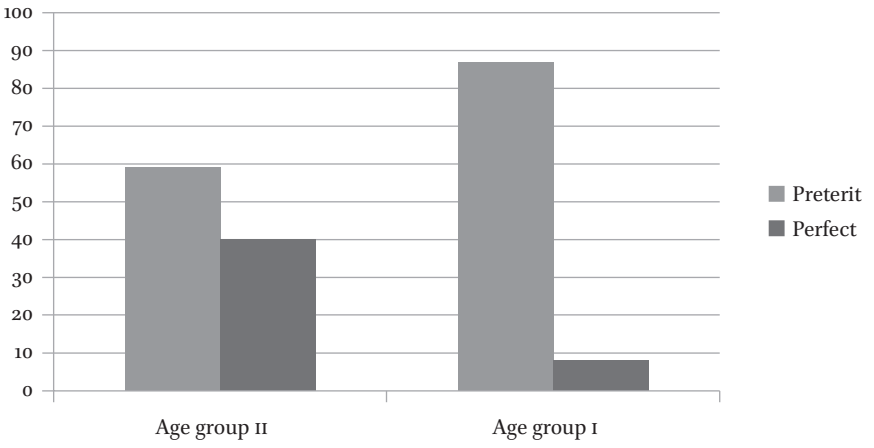

FIGURE 4 *Age group II vs. age group I.*

1 Note that the decrease is statistically significant. The chi-square test was not performed on other data sets because of the low token number of each subfunction.

In this study, the older and middle-aged informants use the Preterit in 60% of the relevant contexts, whereas the young and adolescent informants use used the Preterit in 92% of the relevant contexts. The use of the Perfect has thus decreased from 40% to 8% in the span of one generation, as shown in Figure 4. This finding strongly indicates that a change is occurring in Porteño Spanish. The apparent-time construct has here allowed for the observation of a difference in distribution between the two age groups. This finding supports prior studies of Porteño Spanish. Kubarth (1992) argues that the sparse use of the Perfect in young informants is an innovation. Burgos (2004) and Rodríguez Louro (2009: 107–108) similarly point to a generational usage pattern in which the older speakers use the Perfect to express past with CR more readily than do the young and middle-aged informants. Since some informants in age group II belong to the same generation as some HABCULT speakers, we can establish with some certainty that the Perfect has been in more frequent use in Porteño Spanish.

In addition, this confirms the preliminary findings in Fløgstad (2007) in two ways: first, the general generational usage pattern in the four age groups is confirmed, second, the more frequent use of the Perfect to express past with CR in literary sources from the late 19th century might illustrate a stage in which the Perfect indeed existed.

The data in Fløgstad (2007) stem from individuals with educational backgrounds similar to the informants in the present study and allow for comparison between the two groups. The tendency in the 2007 sample accords with the tendency of the data presented in this study. The youngest informants in the present study (informant 1 and 2) never use the Perfect, which is also the case in Fløgstad (2007), as seen in Figure 5.

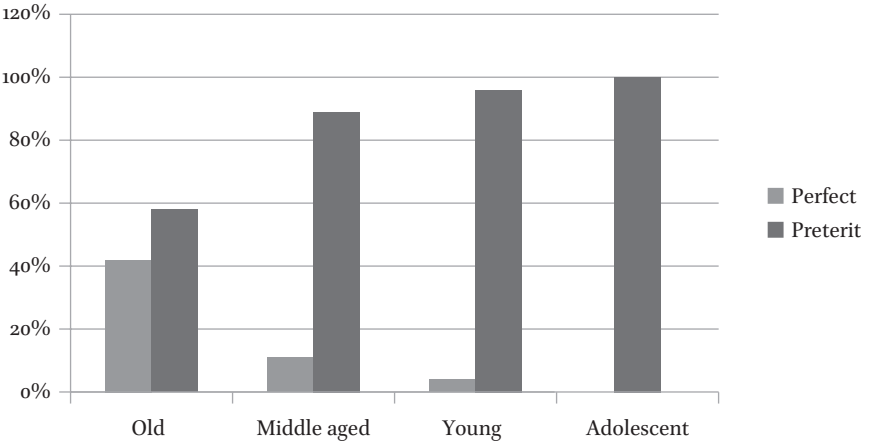

FIGURE 5 *Expression of past with CR, from Fløgstad (2007).*

The fact that two corpora consisting of the spontaneous speech of different individuals show such similarities clearly strengthens the observed tendency and is important because of the relatively low number of informants in both studies.[2]

The comparison of the two age groups indicates that we are not dealing with two stable synchronic systems but rather with a linguistic category undergoing change. Other approaches (Howe 2013; Rodríguez Louro 2009) take the Perfect as the point of departure for a synchronic analysis of its restrictions in Porteño Spanish. They do not succed in identifying clear synchronic criteria, and in my opinion, there is a lack of coherence in the semantic restrictions on the Perfect, such as having restrictions on negative polarity, person number, compatibility with mass nouns, and so on (as has been attempted; see, e.g., Rodríguez Louro 2009 and section 6.4.4 for details) because the variety finds itself in a transition phase.

Note, however, that the numbers presented here are less compatible with those in Rodríguez Louro (2009: 233). As I shall show below, she finds that young speakers tend to use the Perfect in experiential contexts. I observe no such bias. Quite the contrary: in the present data, the young and adolescent speakers use the Perfect in only 9% of the relevant cases. In what follows, I first concentrate on the findings from the young and adolescent speakers. Then I turn to the findings in the older and middle-aged informants.

6.3 Perfects and Preterits in Age Group I

In what follows, I will zoom in on the young and adolescent speakers, those comprising age group I.

6.3.1 *General Tendency*

In this group, the distribution provides little information about the nature of the change because the Perfect has been replaced with the Preterit in all subfunctions and occurs only eight times in the entire data sample (see details on these eight tokens below). It does show, however, that the change appears to have come to completion and that the variation observed in age group II is transitory. Figure 6 shows the distribution of Preterit and Perfect tokens in age group I.

2 Note that two interviews (those with informant 13 and 14) from 2007 were included in this study as well.

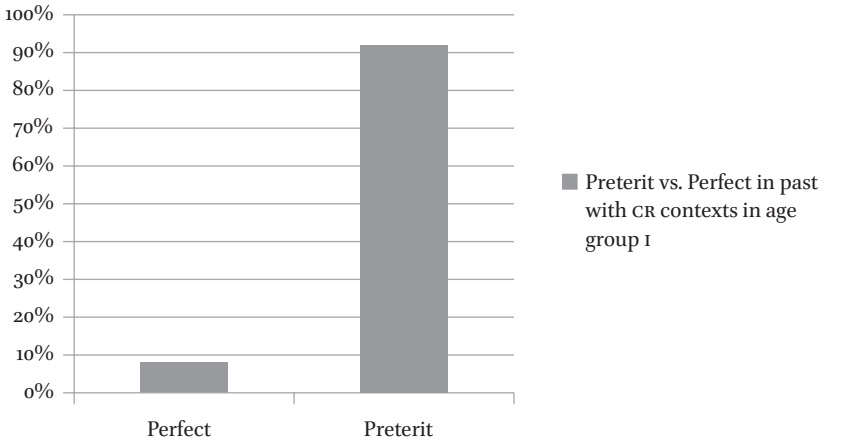

FIGURE 6 *Expression of past with CR in age group 1.*

Table 11 provides a detailed illustration of the distribution of the Preterit and Perfect in the different subfunctions associated with the perfect. Subfunction tokens were also divided according to co-occurrence with TAs.

TABLE 11 *Perfect/Preterit in age group 1*

Age group 1 (Young/ adolescent)	**Experiential**	**Recent past**	**Resultative**	**Persistent situation**	**Total**	
	N	**N**	**N**	**N**	**N**	**%**
Preterit	36	0	12	0	48	87 (92%)
Preterit + TA	18	0	13	8	39	
Perfect	5	0	1	0	6	8 (8%)
Perfect + TA	0	0	0	1	1	
Other (Perfect with spec. time frame)[3]	1	0	0	0	1	
Total N = 95	60	0	26	9	95 (100%)	

3 Here, "other" refers to the use of the Perfect with a specific time frame, a use generally not associated with the Perfect. See section 6.3.6 for details.

The most striking observation is the fact that the Perfect is practically absent. The eight Perfect tokens, I shall show below, belong to three of the informants, leaving five informants who never use the Perfect and instead use the Preterit to express all its subfunctions. Recall from Chapter 4 that his finding is concordant with other accounts of Argentinian Spanish, as shown in Table 12, from Howe and Rodríguez Louro (2013: 50).

TABLE 12 *Perfect/Preterit in Argentinean Spanish* (*adapted from Howe & Rodríguez Louro 2013: 50*)

	Preterit	**Perfect**
Argentinean Spanish	94% (N = 783)	6% (N = 47)

This question in further discussed in Chapter 7, where I argue that there has been a lack of theoretical repercussions for the assumption of regularity in grammatical paths, despite such findings in its disfavor.

6.3.2 *Subfunction Replacement*

All subfunctions except recent past are represented in the data of this age group. On the basis of the available data from age group 11, there is no basis to postulate any synchronic restrictions on the Preterit use. We find Preterits in all subfunctions (except the recent past, in which we have no tokens, but there is nothing to indicate that this subfunction would behave differently from the others; see Section 6.3.2.3 for discussion), as well as in all of the contexts which have been assumed to trigger Perfects in Latin American varieties of Spanish, as persistent situation, to be discussed as follows.

6.3.2.1 Persistent Situation

In addition to experientiality, which will be discussed below in more detail, the Preterit is used to express persistent situation. All Preterits expressing persistent situation appear with temporal adverbials, especially *siempre* 'always', as in (35):

(35) (23:38/3)
Está muy celosa siempre **fue** muy celosa de X
is very jealous always be.3SG.PRT very jealous of X
desde que nació X ella siempre se
since that be.born.3SG.PRT X she always REFL
quedó con ganas de tener otro hijo
remain.3SG.PRT with wishes to have other baby
'She is very jealous, she has always been very jealous of X and since X was born she has always wanted to have another baby'

Example (36) also expresses persistent situation, here combined with the temporal specification *desde que* 'since':

(36) (53:36/3)
Desde que nació ella no **paré**
Since that be.born.3SG.PRT she NEG stop.1SG.PRT
'Since she was born, I haven't stopped'

Tokens expressing persistent situation by means of Preterits occur in all age group I speakers.

6.3.2.2 Resultative

Resultativity is also expressed by means of Preterits (but note one Perfect token in this subfunction; see Table 11). Example (37) illustrates a resultative use of the Preterit:

(37) (45:55/3)
Tengo muchas que **se** **fueron** afuera y que
I.have many that REFL go.3PL.PRT outside and that
ahora están teniendo
now are having
'I have many (friends) who have gone abroad and now are having (babies)'

Note that 48% of Preterit tokens expressing resultativity appear without TA, while 52% appear in combination with a TA. Example (38) illustrates an example of a resultative construction expressed by means of the Preterit and the temporal adverbial *ya* 'already':

(38) (48:56/4)

Y	bueno	**ya**	**tuvo**	el	bebe
And	good	already	have.3SG.PRT	the	baby

'And well she has already had the baby'

Rodríguez Louro (2009: 117) argues that Preterits tend to co-occur with the adverb *ya* 'already' to express resultativity. This does not appear to be the case in the present sample; several tokens without *ya* express resultativity, and several constructions with *ya* express other subfunctions. Preterits can co-occur with *ya* to express resultativity, but they can also express resultativity without co-occurring with such adverbs, as seen in (37). In addition, Preterits may co-occur with ya to express subfunctions other than resultativity. Co-occurrence with adverbs is common for both Perfects and Preterits in all languages where they occur (recall discussion in 2.2.4.1), and the Porteño Spanish case seems to reflect a similar distribution.

It has been claimed that *ya* especially, but also other temporal adverbials, are grammaticalizing in Porteño Spanish and are in a process of becoming CR markers when combined with the Preterit (Fløgstad 2014; Rodríguez Louro 2009). Adverbs meaning 'already' have grammaticalized to become CR markers in a number of languages (as in, for instance, Brazilian Portuguese; see section 7.3.1.2). However, in this study, I find no evidence for combination with certain TAs being particularly prevalent. Recall from Table 11 that a majority of all Preterits expressing past with CR appear without temporal adverbials. I discuss this in further detail below.

6.3.2.3 Recent Past

No recent past tokens appear in the age group I sample. This is likely to be so for two reasons. First, recent past is disfavored in an interview setting in which narration of personal experiences dominates. Recall that recent past often occurs in, for instance, newspaper headlines (hence the term "hot news" used synonymously with recent past; see Chapter 2). Second, and perhaps more importantly, recent past is rare in the corpus because there exists a construction formed with Present + Infinitive to express recent past in Spanish (see 3.3.2.1). Because of the recent past's semantic proximity to past tenses, it is unlikely that Perfect use would be retained in this function (see especially Croft 2012: 142–143; see also discussion in 7.3.1.1).

6.3.2.4 Experientials Expressed by Preterits

Experientiality is overwhelmingly expressed by means of Preterits in age group I. The corpus includes a total of 60 experiential tokens, and the Preterit expresses past with CR in 90% (54[60]) of contexts. Given the fact that no clear restrictions appear to apply on the use of Perfects/Preterits, I assume that the six Perfect tokens used to express experientiality are relics of an older system (see discussion below). These possible relics include tokens that lack explicit temporal reference; in fact, the ones lacking temporal adverbs constitute 67% (36[54]) of the experientiality tokens expressed via Preterits (note that Rodríguez Louro (2009: 233) argues that the opposite is the case). Examples (39) and (40) illustrate this use:

(39) (37:22/5)
Interviewer: Que decís si me corto el pelo bien corto?
'What do you say if I cut my hair really short?'

Yo	por	lo	que	**vi**	te	queda	bien
I	for	that	which	see.1SG.PRT	you	fit	well

'For what I've seen it fits you well'

(40) (16:56/5)

Me	puede	reenvidiar	que	soy	relativamente	flaca	que	tengo	un	novio	que	es
Me	can	envy	that	am	relatively	skinny	that	have	a	boyfriend	that	is
lindo	o	normal	pero	está	bien	de	que	yo	me	**recibí**		
handsome	or	normal	but	is	good	about	that	I	REFL	graduate.1SG.PRT		
de	locutora	y	la	mina	no							
as	broadcaster	and	the	girl	NEG							

'She can envy that I am relatively skinny, that I have a boyfriend who is good-looking or normal but fine, that I have graduated as broadcaster and that chick hasn't'

Recall from 2.2.1.2 that type-focus typically is expressed by means of Perfects, while token-focus is restricted to Preterits. This tendency no longer holds for the young speakers of Porteño Spanish in this sample, as the following examples all express token-focus:

(41) (22:52/5)
No sé si **supiste** del violador de Recoleta
NEG know if know.2SG.PRT of.the rapist from Recoleta
'I don't know if you've heard of the rapist from Recoleta?'

(42) (13:47/4)
Y le pregunto te lo **transaste** a Sebastián
And her ask REFL him transact.2SG.PRT to Sebastian
directamente y me dice que si
directly and me says that yes
'And I ask her directly have you made out with Sebastian and she says yes'

(43) (26:20/4)
Y lo **viste** a Tucho **hablaste** con Tucho
and him see.2SG.PRT to Tucho speak.2SG.PRT with Tucho
'Have you seen Tucho, have you talked to Tucho?'

It should be noted that the use of the Perfect among young and adolescent Porteño Spanish speakers has been reduced to a minimum, consistent with their own metalinguistic understanding but not with previous descriptions of Porteño Spanish, which argue that the Perfect is preferred among young speakers to express experientiality. Rodríguez Louro (2009: 108) argues that young informants choose the Perfect in experiential settings at a rate of 11.5% (13[113]). It is unclear how such a number may lead to the conclusion that the Perfect is preferred by young speakers when it is in fact the Preterit that is used in experiential settings in 88.5% of the cases in her sample (100[113]). At any rate, these numbers stem from questionnaires, and it is expected that elicitation tasks produce more hypercorrection. I return to this question in section 6.3.6 below.

6.3.3 *Subfunction Variation*

Age group I speakers exhibit little variation in their expression of past with CR, simply because the Preterit appears to have taken over all uses previously restricted to Perfects. Because of this, they can shed only little light on the

nature of the expansion of the Preterit in Porteño Spanish; rather, the language of these speakers can be seen as the change having gone to completion.

6.3.4 *The Adolescent Peak*

Ultimately, a comment on the so-called adolescent peak, discussed in 5.4.2, is pertinent. Recall that the adolescent peak refers to the fact that adolescents younger than 17 tend to lead linguistic changes and to be more radical in their linguistic choices (Tagliamonte 2012: 49). Informants 1 and 2 (see Chapter 5) were 16 and 17 years old, respectively, at the time of the interview and have no Perfect tokens. However, a majority of the other informants also lack Perfect tokens, so there is no evidence that the nonuse of the Perfect by these speakers is due solely to the adolescent peak, even though this factor cannot be excluded in informants 1 and 2.

6.3.5 *The Perfect Tokens in Age Group 1*

As observed above, during approximately eight hours of spontaneous speech, young speakers use the Perfect only eight times, and only three speakers produce these tokens. This number is strikingly low. What characterizes these eight tokens? All but two (6[8]) tokens lack explicit temporal reference and have plural or generic reference, as seen in examples (44)–(49).

(44) (05:34/6)

Es	un	viaje	espectacular	la	gente	que	lo	**ha hecho**	que	fue	y	conoce
Is	a	travel	spectacular	the	people	who	it	do.3SG.PRS.PRF	who	went	and	know
me	han dicho	que	es	precioso	si	si						
me	say.3.PL.PRF	that	is	beautiful	yes	yes						

'It is a spectacular trip (. . .) people who have done it and who know have told me that it is beautiful yes yes'

(45) (09:30/6)
En la empresa donde trabajo tengo contacto relativamente
in the company where work have contact relatively
con gente de varios Lugares y **he hablado**
with people from various places and talk.1SG.PRS.PRF
con gente de la India y por curiosidad no
with people from the India and for curiosity NEG
yo pregunto mucho
I ask much
'In the company where I work I have relative contact with people from many places and I have talked to people from India and out of curiosity, right, I ask a lot'

(46) (01:04:39/8)
Y que **has hecho** aparte de estudiar?
And what do.2SG.PRS.PRF apart from study
'And what have you done apart from studying?'

(47) (01:07:19/8)
Noruegos acá no te **has comunicado** con
Norwegians here NEG REFL communicate.2SG.PRS.PRF with
noruegos acá?
Norwegians here
'Norwegians here you haven't been in contact with Norwegians here'

(48) (29:07/5)
No sabés todavía? No lo **has podido** ver
NEG know yet NEG it can.2SG.PRS.PRF see
económicamente?
economically?
'You don't know yet? You haven't been able to see it economically?'[4]

(49) (31:48/10)
Le **han hecho** notas en… revistas es muy popular
Him do.3PL.PRS.PRF notes in magazines is very popular
'They have written about him in magazines. He is very popular'

4 Example (48) is odd; it is unclear what the intended meaning is.

These constructions share semantic content in that they describe an action that has occurred in a nondefined past moment; they are temporally nonanchored (Elsness 1997: 7) and exhibit clear type-focus (as opposed to token-focus; see 2.2.1.2). Moreover, a possible interpretation of these tokens is the Preterit not allowing the token-focusing restriction associated with perfects (Lindstedt 2000; Dahl 2000), and it has indeed been claimed that these constructions require Perfect in Porteño Spanish; see Rodríguez Louro's (2009) and Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos's (2008) findings on Mexican and Argentinean Spanish. At first sight, it might appear that this is indeed the case in Porteño Spanish, because the six remaining Perfect tokens do lack temporal specification. As observed above, however, this is not the case for the rest of the material. In examples (44)–(49) above, the Preterit expresses type-focus, and we saw in Table 11 that Preterits indeed occur to express such a content in a majority of cases.

It should also be mentioned that the eight Perfect tokens are from three speakers only. Five of the tokens are from the same informant, as seen in Table 13.

TABLE 13 *Distribution of Perfect and Preterit in informant 6*

Informant 6	**Experiential**	**Recent past**	**Resultative**	**Persistent situation**
Preterit	1	0	1	0
Preterit + TA	1	0	2	1
Perfect	4	0	1	0
Perfect + TA	0	0	0	0
Total N = 11	6	0	4	1

Two additional tokens appear in the language of informant 8 (see Table 14).

TABLE 14 *Distribution of Perfect and Preterit in informant 8.*

Informant 8	Experiential	Recent past	Resultative	Persistent situation
Preterit	4	0	0	0
Preterit + TA	3	0	4	0
Perfect	2	0	0	0
Perfect + TA	0	0	0	1
Total N = 14	9	0	4	1

This informant, however, spent most of his childhood in Córdoba, in the north of Argentina (and admittedly therefore does not constitute an ideal informant in this case). Northern Argentinean regions are known to have a more frequent use of the Perfect than urban Porteño Spanish regions (Vidal de Battini 1966).

6.3.6 *Hypercorrection or Dead Ends in Age Group 1*

Note that one of the Perfect tokens appears with a specific-time adverbial, in example (50):

(50) (06:56/6)
los padres se **han separado** después de haber
the parents REFL separate.3PL.PRS.PRF after of have
intentado de todo **hemos visto** como los padres
tried of everything see.1PL.PRS.PRF how the parents
de compañeros
of schoolmates
'Also we are a generation who come from many separated parents and not many parents separated after 20–30 years. Perhaps after 5 years or 10 years of being married the parents after having tried everything and we have seen how classmates' parents'

This use—with specific time frame—is typically outside the scope of the perfect (see Chapter 4) (but has been attested for other Argentinean varieties, such as varieties spoken in the northern parts bordering Bolivia; see 3.3.1). I hypothesize that this is a case of hypercorrection, here defined as the overuse

of an item statistically or socially salient (Hopper & Traugott 2003: 137). Such a tendency is also observed—on a larger scale—in the HABCULT interviews, as well as in Rodríguez Louro (2009: 108). Hypercorrection is also treated in section 6.7.4.

It should be noted that in section 7.6.2.1, the use of the Perfect in contexts previously outside its scope in 19th-century texts are interpreted as cases of dead-ended microsteps not gone to completion. It may seem contradictory that those cases should be interpreted as dead ends, while the example in (50) should be interpreted as a hypercorrection. Still, the evidence from the old texts shows a systematic use of the Perfect in novel contexts, while such examples occur only sporadically in young and adolescent speakers. In addition, in the 19th-century texts, examples of novel Perfect use have found their way to written language, which indicates that the innovation has reached a substantial degree of conventionalization.

6.4 Perfects and Preterits in Age Group II

This section is dedicated to a thorough analysis of the distribution of the perfect and Preterit in the older and middle-aged informants—age group II.

6.4.1 *General Tendency*

As Figure 7 clearly shows, this group alternates between using the Perfect and Preterit to express past with CR. This variation is argued to provide evidence for an ongoing change; this is a transition stage. In this age group, all subfunctions except recent past (see 6.4.3.2) exhibit variation. The general distribution is as follows: the Perfect is employed in 40% of CR contexts (40[99]), whereas the Preterit is employed in 60% of CR contexts (59[99]).

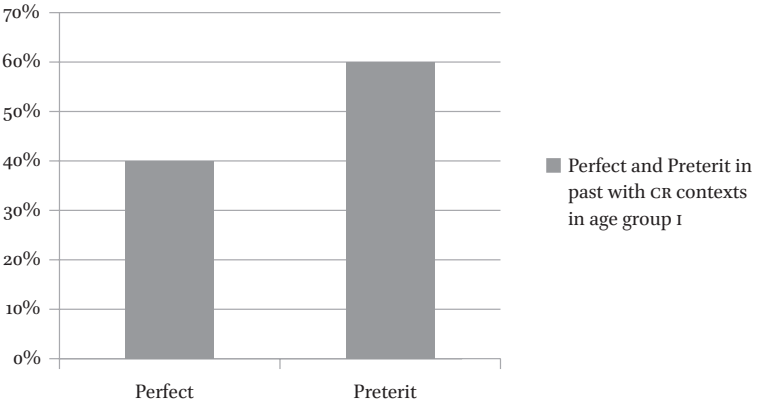

FIGURE 7 *Perfect/Preterit in age group II.*

6.4.2 *Subfunction Replacement*

Table 15 provides further details on the distribution of the subfunctions in the older and middle-aged informants. As can be observed, all subfunctions exhibit variation, except recent past:

TABLE 15 *Subfunction distribution in age group II*

Age group II (Older/ middle-aged)	**Experiential**	**Recent past**	**Resultative**	**Persistent situation**	**%**
	N	**N**	**N**	**N**	**Total**
Preterit	21	6	12	0	59 (60%)
Preterit + TA	8	0	8	4	
Perfect	20	0	9	2	40 (40%)
Perfect + TA	0	0	3	6	
Total	49	6	32	12	99 (100%)

The categories that stand out are the experiential and the resultative categories. Both show substantial variation in their expression; experientiality is expressed by means of the Preterit in 59% of all contexts (29[49]), while resultativity is expressed through the Preterit in 61% of contexts (19[31]). This patterning is expected, as I shall show in Chapter 7, and can be understood as a phenomenon of synchronic variation.

Henderson (2010) argues that generally, the past is default; the perfect is used for generic situations dissociated from the temporal axis. This clearly does not apply to the present corpus, where examples from all subfunctions, with all proposed synchronic restrictions, are abundant. Note, however, that I have not performed quantitative or statistical calculations on these subfunctions and restrictions. As for the statistical tests, the relevant chi-square analysis requires values greater than 5 in all cells, and this does not apply here. Concerning the use of TAS, it is unclear whether this use has increased or not. TAS are known to frequently occur with Perfects, and one could question whether this frequency increases in combination with the Preterit as the Perfect disappears. Such an increase cannot be discerned and calls for further research, which has

not been done here because I lack a basis for comparison to decide whether the use has in fact increased.

6.4.3 *Subfunction Variation*

In the following sections, I go through the four subfunctions associated with the Perfect, and the extent to which they are expressed by means of the Preterit. Subsequently, I go through other proposed criteria for supposed Perfect use.

6.4.3.1 Persistent Situation

There are two ways of expressing persistent situation in Porteño Spanish (and in Spanish as a whole; see discussion in 2.2.7.2). One type of persistent situation token is expressed by means of Present constructions, as in (51):

(51) HABCULT: 65

Hace	22 años	**que**	**reside**	en	Buenos Aires
Do.3SG.PRS	22 years	that	live.3SG.PRS	in	Buenos Aires

'He has been living in Buenos Aires for 22 years'

This subfunction is often expressed by means of Present constructions, not only in Porteño Spanish but also in standard Spanish and French (Comrie 1976). However, a different type of persistent-situation construction typically occurs with temporal adverbs such as *siempre* 'always' and *nunca* 'never'. It is common to claim that these types of constructions are expressed by means of the Perfect in Latin American Spanish (Harris 1982; Henderson 2010; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000; Westmoreland 1988). This is also claimed to be the case for Porteño Spanish (Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 413). A typical durative context expressing the notion of persistent situation in which the Perfect would be employed is given in the following example:

(52) Mexican Spanish

Tú	con	lentes?	Pues	claro	yo	siempre	los
You	with	glasses	well	clearly	I	always	them

he usado
use.1SG.PRS.PRF

'You with glasses? But of course, I have always used them'
(Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 411)

In the corpus, both Perfects and Preterits are used to express persistent situation, as illustrated in (53) and (54), which illustrates subfunction variation.

However, since I do find variation in the use of the two to express this function, it cannot be excluded that there has been a requirement, in which persistent situation is expressed by means of Perfect only, which has since disappeared. In the following examples, we observe the same informant expressing persistent situation with the Perfect and later with the Preterit:

(53) (01:03:33/12)
Nosotros siempre **hemos tenido** el problema famoso
We always have.1PL.PRS.PRF the problem famous
de las Malvinas
of the Malvinas
'We have always had the famous problem of the Malvinas'[5]

(54) (49:49/12)
Yo siempre **tuve** la idea de hacer un libro
I always have.1SG.PRT the idea to make a book
'I have always had the idea of making a book'

6.4.3.2 Recent Past

Recent past appears six times in the entire corpus, and these six tokens all appear in age group II. As a general observation, it can be hypothesized that the lack of tokens here might be due to the low overall frequency of this function in natural discourse (it is traditionally used in, e.g., newspaper headlines and is sometimes labeled the "hot news" perfect; see 2.2.7.4).

Crucially, a construction formed with a verb in the present tense exists to express temporal recentness in Porteño Spanish, as in *Acabo de leerlo* 'I have just read it' (lit.: 'I finish to read it'); it coexists with the Preterit and Perfect to express recent past in Porteño Spanish. The adverbs that do appear are *ya* and *recién*, the counterpart to the English 'just', typically appearing in Perfect constructions.

(55) With *ya*
(00:11/4)
Vos decime cuando Ah **ya** **empezamos**
You tell.me when ah already start.1PL.PRT
'You tell me when . . . ah we have already started'

5 The English term for *Malvinas* is Falkland Islands.

(56) (13:12/13)
Viste como hablé? Ahora hablá vos también
See.2SG.PRT how talk.1SG.PRT now talk you too
contáme algo tuyo
tell.me something yours
'Have you seen how I have talked? Now talk you too, tell me something yours!'

The recent past function is sometimes claimed to be the key to understanding the expansion of a Perfect (see Chapter 7), and Croft argues that the recent-past function is the one that has the most in common with a tense (2012: 142–143). Based on these considerations, it is difficult to exclude the possibility that recent past was early expressed by means of Preterit in Porteño Spanish. I return to this in Chapter 7.

6.4.3.3 Resultative

The expression of resultativity shows variation at 12 Perfect tokens versus 20 Preterit tokens. Of the Perfect tokens, three appear with temporal adverbial. Of the 20 Preterit tokens, eight co-occur with temporal adverbials. In this data set, there is no evidence in favor of Rodríguez Louro's claim (2013: 238) that resultatives tend to co-occur with the temporal adverbial *ya* 'already'. Example (57) illustrates a Perfect used to express a resultative:

(57) (21:53/10)
Está lleno de hippies te digo los hippies se
It.is full of hippies you tell the hippies REFL
han quedado ahí
stay.3PL.PRS.PRF there
'It is full of hippies I tell you the hippies have stayed there'

Examples (58) and (59) illustrate how informant 11 alternates between Perfect and Preterit to express resultativity; (58) is a Perfect:

(58) (23:41/11)
La gente **ha salido** de vacaciones
The people go.out.3SG.PRS.PRF for vacation
'People have left for vacation'

Example (59) illustrates how the same informant switches to the Preterit to express resultativity. Note, however, that the CR is made explicit by the initial phrase *vos ves* 'you see'. This explicitness provides the sentence with an unambiguous resultative reading (recall from 2.2.7.1 that sentences may be ambiguous between a resultative and an experiential reading).

(59) (23:24/11)
Vos ves que la gente se **fue** de vacaciones
You see that the people REFL go.3SG.PRT for vation
'You see that people have gone on vacation'

Note that this type of explicit disambiguation does not always occur with the Preterit in the resultative function, as in example (60):

(60) (02:46/10)
Ah **conseguiste** vacante?
Ah get.2SG.PRT vacancy?
'Ah have you gotten a vacancy?'

6.4.3.4 Experiential

The experiential is discussed in detail in 2.2.7.3. Here, it is important to mention, that both Perfects and Preterits occur to express experientiality in age group II. The Preterit is used to express this function in 29 out of 49 tokens, while the Perfect is used to express experientiality in the remaining 20 tokens. As with the resultative, variation is found both within the same informant and across informants. There is no tendency for the Preterit tokens to occur with temporal adverbials; this co-occurrence is found in eight tokens, but as will be noted in 6.4.4.1, there is no reason to think that this is more than a typical co-occurrence between Perfects and temporal adverbs.

The examples below show how informant 12 uses both the Preterit and Perfect to express experientiality. Example (61) illustrates Perfect use. Note also how the speaker uses the Preterit to express perfective past in *Yo vine aquí a los dos años* 'I came here when I was two'.

(61) (06:48/12)
Yo **vine** aquí a los dos años **he visto**
I come.1SG. PRT here at the two years see.1SG.PRS.PRF
la transformación del barrio
the transformation of.the area
'I came here when I was two years old, I have seen the transformation of the area'

(62) (58:50/12)
Yo **estuve** en París en el museo de la
I be.1SG.PRET in Paris in the museum of the
segunda gran guerra
second great war
'I have been to Paris to the museum of the Second World War'

Informant 11 also varies between Perfect and Preterit in the expression of experientiality:

(63) (11:05/11)
Las únicas que **han viajado** más son Sole y
The only.ones that travel.3PL.PRS.PRF more are Sole and
sus hermanas que se **han ido** a distintos
her sisters that REFL go.3SPL.PRS.PRF to different
lugares
places
'The only ones who have travelled more are Sole and her sisters who have gone to different places'

(64) (27:37/11)
Hubo épocas en que las maestras
Have.3.SG.PRT times in which the teachers
cobraban muy poco
earn.3.PL.PST.IPFV very little
'There have been times in which teachers earned very little'

6.4.4 *Other Hypotheses*

Several semantic restrictions have been proposed to account for the distribution of the Perfect in Porteño Spanish, as well as in other Latin American varieties (see especially Rodríguez Louro 2009; Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008). Many of these studies attempt to provide a clear-cut synchronic picture of the distribution of the Perfect and, to some extent, the Preterit. In addition, in these studies, the traditional CR approach to the Perfect is often questioned methodologically, and there is a tendency to employ other criteria than the Perfect's subfunctions in order to understand the Perfect's distribution (Henderson 2010; Rodríguez Louro 2009; Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008).

There clearly is a difference in the extent to which the different subfunctions of the Perfect are expressed by means of Preterits in the groups that show variation. However, it is remarkable that no studies have been able to

pinpoint a clear semantic pattern. Rather, the distribution between the two forms appears to be more random, in line with Kubarth's observation (Kubarth 1992; see also Chapter 7 for discussion). As I have shown, age group II speakers alternate between Perfect and Preterit to express all subfunctions except recent past (albeit more so in the experiential), while most age group I speakers have replaced Perfects with Preterits in all subfunctions.

Here, I schematically go through some proposed criteria for the distribution of the Perfect and Preterit in Porteño Spanish. In this data sample, it is difficult to point to any criteria that clearly require Perfects and Preterits. Such restrictions have been identified to only a small extent in other works, such as Rodríguez Louro (2009). In my view, this inability is not unexpected and is thus seen as an argument that the Porteño Spanish Preterit is in a process of change induced in a subfunction.[6]

No quantitative tests have been effectuated on this subpart of the data, except co-occurrence with temporal adverbs. For the diachronic-semantic analysis, however, it is clear, judging from the data, that the "constraints on the linguistic environment [are] no longer obligatory" (Hopper & Traugott 2003: 48), as when, for instance, the Preterit expresses persistent situation. The totality of the data illustrates the loss of a semantic restriction.

6.4.4.1 Temporal Adverbs

Squartini and Bertinetto (2000), citing Lope Blanch (1972), report a constraint on the use of Perfect/Preterit in Mexican Spanish: when in a construction with the adverb *ya* 'already', the Preterit is used, and when paired with *todavía* 'still, yet', the perfect is used. *Ya* indeed pairs with the Preterit in Porteño Spanish (to the extent that one may speculate whether this pairing may be grammaticalized to express perfect in the future—adverbs meaning 'already' are common sources of perfects; see, e.g., Dahl 1985). *Todavía* does too:

(65) With *ya* 'already'
(00:11/4)

Vos	decime	cuando	ah	**ya**	**empezamos**
You	tell.me	when	ah	already	start.1PL.PRT

'You tell me when . . . ah we have already started'

6 Note that this inability may also be due to the relatively low number of tokens, and it is possible that patterns would be visible in a larger corpus.

(66) With *todavía no*[7] 'not yet'
Todavía no **fui**
Yet NEG go.1SG.PRT
'I haven't gone yet'

As noted above, Rodríguez Louro (2009: 238) goes further and claims that *ya* 'already' is combined with Preterits to convey resultativity. This is not supported in the present study. Though no quantitative study is effectuated on this topic, *ya* + Preterit occurrences, which clearly do not express resultativity, are abundant in the corpus.

Example (66) above clearly indicates not resultativity but rather experientiality. The same goes for the following examples:

(67) (13:11/11)
Ya me **dijo** Anton que le falta poquito
Already me say.3SG.PRT Anton that it lacks very_little
para su cumple
for his birthday
'Anton has already told me that his birthday is coming up very soon'

This clearly is not a resultative and has here been defined as experiential. The same holds for example (68):

(68) (14:56/13)
Esta fracción peronista yo ya **dije** que hay
This fraction peronist I already say.1SG.PRT that are
dos cosas que jamás a mí me van a decir
two things that never to me REFL will to say
ni puta ni peronista
neither whore nor peronist
'This peronist fraction . . . I have already said that there are two things that will not be said to me neither whore nor peronist'

In addition, Rodríguez Louro (2009: 151) claims that the use of TAS in Porteño Spanish arises in frequency in order to disambiguate cases where the interpretations of the Preterit as past perfective and the Preterit as past with CR are equivocal. This is in line with Dahl and Hedin's finding (2000: 386) from

7 Does not appear in this corpus but is frequently found in a Google search, where this example is from; more specifically, from an Argentinean chat room.

newspaper headlines in American English, where the simple past is accompanied by a temporal adverbial in 40 out of 41 tokens and is used to refer to recent past. Is this the case for Porteño Spanish as well? Do temporal adverbials provide disambiguation to "make up" for the lack of the Perfect? No evidence for such a development is found in the present data; as seen in Table 16 below. Note also that I disagree with the idea of new forms emerging in order to "fill gaps" in a linguistic system, as this entails that a language "needs" certain linguistic categories, which again is incompatible with the crosslinguistic typological variation observed (see, e.g., Bybee et al. 1994: 297–300).

TABLE 16 *Preterit + TA co-occurrence in age group II*

Age group II	Experiential	Recent past	Resultative	Persistent situation
Preterit	36 (67%)	0	12 (48%)	0
Preterit + TA	18 (33%)	0	13 (52%)	8 (100%)
Total	54	0	25	8

Of 54 Preterit tokens expressing experientiality, 18 include TAs while 36 appear without any temporal specification whatsoever. The same tendency holds for the resultative: of 25 Preterit tokens expressing resultativity, 12 appear without any temporal specification while 13 include temporal adverbs. All eight persistent-situation tokens included temporal adverbs; however, this is a specific type of construction that consistently includes adverbs such as *siempre* 'always' and *nunca* 'never' (Östen Dahl, personal communication; see also Chapter 2).

On a more general note, it is important to remember that certain temporal adverbs, such as *just*, *already* (notably not specific-time adverbs such as *yesterday*) tend to combine with perfects. Because no available corpus of Porteño Spanish tagged for Perfect + TA use exists, I have no means of measuring whether the use of temporal adverbs, as observed in Table 16, is higher due to the disappearance of the Perfect or just as high as expected for any form expressing CR.

6.4.4.2 Temporal (Un)specification

It has been proposed that Perfects tend to be used in sentences with unspecific time span (Rodríguez Louro 2009: 233). As the analysis will show, it is possible that the expansion of the category began through a pragmatic strengthening

of the Preterit when it occurs in a preestablished past context. However, there also are examples of experientials in which this specification is absent. In this study, six of the eight Perfect tokens in young informants represent such tokens. As discussed above, Rodríguez Louro (2009: 233) notes that the most striking result in her study is that experientials with no preestablished time frame, no temporal specification, and generic reference are expressed by means of the Perfect. How can this be reconciled with the analysis in Chapter 7, in which experientiality is suggested as an early locus of variation? If we choose to distinguish the experientials into two types, it becomes clearer.

i. Experientials with a preestablished time frame
ii. Experientials unidentified as to temporal location

In fact, Rodríguez Louro's examples are of a similar type as the Perfect tokens in age group II; both qualify as type-focusing constructions. Recall from 2.2.1.2 that a type-focusing construction refers to a situation as indefinite and emphasizes one or more occurrences of a situation. Example (69) exemplifies a type-focusing experiential with a plural object, unidentified as to temporal location, as in (ii) above:

(69) (01:07:25/8)

Noruegos	acá	no	te	**has comunicado**	con
Norwegians	here	NEG	you	communicate.2SG.PRS.PRF	with
noruegos	acá?				
Norwegians	here				

'You haven't communicated with Norwegians here?'

Compare to example (70) as cited in Rodríguez Louro (2009: 114):

(70)

No	a	todo	el	mundo	se	le	**han dado**
NEG	to	whole	the	world	REFL	it	give.3SG.PRS.PRF
las	cosas	que	se	me	**dieron**	a	mí
the	things	that	REFL	REFL	give.3SG.PRT	to	me

'Things have not turned out for everyone as well as they did for me.'

Note that in the present corpus, both type- and token-focus are expressed by means of Preterits. As I will further discuss in Chapter 7, it is possible that the sporadic use of the Perfect to convey experientials without a preestablished time frame or a plural or generic object has been retained. This retention is

compatible with experientials that occur in a preestablished past context's being the first to expand.

6.4.4.3 Person Number

First-person subjects should favor the Perfect on the assumption that the Perfect is a more subjective category (Rodríguez Louro 2009: 78). This is not confirmed in the data, in which numerous examples of the Preterit used with first-person subjects exist. Example (71) illustrates first-person singular in a persistent situation:

(71) (31:03/3)
Siempre **encontré** qué hacer nunca me **aburrí**
Always find.1SG.PRT what to.do never REFL bore.1SG.PRT
pero
but
'I've always found something to do, I've never been bored, but . . .'

Example (72) illustrates first-person plural, also in persistent situation function:

(72) (31:28/3)
Nosotros con X nos **mudamos** mucho desde que
Us with X we move.1PL.PRT much since that
nos conocimos muchas veces
REFL met many times
'With X we've moved a lot since we met, many times'

6.4.4.4 Object/Mass Number and Specification

Unspecified referents are supposed to trigger Perfect use (Rodríguez Louro 2009: 113). I do, however, observe examples of Preterits combined with unspecific objects, as in (73):

(73) (27:48/3)
O ponéle muchas veces en esta casa se
Or put.it many times in this house REFL
hicieron festejos
make.3PL.PRT celebrations
'Or say, many times parties have been held in this house'

The same goes for (74), in which the Preterit expresses resultative function:

(74) (42:55/3)
Habla bastante ahora con los abuelos y
He.speaks enough now with the grandparents and
todo **mejoró**
all improve.3SG.PRT
'He speaks pretty much. Now with the grandparents and all it has improved'

Note, however, that a majority of the retained Perfects in age group I belong to this category. This observation is discussed in Chapter 7.

6.4.4.5 Negative Polarity

Given that Perfects have an atelicising effect on telic verbs, one could expect to find that Perfects occur more readily in such contexts (Rodríguez Louro 2009: 77; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000). This is not observed in this sample—quite the contrary: negated Preterits expressing CR appear in both age groups I and II, as seen in examples (75) and (76). The first two examples are from age group I:

(75) (24:12/3)
Nunca **estuve** tanto en mi taller como en la
Never be.1SG.PRT so.much in my studio as in the
última semana
last week
'I've never been in my craft studio more than this last week'

(76) (24:32/3)
No **tuve** ninguna pelea ninguna nada
NEG have.SG.PRT no fight no nothing
'I haven't had a fight, nothing'

Example (77) is from age group II:

(77) (06:31/13)
No **fuiste** a Bariloche? Que lastima para el
NEG go.2SG.PRT to Bariloche? What shame for the
próximo viaje
next trip
'You haven't been to Bariloche? What a shame, for the next trip'

Two of the eight Perfect tokens in the young informants are negated, but this negation provides no evidence for negative polarity to be a trigger of perfects in the current system of these speakers. Rodríguez Louro (2009: 77) also notes that negated sentences expressing past with CR are expressed by means of Preterits in 81% of cases (188[233]).

To conclude this section, it is worth mentioning the inability to point to clear synchronic criteria for the distribution of the Preterit and Perfect should be expected. As I will argue in Chapter 7, it is possible that the expansion of the Preterit has occurred along the lines of semantic subfunction. If so, one would expect to find early variation in certain subfunctions (which is confirmed) but would not expect to observe other semantic criteria to account for the sparse use of Perfect (which is confirmed here, and to some extent in Rodríguez Louro 2009).

6.4.5 *Retained Meanings of the Perfect*

This section briefly discusses the existence of past perfect and subjunctive perfect coined with the otherwise rare auxiliary *haber* 'to have'. It is not uncommon for other types of perfects to survive as the present perfect disappears (Dahl & Velupillai 2011), and this survival has happened in languages such as Romanian, where the Perfect/Past distinction has disappeared, in addition to French, some dialects of German (Dahl 1985: 144), and Judeo-Spanish (Varol 2008). This tendency, combined with the fact that the past perfect survives the disappearance of the present perfect, indicates that the former should be seen as a category in its own right. This prediction is confirmed in Porteño Spanish, and it should be noted that other forms of the Perfect exist, such as the past Perfect, as in (78):

(78) HABCULT: 200

Había	dos	oficiales	del	ejército	Uruguayo	que
There.were	two	officials	from.the	army	Uruguayan	that
habían venido		aquí				
come.3PL.PST.PRF		here				

'There were two officials from the Uruguayan army who had come here'

Note also that the subjunctive mood of the present of *haber* can be combined with perfect participles, as in (79):[8]

8 Example (79) is from a search on Google, more specifically from an Argentinean chat room.

(79) El que no lo **haya hecho** es un ignorante
Him that NEG it do.3SG.SUBJ.PRF is a ignorant
'Him who hasn't done it is a ignorant'

The participle also appears with progressives, as seen again in (80):

(80) (18:45/8)
Carrió **ha ido** creciendo desde el 2001
Carrió go.3SG.PRS.PRF growing since the 2001
'Carrió has been growing since 2001'

6.5 Synchrony: Tense and Aspect in Present-Day Porteño Spanish

The last question to address in this section concerns the nature of the past categories in Porteño Spanish today. Two systems can be identified in the speakers in this sample.

- System one: Variation between Perfect and Preterit to express past with CR
  - In the language of older and middle-aged informants, past with CR is expressed through both Perfect and Preterit. This system is the one found in the older informants of the oral sources and, as I shall show below, also holds for the informants in the written corpus (even though their Perfect use is more frequent). I have shown that the same informants use both Preterits and Perfects, in nearly identical semantic contexts, to express functions associated with the Perfect. I have identified no clear requirements on the use of Preterits/Perfects in this group and have observed that all subfunctions of the Perfect are expressed by means of both. I will assume that this stage is transitory in Porteño Spanish, based on data from age group I.
- System two: Preterit takes over
  - In system two, the Preterit expresses both past perfective and CR. A majority of young informants clearly exhibit such a system. In their language, the grammaticalized expression of the Perfect has disappeared, and the functions typically associated with it are expressed by means of Preterits. The remaining system is simpler; a category distinction has disappeared, and the opposition in the past domain is between the perfective past and the imperfective. This category will be argued to be polysemous, as it expresses the different but related meanings of perfective past and past with CR.

6.5.1 *Summary of Oral Sources*

The previous sections have shown a general decrease in Perfect use from age group II to age group I (from 40% to 15%). The older and middle-aged informants show substantial variation in the expression of CR, and the variation lacks a clear semantic pattern. Semantic restrictions proposed in earlier works have not been identified for the speakers in the present corpus. In addition, emphasis has been on the variation found in the expression of experientiality, resultativity, and persistent situation. There is variation in the expression of all subfunctions that appear in the corpus.

6.6 Uruguayan Sources

In this section, evidence from five Uruguayan informants (henceforth UYCORP) is presented (see 5.5 for details on the informants). This group was included as a control group, under the assumption that the Perfect distribution would to a greater extent resemble the Peninsular norm in that the Preterit would not be used to express past with CR (see Henderson 2010; also, cf. assumptions that Argentinean is the most extreme of the Latin American varieties in the non-use of Perfects; see 4.3.1). A second hypothesis was that in the case of there being variation in the expression of past with CR, this variation would be centered on the experiential function, on the assumption that this is the first subfunction to be expressed by means of Preterits.

Note that the overall frequency of tokens of past with CR meaning is very low in this group. It is unclear why these interviews generated so few tokens, as opposed to the interviews from Buenos Aires speakers. In this case, using spontaneous speech is a disadvantage as opposed to, for example, using questionnaires.

6.6.1 *General Distribution*

Because of the low overall frequency of past with CR tokens in UYCORP, it is difficult to generalize about the general distribution of the Perfect and Preterit. As noted above, what little has been written about Uruguayan Spanish suggests that the Preterit is used less frequent frequently to express past with CR than in neighboring Argentina. However, the data presented here support the claim that experientiality is expressed by means of the Preterit in Uruguayan Spanish. I now turn to this.

6.6.2 *Subfunction Replacement and Variation*

Of 24 experientiality tokens, 19 (79%) are Preterits. This finding is largely compatible with Henderson (2010: 124), who shows that the experientiality is "abundantly" expressed by means of Preterits in this variety. This is shown in Table 17.

TABLE 17 *Preterit/Perfect in* UYCORP

UYCORP	Experiential	Recent past	Resultative	Persistent situation
Preterit	19 (79%)	0	1(14%)	1 (100%)
Preterit + TA	0	0	0	
Perfect	5 (21%)	0	6 (86%)	0
Perfect + TA	0	0	0	
Total N = 32	24	0	7	1

This can thus be interpreted as further evidence for this function being the locus of the change, although it should be noted that that the low overall frequency in this source makes this evidence merely suggestive.

The following examples illustrate the alternation between Perfect and Preterit to express experientiality in informant 17:

(81) (05:14/17)
Pero nosotros **hemos hecho** bondiola que es muy
But we make.1PL.PRS.PRF bondiola which is very
parecido el lleva mismo proceso
similar takes the same process
'We have made bondiola, which is very similar and takes the same process'

(82) (05:55/17)
Nosotros **hicimos** nos **quedó** riquísima la
We make.1PL.PRT us become.3SG.PRT very.good the
bondiola
bondiola
'We have made bondiola it turned out very good for us'

Example (83) further illustrates both interspeaker variation (speaker 15 and 17) and intraspeaker variation (in speaker 17):

(83) (01:35/15/17)

17:

No	**has ido**	para	la	Concordia	allá	para
NEG	go.2SG.PRS.PRF	to	the	Concordia	there	to
allá	afuera					
there	out					

'You haven't been to Concordia, out there, outside?'

17:

Para	allá	afuera	no	**fueron**	a	la	Concordia ?
To	there	outside	NEG	go.3PL.PRT	to	the	Concordia

'Out to Concordia you haven't been?'

15:

No	no	**he ido**
NEG	NEG	go.1SG.PRS.PRF

'No I haven't been there'

In sum, the low overall frequency of past with CR in UYCORP provides restricted grounds for generalization. However, the experiential function stands out, both in frequency and in showing both inter- and intraspeaker variation between Perfect and Preterit expression.

6.7 HABCULT Interviews

As discussed in Chapter 5, in addition to the oral sources, tokens were extracted from a written corpus of spontaneous speech: *El Habla Culta de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* (1987): HABCULT. This corpus consists of semistructured interviews of informants whose background information is provided in short introductory texts that follow the same structure. Therefore, this collection of interviews provides two types of sources: transcripts of semistructured interviews and short, edited texts, referred to as introductory texts. In this section, the distribution of the Perfect and Preterit in six informants from this corpus is accounted for and discussed.

6.7.1 *General Tendency*

The transcribed interviews from HABCULT illustrate a stage in which there is some observable variation in the expression of past with CR, but less so than in age group II. This source therefore supports the claim that the use of the

Preterit to express CR is novel. The HABCULT speakers use the Preterit in 20% of all past with CR contexts, while the Perfect is employed in the remaining 80%, as illustrated in Figure 8 and in detail in Table 18.

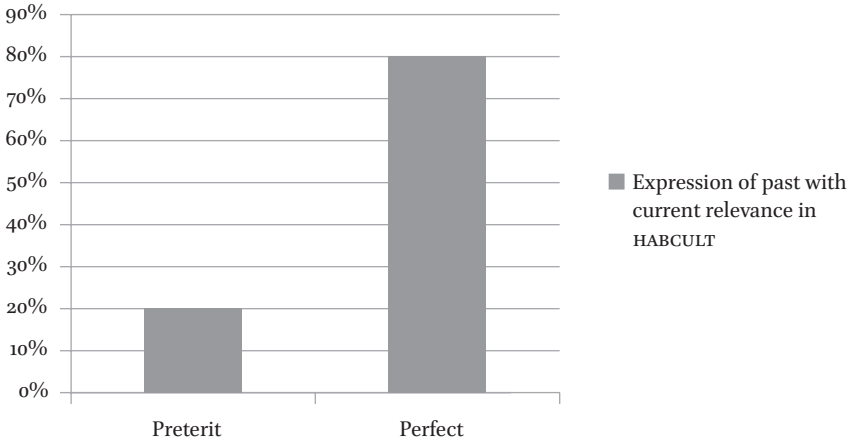

FIGURE 8 *Distribution of Perfect and Preterit to express past with CR in HABCULT.*

TABLE 18 *HABCULT subfunction distribution*

HABCULT	Experiential	Recent past	Resultative	Persistent situation	Total
Preterit	20	0	0	0	20 % (25)
Preterit + TA	2	0	0	3	
Perfect	57	0	23	3	80 % (100)
Perfect + TA	8	0	1	8	
Total N = 125	87	0	24	14	100% (125)
Total Perfect	75% (63/87)	–	100% (24/24)	79% (11/14)	
Total Preterit	25% (22/87)	–	–	21% (3/14)	

Recall from discussions in section 6.3 that this distribution is not unlike an exact reversal of the distribution of the Perfect and the Preterit in age group I, in which the Perfect is used in 9% of the relevant contexts. It is likely that the HABCULT speakers represent an early stage of the spread, in which Preterits appear in transition contexts only (see the stages of semantic change in Chapter 7).

6.7.2 *Subfunction Replacement*

Here, I discuss the subfunction replacement of the Perfect in more detail. Table 18 shows the distribution among the seven HABCULT informants.

First, it should be noted that the data provide no information on the recent past, as no recent-past tokens appear (see discussion in section 6.3.2.3). Second, and more importantly, the use of Preterit to express past with CR is centered on the experiential function, in which the Preterit is used in 25% of cases. There is no tendency to employ temporal adverbials when Preterit expresses past with CR; this co-occurrence can be observed in only 10% (2[20]) of tokens. There is no variation in the expression of resultative, but we observe three Preterit tokens in the expression of persistent situation. Example (84) illustrates a resultative expressed by means of the Perfect:

(84) HABCULT: 195

Yo	tengo	algunos	recuerdos	pero	así	me
I	have	some	memories	but	such	me
han quedado		un	recuerdo	directo		
stay.3PL.PRS.PRF		a	memory	direct		

'I have some memories . . . but like that some direct memories have been left for me'

The following example illustrates an experiential expressed by means of the Perfect:

(85) HABCULT: 199/20

Yo	**he pasado**	siete	años	más	nueve	años	fuera
I	pass.1SG.PRS.PRF	seven	years	more	nine	years	away
de	mi	casa					
from	my	house					

'I have passed seven years . . .more . . . nine years away from home'

6.7.3 *Subfunction Variation*

The variation observed in the expression of experientiality suggests that Preterits came to express this function earlier than, for instance, resultative

and persistent situation. What is striking is the way in which Preterits and Perfect co-occur within the same speaker—in the same sentence even—to express past with CR. The following exemplify this.

Examples (86) and (87) illustrate the Preterit used without temporal specification to express experiential. Note how the speaker alternates between the two forms:

(86) HABCULT: 395/22
Te **conté** que Jorge Luis Borges está ya en
You tell.1SG.PRT that Jorge Luis Borges is already in
trámite de divorcio? Hablando de refinados y de
process of divorce speaking of refined and of
exquisitos me **he acordado** de él Yo te
exquisites REFL remember.1SG.PRS.PRF of him I you
conté de su casamiento?
tell.1SG.PRT of his wedding
'Have I told you that Jorge Luis Borges already is in the process of divorce? Speaking of the refined and the exquisites I have remembered him. Have I told you about his wedding?'

(87) HABCULT: 214/21
Interviewer: La sicoterapia(sic) qué hace es toda a base de sicoanálisis?
'Psychotherapy how is it is it all with psychoanalytic base?'

(88) No. Yo me **sicoanalicé** y estoy de vuelta
NEG I REFL psychoanalize.1SG.PRT and am on turn
del sicoanálisis. Yo hago una psychoanalysis
from.the psychoanalysis I do a sicoanálisis
me **he sicoanalizado** muchos años con
REFL psychoanalyze.1SG.PRS.PRF many years with
sicoanalistas from very.first category
psychoanalysts de primerísima categoría
'No. I have been psychoanalyzed and I am back from the psychoanalysis. I do psychoanalysis . . . I have been psychoanalyzed many years with psychoanalysts of the highest quality'

Example (89) illustrates intraspeaker variation, assuming that *han* 'have' is the beginning of a Perfect (as in *han ido*, for example):

(89) HABCULT: 337
Que son todos locos. Esos **han** se
What are all crazy they have.3PL.PRS REFL
fueron, se **fueron** a otro. lado
go.3PL.PRT REFL go.3PL.PRT to other place
'What are they all crazy? They have . . . They have gone they have gone to another place'

Example (90) illustrates a possible similar autocorrection from Perfect to Preterit:

(90) HABCULT: 320
Pero resulta que ahora según X, dice que le
But prove that now according X says that it
han que **fueron** varios los que tiraron
have.3SG.PRS that be.3PL.PRT many those that shoot.3PL.PRT
'But it turns out now, according to X, he says that they have . . . that they were many those who shot'

Example (91) also illustrates intraspeaker variation. Note how the Perfect alternates with the Preterit to convey past with CR:

(91) HABCULT: 333
Hace tres años que no pisa la calle, que no
Make three years that NEG step the street, that NEG
ha querido salir Desde que estamos acá **fue**
want.3SG.PRS.PRF go.out since that are here go.3SG.PRT
una sola vez al oculista nada más Y ya
one only time to.the optician no more. And already
después no **volvió** a salir.
after NEG return.3SG.PRT to go.out
'It's been three years that he doesn't set foot on the street that he has not wanted to go out. Since we are here, he has been once to the optician, nothing more. And after that he hasn't gone out again'

6.7.4 *Hypercorrection or Dead End in HABCULT*

As in the speakers in age groups I and II, we observe a use of the Perfect with temporal specification traditionally outside the scope of the Perfect. Recall that

Perfects typically do not go well together with specific-time adverbials (Dahl 1985: 137), as in (92):

(92) HABCULT: 345
El otro día nos **hemos reído** con aquella
The other day REFL laugh.1SG.PRS.PRF with that
chica que cantaba tano
girl that sang Italian
'The other day we laughed with that girl that sang Italian'

This can be interpreted in two ways. One possibility is to view it as hypercorrection toward a Peninsular Spanish norm, in which the Perfect is default to express past with CR. This is what I argued for age group I in 6.3.6. Another possibility is that this is a microstep change that has not spread further in speakers of Porteño Spanish: a so-called dead end. This is also discussed in section 7.6.2.1. As with age group I, it is difficult to ascertain the nature of these atypical uses, although the rarity of these examples in HABCULT points in the direction of a hypercorrection.

6.8 Secondary Written Source: Introductory Texts

The introductory texts to the HABCULT interviews represent a surprising source of insights into the subfunction variation.

6.8.1 *General*

Every transcribed interview in the written corpus is introduced by one such text, making a total of 28 texts. These introductory texts provide particularly valuable information because they include contexts that typically call for Perfects: those expressing experientiality and persistent situation. All texts follow the following pattern (HABCULT: 195):

(93) Muestra XIII
Corresponde a la Encuesta n. 33, cinta XX A. Diálogo dirigido. Duración: 40 minutos. Tema: vida de estudiante, recuerdos familiares. El informante (n. 5 de nuestro archive) es un hombre de 69 años, casado, nacido en Buenos Aires, donde siempre **ha residido**, salvo 10 años en Bahía Blanca. **Ha viajado** a Francia. Profesión: ingeniero agrónomo. Su padre, estanciero, y su madre, ama de casa, son de Buenos Aires.

> 'Excerpt XIII
> Corresponds to Interview n. 33, tape XX A. Structured dialogue. Duration: 40 minutes. Topic: life as student, family memories. The informant (n. 5 of our archive) is a man of 69 years, married, born in Buenos Aires, where he has always lived, except 10 years in Bahía Blanca. He has traveled to France. Profession: agricultural engineer. His father, farmer, and his mother, housewife, are from Buenos Aires.'

All texts provide information on where the informants are currently living, a typical use of persistent situation, expressed with the Perfect, as in (94):

(94) El informante A es una mujer de 26 años, soltera,
The informant A is a woman of 26 years single
siempre **ha residido**. nacida en Buenos Aires, donde
always live.3SG.PRS.PRF born in Buenos Aires where
'Informant A (. . .) is a 26 year-old woman, single, born in Buenos Aires, where she has always lived'

Furthermore, the introduction to each informant includes information on whether the informant has traveled, a typical experiential context, as in (95):

(95) **Ha viajado** a Uruguay, Chile, Colombia y Méjico
Travel.3SG.PRS.PRF to Uruguay Chile Colombia and Mexico
'She has traveled to Uruguay, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico'

These texts provide a particularly valuable illustration of the use of experiential and persistent-situation subcategories, primarily because the context is almost identical in all examples. The context is thus exceptionally controlled, and the texts are almost formulaic in nature. It is unclear who wrote the texts or whether the same person wrote them all. In any case, the findings are interesting: if the same person wrote them, they illustrate intraspeaker variation. If different persons wrote them, they illustrate interspeaker variation. The mere inclusion of such phrases points to a significant level of social acceptance, also in academic language.

Despite the formulaic nature of the texts, however, systematic variation is observed between Perfect and Preterit in the expression of experientials, which is repeated in all the 28 introductory texts. Compare the use of Preterit to the use of Perfect in the following excerpt (HABCULT: 211) with (96):

(96) Muestra XIV
El informante (numero 36 de nuestro archivo) es un hombre de 62 años, soltero, nacido en Buenos Aires, donde siempre **ha residido**. **Viajó** a Europa, Brazil y Uruguay.

'Excerpt XVI
The informant (number 36 of our archive) is a man of 62 years, single, born in Buenos Aires, where he has always lived. He has traveled [lit. he traveled] to Europa, Brazil y Uruguay.'

It is particularly striking that this variation has found its way to text at such an early stage. This is a formal setting, presumably with educated writers who are likely to have been following clear, formal instructions.

In the following examples, it can be observed how the expression of experientiality varies between Perfect and Preterit. Note also how this variation is present irrespective of whether the object is singular or plural, as seen in the examples above. This observation is crucial since it has been proposed that plural/generic objects trigger Perfect use in Porteño Spanish (Rodríguez Louro 2009: 113).

6.8.2 *Subfunction Variation*

Table 19 illustrates the detailed distribution of the Perfect and Preterit to express experientiality and persistent situation in the introductory texts.

TABLE 19 *Detailed distribution in expression of experiential and persistent situation*

HABCULT texts	Persistent situation	Experiential
Perfect	25 (86%)	14 (48%)
Preterit	–	15 (52%)
Present construction	4 (14%)	–
Total N= 58	29	29

6.8.2.1 Experientiality

As can be observed in Figure 9, there is variation in the expression of experientiality, the Preterit being used slightly more frequently (52%, 15[29]):

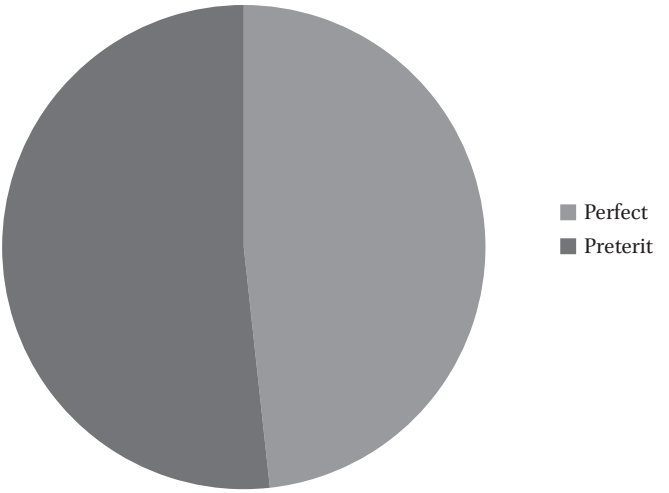

FIGURE 9 *Expression of experientiality in* HABCULT.

Examples (97)–(98) show experiential tokens as they appear in the introductory texts. It is worth mentioning that the Preterit occurs referring to both singular and plural destinations (recall the distinction between type-focus and token-focus introduced in 2.2.1.2), as in example (97):

(97) HABCULT: 215

Viajó	al	Uruguay	y	por	el	interior	del
Travel.3SG.PRT	to	Uruguay	and	to	the	interior	of.the
país							
country							

'She has traveled to Uruguay and to the interior of the country'

Example (98) shows a singular reference:

(98) HABCULT: 215

Viajó	a	Europa
Travel.3SG.PRT	to	Europe

'He has traveled to Europe'

The Perfect also alternates similarly, as seen in examples (99) and (100):

(99) HABCULT: 379
Ha viajado a Europa, Oriente y América
Travel.3SG.PRS.PRF to Europe Orient and America
'He has traveled to Europe, the Orient and America'

As is the case for the Preterit, the Perfect can also be used when the reference is a single destination, such as in (100):

(100) HABCULT: 501
Ha viajado a Europa
Travel.3SG.PRS.PRF to Europa
'She has traveled to Europe'

6.8.2.2 Persistent Situation

Persistent situation is expressed overwhelmingly by means of the Perfect (83%, 25[29]). We also find four tokens of Present constructions expressing this function, but crucially, no Preterits. Figure 10 shows the variation found in the distribution of persistent situation.

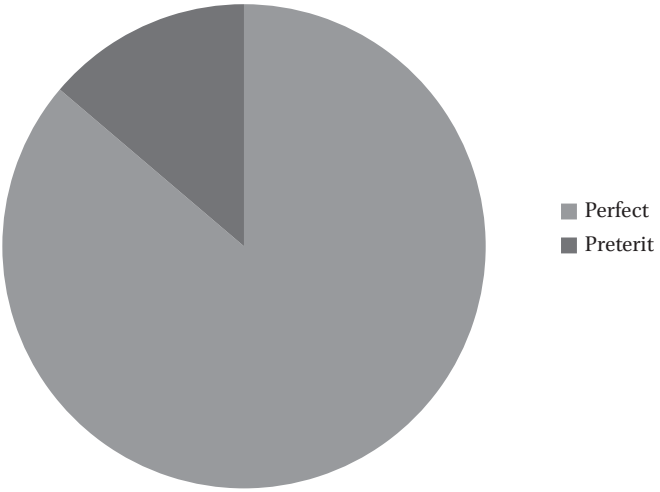

FIGURE 10 *Expression of persistent situation.*

Note that the Preterit is never used to express this content in this source (but it is used in the oral sources; see section 6.3.2.1). The use of Present constructions to express the imperfective content in persistent situation is known to occur not only in Porteño Spanish (Burgos 2004) but also in other Spanish varieties (Penny 2000). The use of the Perfect to express persistent situation is exemplified in (101):

(101) El informante B es un hombre de 30 años, casado,
The informant B is a man of 30 years married
siempre **ha residido.** nacido en Buenos Aires, donde
always live.3SG.PRS.PRF born in Buenos Aires where
'Informant B is a man, 30 years, married, born in Buenos Aires, where he has always lived'

The use of Present constructions to express persistent situation is exemplified in (102):

(102) El informante A es una mujer de 29 años casada
The informant A is a woman of 29 years married
con el informante B, nacida en Rosario, **hace**
with the informant B born in Rosario do.3SG.PRS
22 años **que vive** en Buenos Aires.
22 years that live.3SG.PRS in Buenos Aires
'Informant A is a woman, 29 years, married to informant B, born in Rosario, has been living in Buenos Aires for 22 years'

In the two age groups in the oral corpus, we find persistent situation expressed with Preterits combined with the TA *siempre* 'always' to be particularly common, but as we observe, this is not the case for the introductory texts, which show no such variation; the variation is between Perfects and Present constructions.

Overall, the expression of persistent situation stands in sharp contrast to the expression of experientiality discussed above. In addition, it strongly suggests that experientiality, prior to persistent situation, came to be expressed by means of the Preterit.

6.8.3 *Summary of Written Sources*

The written sources show two clear tendencies. First, the HABCULT interviews provide further evidence for the recency of the Preterit's expansion. In this source, the Perfect is preferred in 80% of CR contexts. In addition, we again

observe the tendency for the experiential to be the first subfunction to be expressed by means of the Preterit, here in 34% (22 out of 65 tokens). No such variation in the expression of resultatives and recent past is observed, but note three tokens of persistent situation, as discussed above.

The introductory texts provide more telling evidence. Here, there is no variation in the expression of persistent situation (except for the fact that Present constructions are used), but we do observe substantial variation in the expression of experientiality, as shown in Figure 9. Overall, these sources clarify the picture and provide strongvidence for a gradual decrease in the use of the Perfect in Porteño Spanish in the 20th century (in agreement with, e.g., Rodríguez Louro 2009) and for experientiality's being a locus of change. The next chapter provides an analysis based on this finding.

6.9 Summary of Results

This chapter has presented data indicating two tendencies: (1) the clear and gradual decrease in the use of the Perfect to express past with CR in the three informant groups studied, and (2) the varied expression of experientiality (between Perfect and Preterit) at an early stage. To sum up, the diverse sources of data show the following:

a) Oral corpus data
   - Age group I speakers use the Preterit in 92% of relevant tokens expressing past with CR. There is no clear pattern to account for the remaining 8% of Perfects.
   - Age group II speakers use the Preterit in 60% of the cases expressing past with CR. Here, all subcategories exhibit variation in their expression.
   - Uruguayan speakers use the Preterit in 66% of cases expressing past with CR. Note, however, that a majority of Preterit tokens are experientials (75%). Within these 75%, a majority (79%) are expressed by means of the Preterit, indicating that this subfunction has come to be expressed by means of Preterits at an early stage. However, it should be noted that the overall frequency in this group is low, so this source should be viewed merely as an additional indication of the locus of variation.

b) HABCULT data

The speakers in the HABCULT corpus use the Preterit in 20% of the contexts expressing past with CR. This finding adds to the hypothesis that the change is novel and that these speakers may represent an early stage in the Preterit's

expansion. Crucially, in this group, Preterits appear to express only experientiality. Figure 11 provides an overview of the tendencies observed in HABCULT, age group I, and age group II.

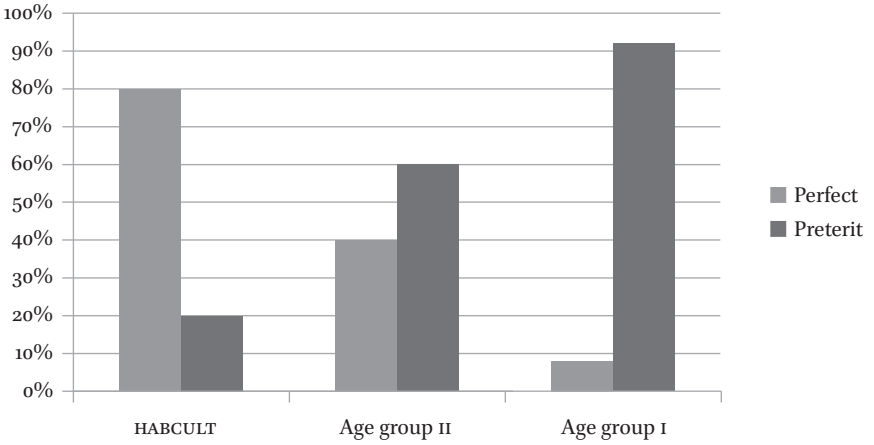

FIGURE 11 *General use of Perfect/Preterit, age groups I and II, HABCULT.*

It should be noted that some speakers from HABCULT and age group II may belong to the same generation. This in itself may indicate a change in morphosyntax in the grammars of adults; an important observation compatible with a usage-based approach to language, where grammars—be it those of children and those of adults—are conceived as fleixble and subject to change. This generational change also illustrates the speed by which the change has occured. Is it really possible for a linguistic change to proceed so fast? We know that grammaticalization is slow; the grammaticalization of the Perfect began in Late Latin and took several centuries to complete. The decline of the Preterit, however, entails loss, which clearly can occur at a faster rate. The mere speed of the change is an important finding.

c) HABCULT texts

These texts provide details on the early expansion of the Preterit in the subfunctions experientiality and persistent situation. Experientiality is expressed through both Perfects and Preterits (48% vs. 52%), while Preterit is not used to express persistent situation at this stage.

On the whole, the data have provided clear evidence for how the Perfect has fallen into disuse over the course of two generations. In addition, they have suggested that experientiality may have been the locus of the expansion. In the following chapter, this hypothesis will be further explored.

CHAPTER 7

Subfunction Variation as the Source of the Expansion of the Preterit

7.1 General

This chapter provides an analysis of how the Preterit may have begun its expansion in Porteño Spanish. The chapter has the following structure.

First, rather than focusing on the global finding—the general decrease in the use of the Perfect—focus is on one subfunction, the experiential. The experiential function stands out, both in the oral and in the written sources, by appearing to be the first subfunction to be expressed by means of the Preterit, gradually spreading to other subfunctions.

Second, the empirical findings are connected to relevant theoretical assumptions, such as (i) the tense-like nature of the experiential (drawing on theoretical assumptions from Chapter 2), (ii) change occurring via microsteps that may, but need not, create macrochanges, and ultimately (iii) the key to understanding any semantic change lying in the interaction between speaker and hearer. In this view, language change arises in language use, through ad hoc speaker innovations, which count as change only as they are internalized by the hearer.

The variation in the experiential is argued to occur because of a two-step process; the Preterit is used to express experientiality as the specific time frame is assumed to form part of the semantics of the construction and becomes semanticized through a process of pragmatic strengthening (Traugott & Dasher 2002); and the hearer interprets the Preterit as expressing CR related to the lack of temporal specification in the new use of the Preterit (Dahl & Hedin 2000).

Third, I suggest that the abovementioned mechanisms create variation in the expression of the experiential, as it comes to be expressed not only by means of Perfects but also, crucially, by means of Preterits. "Variation" is here taken to mean inter- and intraspeaker variation, in a sense compatible with the concept of variation referred to by, e.g., Labov (2001: 80), in which it is stressed that variation may demonstrate a highly constrained pattern that closely determines the linguistic behavior of each speaker. Note that here, this variation is seen not as a carrier of social evaluation (although such a factor cannot be excluded), but as structured by age.

Fourth, I conclude that the intertwined semantic relationship of the Preterit and Perfect categories leads to the frequent collapse of these categories into one. I also point to the fact that the semantic outcome of this collapse is the same, irrespective of which form leads in the expansion; the end result is a past/past perfective, reminiscent of what Dahl (1985: 139) describes as a tendency for the peripheral tense/mood/aspect categories to be attracted toward the center of the TMA system, thereby acquiring properties that are typical of the central categories.

Based on the available typological data, it appears to be the case that both forms are likely to expand, and I suggest there is no predictability as to which of the two expands. That expansion of the synthetic Preterit and the analytic Perfect are both likely is surprising, given the presumed preference for analytic forms (recall the principle of clarity; see Chapter 4). Still, the secondary sources of Latin American Romance languages clearly show that both forms may expand.

Fifth, and finally, I briefly discuss the question of contact. While innovation and reanalysis can be accounted for through language-internal processes, the further spread into society clearly has a social component. I will discuss whether the spread was due to (i) direct contact with Sicilian and covert prestige or (ii) postcontact simplification. It is unlikely that the novel use of the Preterit has occurred because of contact but likely that a social component has accentuated the spread.

7.2 What Has Happened to the Porteño Spanish Preterit?

Recall from Chapter 6 that the Porteño Spanish Preterit is used by all informants to express past with CR. In these speakers, the category is polysemous and can be used to express two functions:[1]

1 I follow Traugott and Dasher (2002: 11–16) in claiming that homonymy should be posited only when there is no clear semantic relation, no contrastive ambiguity between two meanings. I agree that this definition poses a methodological problem for the historical linguist: When have the meanings in a polysemous pair lost their relation? And when should the relation/meanings be understood as homonymous? I will not go into further detail on this topic here, since it clearly does not apply to the status of the Porteño Spanish Preterit.

(103) Past perfective
(22:22/11)
Después me **fui** una semana a Punta del Este
Afterwards REFL go.1SG.PRT one week to Punta del Este
'After that I went one week to Punta del Este'

(104) Past with CR
(22:26/11)
Conociste Punta del Este? Es muy lindo Punta del Este
Know.2SG.PRT Punta del Este is very nice Punta del Este
'Have you gotten to know Punta del Este? It is very nice Punta del Este'

We observe that the Preterit can now refer to an occasion that is not temporally specified. Recall that generally, there is a restriction on the past; either it must be specified in time, or the speaker and the hearer must share the ability to refer to the occasion in question (Comrie 1985: 41): it must have an established reference point. This no longer applies to Porteño Spanish; see example (105):

(105) (22:52/5)
No sé si **supiste** del violador
NEG know.1SG.PRS if know.2SG.PRT of.the rapist
de Recoleta
from Recoleta
'I don't know if you've heard of the rapist from Recoleta'

Following from the point above, the Preterit acquires the ability to appear without any temporal specification (contextual/adverbial). It can now be used to refer to past situations with unspecific time frame, as exemplified in (105) above.

Furthermore, it expresses token-focus, not only type-focus; that is, it can establish an event token as a new discourse referent, anchoring it in time and space (as opposed to anchoring a situation in a temporal domain):

(106) (06:31/13)
No **fuiste** a Bariloche? Qué lastima, para el
NEG go.2SG.PRT to Bariloche? What shame, for the
próximo viaje
next trip
'You haven't been to Bariloche? What a shame, for the next trip'

It can be used to express current relevance, such as in a resultative, as in example (107):

(107) (30:35/3)
Voy recuperando partes mías que están **quedaron**
go recovering parts mine that are Get.3PL.PRT
perdidas como si no las **pude** desarrollar siento
lost how if NEG them can.1SG.PRT develop feel
'I keep on recovering parts of me that are, that have been lost, as if I haven't been able to develop them I feel'

It can be used to express not only past with CR but also an imperfective notion, persistent situation:

(108) (23:38/3)
Está muy celosa siempre fue muy celosa de
is very jealous always be.3SG.PRT very jealous of
X desde que **nació** X
X since that be.born.3SG.PRT X
'She is very jealous, she has always been very jealous of X, since X was born'

Note, however, that the original function of the Preterit prevails, as seen in example (103) above:

– It continues to be used narratively.
– It continues to be used for token-focus.
– It continues to be used with specific-time reference.

As discussed initially, the possibility to express CR meaning with the Preterit makes the category polysemous. According to Traugott and Dasher (2002), semantic change cannot be studied without drawing on a theory of polysemy. This is because, as also discussed in 2.1.4, no change involves a simple A-for-B replacement, but rather it involves stages in which both A and B express the same content, or where, for instance, A expresses related, but distinct functions. Therefore, polysemy is often assumed to be a transitory stage in diachronic changes The Preterit category currently has two uses:

(i) The perfective meaning: Situation is located to the past and is complete
(ii) The past with CR meaning: Situation is located to the past and has current relevance

Polysemy is the rule rather than the exception in natural languages, and this also follows from the approach taken here to verbal categories outlined in Chapter 2, in which category members are defined in terms of their similarity to a prototypical core member. As Croft (2012: 130) notes, grammatical aspect categories tend to be polysemous within a language and differ in their uses across languages. This means that one category can express different, related meanings. Kuteva and Kohan (2011), as en example, argue that the English simple past is polysemous and has the following functions:

– To locate an event at some point prior to the moment of speech
– To mark unreality, when combined with *if*
– To function as a pragmatic softener, when used with the English modals and verbs such as *want*, *think*, etc.

It is possible that the Porteño Preterit did express a wide range of meanings, such as experientiality, also before it began to change. As it changes, this polysemy becomes more pronounced.

Before continuing, I will, for the sake of clarity, explain again why the Porteño Spanish change needs a separate explanation. As I have shown, the Preterit's expansion can be defined negatively as follows:

– It is not grammaticalization (see 2.1.1.2).
– It is not a "different path" (see 2.1.1.2).
– It is not a traditional simplification (but see discussion in 7.7).
– It is not contact induced (although this might be an additional driving force, as discussed in section 7.8).

More importantly, the expansion of the Porteño Spanish Preterit cannot be accounted for by the same principles as those used to explain the expansion of a perfect. Recall from Chapter 4 that the generalization of a perfect to a past/past perfective (as seen in, e.g., French) is assumed to be a loss of specific meaning components and a subsequent generalization of meaning, since it is assumed that the CR component disappears (see Bybee et al. 1994). Nevertheless, it is worth questioning if the CR component is lost in French, is the remaining category then not polysemous? It is a paradox that the expansion of the Perfect is understood as a process of bleaching even though the end result arguably involves a broadening, or polysemization, of the category's scope.

This understanding of the nature of the spread is concordant with the assumption that increased frequency of use leads to semantic bleaching. But in the present case, the CR component is added to the scope of the perfective, not lost. Bleaching and other frequency-driven processes do not apply. The processes involved in the Porteño Spanish change are discussed in further detail in section 7.7.1.

Change in the tense and aspect domain is often assumed to develop from the aspectual to the more temporal (Heine & Kuteva 2007). Is the inclusion of CR readings in the Preterit's scope a development in the direction of temporality or aspectuality? The answer depends on how one is to define the features that are added to the Preterit's scope but is difficult to reach because the definitions of a perfect and of a CR component are themselves unclear. In section 2.2, I showed that the perfect is generally agreed upon as having four distinct, but related, subtypes (persistent situation, experiential, resultative, and recent past) that share the semantic notion of CR. It is, however, notoriously difficult to explain exactly what this component entails. It appears, though, that the addition of a CR component has more in common with aspectual changes than with temporal ones. CR clearly is not a temporal notion, and I therefore understand the expansion to have more in common with aspectual than temporal change.

First and foremost, however, the Preterit's expansion is a change in grammatical meaning. The Preterit category in Porteño Spanish changes in scope. The restrictions previously attached to it no longer apply, as seen earlier in this section. It appears that pragmatic and dialogical forces are able to trigger both the expansion of a perfect (probably because of a CR component, as observed above) and the expansion of a Preterit, most likely because of inferences about the semantics of the experiential category. I now turn to the details of the model of the expansion.

7.3 Creating a Model for the Preterit's Expansion

As discussed in Chapter 2, a simple yet illustrative sketch captures the intermediate stage in which a new and an old construction coexist:

A > [A/B] > (B)

FIGURE 12 *A formalization of linguistic change* (*from Norde 2009: 16*).

A more nuanced model is proposed in Enfield (2003):

TABLE 20 *Stages in semantic change (based on Enfield 2003: 29)*

	Stage I	**Stage II**	**Stage III**	**Stage IV**
Form	f	f	f	f
Meaning	'p'	'p' (+ > 'q')	'p', 'q'	'q'

None of these figures fully capture the expansion of the Preterit category (but note that they could capture the change in the specific subfunctions, such as experiential). Why? In Porteño Spanish, we are dealing with a category that falls into disuse, not one that appears and subsequently coexists with a previously existing one in a transition phase. This demise is captured in a modified version of Enfield's model:

TABLE 21 *Modified version of Enfield (2003); competing forms, Porteño Spanish*

	Stage 1		**Stage 2**		**Stage 3**		**Stage 4**
Form	f^1	f^2	f^1	f^2	f^1	f^2	f^2
Meaning	p	q	p	q (+>p)	p	p, q	p, q

f^1 = Perfect p = Past with CR
f^2 = Preterit q = Past perfective

What is remarkable in this modified model is the nature of stage 4, in which two forms are reduced to one, while the complex meanings (p and q) are expressed by means of the same form, f^2. It is q's inclusion in the expressed form f^2 that should be highlighted.

So far, I have illustrated the broadened scope of the Preterit as it acquires a CR function. Now, I approach the task of providing an explanation for this change. Ideally, a model should be able to (i) account for the way in which the Preterit becomes able to express CR, (ii) suggest a semantic turning point, and ideally, (iii) also shed light on related developments in other languages.

The model proposed below suggests answers to all three elements. In addition, it creates a plausible hypothesis of the status of other Latin American varieties and their highly heterogeneous Perfect/Preterit distributions.

7.3.1 *Subfunction Variation and the Experiential*

Chapter 6 provided evidence for the spread of the Preterit and the demise of the Perfect. In addition, a salient feature, that of substantial variation in the expression of past with CR, was identified. In age group I, this variation is found in all subfunctions, but in older written sources and in the HABCULT corpus, in addition to UYCORP, this variation is centered on the experiential. Clearly, this subfunction stands out because of its frequency: it appears more frequently than the other subfunctions in the material, probably because of the nature of the interviews (informants tended to talk about their prior personal experiences, which are typical experiential generators). More importantly, however, it stands out as the locus of variation in the oldest sources.

These distributions of Perfect and Preterit show that the variation found in the expression of the two subfunctions in age group II practically disappears in age group I. However, the variation found in age group II does not provide any clear hints as to the turning point of the change; it illustrates variation in the expression of experientiality, but also to some extent in the expression of resultativity and persistent situation.

Other sources do provide clear evidence for the early expansion of the Preterit to convey experientiality. First, the UYCORP sources suggest (despite their low overall frequency) that where there is variation, the variation is localized to the experiential.

Second, the written corpus shows variation in the experiential, to a radically lesser extent than in the other subfunctions.

Third, in the old written sources (presented in 6.8)—representing the earliest stage of Porteño Spanish to be found in this study, a stage that shows clear variation in the experiential—the Preterit already at this stage had made its way to the written language, expressing experientiality in 52% of the relevant tokens (15[29]). Note also that persistent situation is never expressed by means of Preterits (but by means of Present constructions in 14% of the contexts (4[29]) tokens). For details on these constructions, see Chapter 2; see also Burgos (2004). Crucially, therefore, we observe variation in the expression of experientiality.

The variation between the two forms in Figure 13 is absent in the expression of persistent situation, as seen below in Figure 14. In persistent situation, there is variation, but this variation occurs between Present constructions and the Perfect (4[29] tokens).

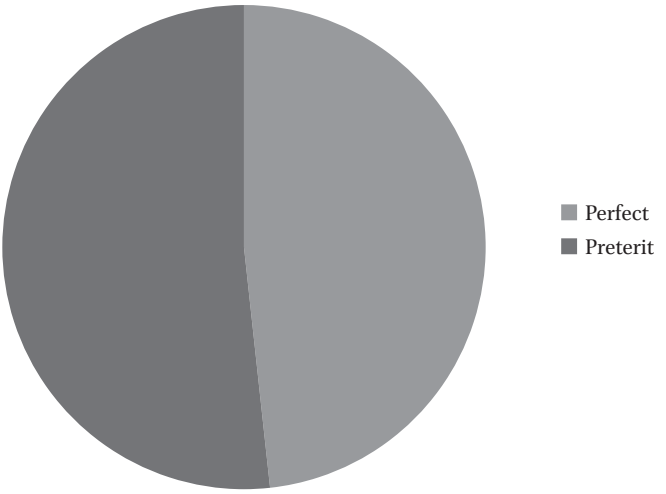

FIGURE 13 *Expression of experientiality in* HABCULT*, introductory texts.*

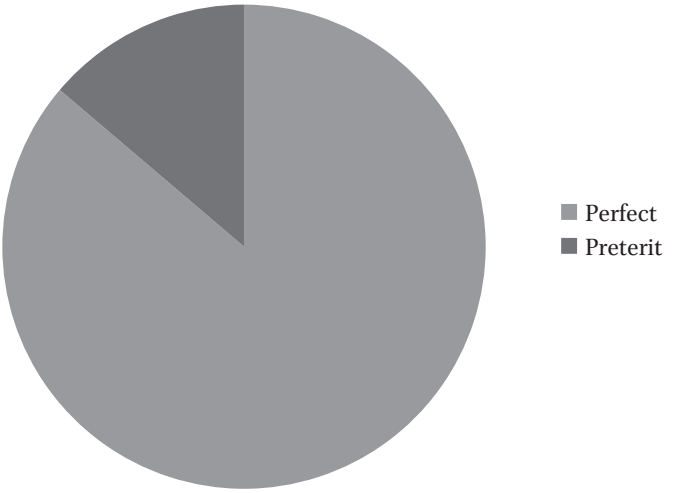

FIGURE 14 *Expression of persistent situation in* HABCULT*, introductory texts.*

These early sources provide particularly telling evidence in support of the experiential's being the locus of the change. This evidence is especially telling since these tokens are extracted from a formal written source, which is expected to be more conservative in the acceptance of new construction. We can assume that the experientiality had occurred in speech before it appeared in these written sources, making it likely that this variation was generated early, perhaps in the middle of the 20th century.

7.3.1.1 What About the Other Subfunctions?

It is worth mentioning, however, that the HABCULT introductory texts include no data regarding recent past or resultative functions. Because of this gap, it is not possible to discard the possibility of there also being variation in these subfunctions at this stage. In Chapter 6 it was shown that in age group II, all recent past tokens were expressed by means of the Preterit. It might well be that recent past was early in the expansion; it is simply not deducible from the corpus whether this is the case. As I shall discuss further below, this function is indeed often assumed to have tense-like qualities (recall also from Chapter 2 that its relevance is taken to be due to temporal recentness; see Croft 2012: 142–143; Klein 1994: 113), and because of these qualities, it would not be unexpected for this function to have expanded before, for instance, persistent situation. Dahl and Hedin (2000: 396) also note that recent past is expressed by means of past in many languages.

As for the resultative, it is indeed expressed by means of both Preterits and Perfects in age group II, but there is no similar variation in written sources or in UYCORP. In these sources, the resultative is mostly expressed by means of the Perfect; HABCULT interviews include 24 Perfects and no Preterits expressing resultativity (Table 18). UYCORP includes six Perfects and one Preterit expressing resultativity (Table 17). There is no typological or theoretical support in favor of the resultative's early expansion. Based on theoretical assumptions and typological distribution, therefore, it is less likely that the resultative was the first to expand.

Overall, the data are suggestive but, as I shall show in the next section, strongly supported by cross-linguistic findings and theoretical considerations.

7.3.1.2 Experientiality Expressed Cross-Linguistically

Variation, different ways of saying "the same thing" (Croft 2010: 7), is expected in any language. Here, variation is seen as both an origin and an end point of change (Croft 2010). In the following section, I provide further evidence that the subfunction that is first expressed by means of Preterits is the experiential.

The findings from Uruguayan and Argentinean Spanish suggest that the early expansion of the Preterit occurred in the experiential function. If this expansion occurs as a result of usage-based mechanisms, it is expected that similar developments are to be found in other languages as well. Recall from Chapter 2 that in a usage-based framework, linguistic material is viewed as formed by mechanisms that are common to speakers of all languages. This prediction is indeed supported by typological evidence—we do find experientials expressed by means of Preterits in other languages that originally had a separate Perfect category.

McKenzie (1999: 39–40) notes that the "simple past" (his term for the Preterit) in certain varieties such as Galician and Asturian, as well as in varieties in large parts of Latin America, appears in experiential use (existential in his terms; see also Chapter 2 for an overview of the different terms). In this use, the Preterit refers to a time prior to the time of speech, in which an event of some type occurred, as in (109):

(109) **Fuiste** alguna vez a México?
Go.2SG.PRT any time to Mexico
'Have you ever been to Mexico?'
(McKenzie 1999: 40)

Rodríguez Louro (2009: 108), however, states that the experiential is overwhelmingly expressed by the Perfect in Argentinean Spanish (see also 6.3.2.4). This conclusion is surprising, given the fact that in her data from young participants, experientiality is expressed by means of the Preterit in 88.5% (100[113]) of all contexts, the remaining being expressed by means of Perfects. Among the young speakers of Rodríguez Louro's study, experientiality is thus overwhelmingly expressed by means of Preterits.

Henderson (2010: 63) notes that experientiality frequently is expressed by means of Preterits in Latin American varieties of Spanish. In Brazilian Portuguese, experientiality is expressed by means of Preterits. Henderson, citing Paiva Boléo (1936), illustrates this use in Brazilian Portuguese with a hypothetical example: if the son in a family is sent away to study, and the mother is asked by family members whether she has heard from him, this question would be expressed by means of either (110) or (111) in Brazilian Portuguese (Henderson 2010: 63):

(110) Então filho **escreveu**?
So son write.3SG.PRT
'So has son written?'

In example (111), the past with CR is expressed by means of the Preterit and an adverb *já* 'already', cross-linguistically a common source of perfects (Dahl 1985: 129).

(111) **Já** **recebeu** noticias de filho?
Already receive.2SG.PRT news from son
'Have you received news from (the) son?'

Remarkably, in Brazilian Portuguese, the Perfect is not used to express experientiality; it is employed to express persistent situation only. The following sentence, from Howe (2013: 77), therefore has persistent situation interpretation:

(112) Eu **tenho morado** no Rio por três anos
I live.1SG.PRS.PRF in Rio for three years
(i) 'I have lived in Rio for three years' (persistent situation)
(ii) 'I have lived in Rio for three years/in a three-year period' (experiential)

In Brazilian, unlike in languages where the perfect has a more canonical use, interpretation (ii) is unavailable. This means that the Perfect is restricted to use in persistent situation function. This tendency also holds for Galician, in which the Perfect is rare, and when it is used, it is used only in contexts denoting resultativity or persistent situation (Squartini & Bertinetto 2000: 410), thus making it likely that the first two functions expressed by means of the Preterit were experientiality and recent past. Note that these two are also the functions that are placed closest to the past, as discussed below in section 7.3.2.1.

7.3.1.3 Additional Evidence

As briefly mentioned in Chapter 2, several approaches to the Perfect/Preterit distinction account for the competing relationship between the two and the ability of both to enter each other's domain. For example, Dickey (2001: 15) argues that the English Preterit, a simple past tense, (which is known to be used frequently in a CR function; see, e.g., Elsness 1997) is ambiguous. In this view, the simple past has two senses.[2] One spells out a genuine, anaphoric past tense, which refers directly to past moments in time. The other—relevant for the present purposes—is an interpretation with an existential quantificational force, which does not refer to previously mentioned times (remember that "existential" is another term for experiential). Dickey (ibid.) also notes how in a language such as German (which variety is not specified), the simple past requires an explicit reference in preceding discourse to be felicitous. If no such context is present, such as in out-of-the-blue contexts, the Perfect is required. It is not impossible that a similar constraint has held in Porteño Spanish and that this former requirement now exists only as relics in the language of young and adolescent speakers, as discussed in section 6.3.5. This might then explain why some experiential tokens are retained in the language of speakers who otherwise have replaced all subfunctions with the Preterit, such as in the following examples:

2 This is referred to as quantificational and referential tense, and this approach will not be treated here.

(113) (01:04:40/8)
Y que **has hecho** aparte de estudiar?
And what do.2SG.PRS.PRF apart of studying
'And what have you done apart from studying?'

(114) (01:07:25/8)
Noruegos acá no te **has comunicado** con
Norwegians here NEG you communicate.2SG.PRS.PRF with
noruegos acá?
Norwegians here
'Norwegians here you haven't been in contact with Norwegians here'

Similarly, Schaden (2009) provides an analysis in which he relies on the concept of markedness between the two forms. He discusses the competing relationship between Perfects and Preterits and argues that in certain languages, such as English and Spanish, the Preterit can always be used whereas the Perfect is the marked form, restricted to very few contexts.[3] In languages such as French and German, he argues, the situation is the opposite. Here, the unmarked form is the Perfect. He further argues that the restriction most likely to undergo contextual manipulation is what he calls lifetime effects (the possibility of reiteration of the situation in question; see section 2.2.7.3), typically associated with experientials, as in the examples he cites (ibid.: 36; see also Portner 2003: 464):

(115) A: Which Nobel Prize laureates **have visited** Princeton?
B: Let's see . . . Einstein **has** (**visited** Princeton), Friedman **has** (**visited** Princeton)
(116) Shakespeare **has influenced** every known writer to some extent

Clearly, these phrases illustrate an opposite development to that in Porteño Spanish, namely the extensibility of the Perfect to contexts typically outside its scope. In this case, the Perfect is used when referring to actions that are nonreiterable (Einstein can no longer visit Princeton). However, it should be noted that these examples clearly illustrate the flexibility and semantic proximity between perfectives and experientials expressed by means of Perfects.

Schaden's account largely ignores diachrony, though, and the developments that have created the current synchronic systems in the languages

3 Schaden takes a marked form to mean a form that needs to be justified and that triggers a pragmatic reasoning process (2009: 29), as opposed to the default form, which does not have to be justified. The concept of markedness will not be further discussed here.

he describes.[4] In addition, Schaden (ibid.: 39) states that the restrictions on the Perfects in languages like English and Spanish are generally seen as indications that these tense forms have not yet acquired a past tense-like status. This scenario is clearly not valid for all languages in which such processes occur, and the author makes no further comment on the diachronic expansion of the Preterit.

7.3.2 Experiential: Typological Distribution and Defining Features

The experiential offers a way of referring to a past action without referring to a specific occurrence and is thus characterized by nonspecific-past time reference (Lindstedt 2000). Crucially, the experiential is more indirectly relevant to the present state of affairs than, for example, the resultative is; the relevance is more indirect and abstract, even psychological in nature. The CR component in experiential perfects is thus weaker than in, for example, resultative perfects, in which the result state is more tangible (but cf. Brinton 1988 for an opposing analysis).[5] Even more importantly, the experiential is more tense-like than the resultative perfect, being an indefinite past tense that typically occurs in questions and negated assertions with ever-like adverbials. However, current relevance and experientiality do not exclude each other, and when expressed, elements of both can be discerned (Lindstedt 2000: 369). As we shall see later in this chapter, the experiential may appear without temporal specification, and when it does, it is the CR meaning which comes into play (Dahl & Hedin 2000).

Table 22 summarizes the above-listed points and their relation to prototypical experiential and perfective categories.

4 In a recent article (Schaden 2012), Schaden proposes an explanation for the diachronic development toward expansion of perfects, based on the idea of inflation due to speakers overestimating the current relevance content of their utterances. Change is thus viewed as a long-term consequence of language use or, in Schaden's words "speaker-hearer interaction and the biases that act upon them" (ibid.: 261).

5 However, according to Brinton, tangibility is a result within the realms of experience, memory, and feeling. The experiencer has been affected internally by the situation and bears the result of that change.

TABLE 22 *Experiential vs. past perfective*

	Experiential	**Perfective past**
May appear without spatiotemporal specification	Yes	No
Can be used narratively	No	Yes
Expresses type-focus	Yes	No
Expresses token-focus	No	Yes
Has restrictions on reiterativity	No	No
Has restrictions on use of adverbials	Yes	Yes
Includes CR component (aspect-like features)	Yes	No
Can be used with specific-time reference (*yesterday*, *in 1990*, etc.)	No	Yes

Remarkably, as the Preterit expands in Porteño Spanish, the Preterit comes to cover all uses associated with both experiential and perfective (in the majority of age group I speakers).

7.3.2.1 Functional Overlap

As I showed in Chapter 2, there is no consensus as to whether the perfect is an aspect or a tense—or neither. This lack of consensus may be triggered by the fact that perfects may be used to express tense-like states but they also convey additional information, here assumed to be CR. In any event, some uses of perfects lie close to purely temporal interpretations, and there clearly are contexts in which the perfect and the past perfective/past may be used more or less interchangeably.

We have also observed how categories have nondiscrete boundaries and are gradient in nature. Michaelis (2006: 4) refers to the way in which tense and aspect may interact with the same system as functional overlaps. One such overlap, she argues, is exemplified in the use of the Perfect in English and phrases such as (117), which may have purely temporal interpretations:

(117) **We've lost** our lease

Dahl (1985: 139) similarly admits that despite differences (such as the perfect's typically not being used narratively), there is a considerable overlap in the distribution between the perfect and the perfective. In Dahl's view, this overlap may have to do with the two categories' historical relation (as discussed in 4.2). According to Howe (2013), the functional overlap between the Perfect and

Preterit accounts for their synchronic distribution in, for instance, Peruvian Spanish. Comrie (1995) notes that perfect and simple past are in general not substitutable for one another without clearly changing the speaker's communicative intent. However, he argues that there are examples in which, even in the presence of continuing relevance, English prefers the simple past, noticeably with explicit time adverbials, such as in (118), an illustration of the intimate relationship between the two:

(118) '**Have you seen** Amy? Yes, I **saw** her two hours ago'

Elsness (1997: 26) similarly notes that what he refers to as "preterites" (a term he does not capitalize; meaning simple pasts) may be used without temporal specification. While Elsness argues that "preterites" normally require a temporal anchor, he notes that this anchor does not have to be expressed linguistically, as in the following examples:

(119) My watch-trap **snapped**
(120) The candlestick **overturned**

Here, in the absence of a temporal specification, Elsness argues that the Preterit expresses immediate past. This notion of immediate past may be compatible with the notion of recent past—and hence not with the notion of experientiality. It is surely possible that such phrases may have been crucial to the change in Porteño Spanish as well, but unfortunately, there is no evidence to either confirm or disconfirm such a claim in the data material, as discussed in 7.3.1.1.

As discussed in Chapter 4, in a usage-based framework, it is often stressed that the overlapping relationship between perfects and past/past perfectives has diachronic origins; both perfects and pasts/past perfectives are assumed to develop from similar lexical sources and to go through stages signaling anteriority. In the usage-based framework focuses on the assumption that the diachronic relation between perfects and pasts leads to a synchronic, semantically intertwined relationship, as suggested by Dahl above. Ritz (2012: 882) similarly argues that the perfect must be studied together with the past perfective because they are intimately intertwined diachronically and synchronically. Bybee (1985: 162) also notes that "anterior" (her term for perfect) and past/past perfective may not be independent, owing to an overlap in their conceptual domains, which leads to a diachronic relation between them. Croft (2012: 143) suggests that the overlapping semantics are due to the diachronic development between the different categories, and suggests the following rankings from closer to the past to closer to the present:

More past
↑
Immediate past perfective, perfect of recent past
Experiential perfects
Result/state perfects
↓
More present

FIGURE 15 *Ranking from past to present after Croft (2012: 143).*

Croft's model builds on a multidimensional scaling of Dahl's prototypes (1985; discussed in Chapter 2), and the results presented above illustrate the conceptual continuum in the spatial model between past perfective, perfect and its relatives. Remarkable here is the absence of persistent situation. This absence is due to the fact that in Dahl's questionnaire, persistent situation occurs in the present imperfective cluster, which is compatible with the discussion in 2.2.7.2—persistent situation differs drastically from the other subfunctions typically expressed by means of Perfect. As a whole, Croft's illustration provides a clear illustration of the extent to which the different subfunctions are closer to present or to past tenses, but differs from other accounts in that he ranges recent past as the most tense-like.

7.3.2.2 Examples from Porteño Spanish

The first example stems from the HABCULT corpus and shows the alternations between Perfect and Preterit in informant A. Below, I suggest that the structure of this variation (phrase-initial Perfect, Preterit after past context is established) may be the locus of the change in Porteño Spanish. These examples illustrate not only intraphrasal variation between the two forms but also intraspeaker variation.

(121) HABCULT: 333

Hace	tres	años	que	no	pisa	la	calle,	que	no
Make	three	years	that	NEG	step	the	street	that	NEG
ha querido		salir.	desde	que	estamos	acá	**fue**		
want.3SG.PRS.PRF		go.out	since	that	are	here	go.3SG.PRT		
una	sola	vez	al	oculista,	nada	más.	Y	ya	
one	only	time	to.the	oculist,	no	more	and	already	
después	no	**volvió**		a	salir.				
after	NEG	return.3SG.PRT		to	go.out				

'It's been three years that he doesn't set foot on the street, that he has not wanted to go out. Since we are here, he has been once to the oculist, nothing more. And after that he hasn't gone out again'

(122) HABCULT: 333
Extraña mucho, sí. Y claro, imagináte, para él
misses much yes and clearly imagine for him
ha sido un cambio dejar el consultorio
be.3SG.PRS.PRF a change leave the office
'He misses it a lot, yes, and yes, sure, imagine, for him it has been a change to leave the doctor's office'

Examples (123)–(124) clearly illustrate an alternation between Perfect and Preterit in experiential function. Note that this is a speaker who shows variation in no other subfunctions than the experiential:

(123) (05:14/17)
Pero nosotros **hemos hecho** bondiola que es muy
But we make.1PL.PRS.PRF bondiola that is very
parecido lleva el mismo proceso
similar takes the same process
'But we have made bondiola that is very similar, takes the same process'

(124) (05:55/17)
Nosotros **hicimos** nos quedó riquísima la bondiola
We make.1SG.PRT us turn.out very.good the bondiola
'We have made bondiola it turned out great for us the bondiola'

The examples provide illustrations of the prevalent subfunction variation found in the same speaker. It appears uncontroversial, therefore, to claim that the overlapping relationship between a perfect and a perfective allows for the expansion of the former. However, considering the heterogeneity of the Romance Perfects (as well as the Perfects of other language families; see section 4.3.1.1), it should be noted that the instability appears to be on the level of the distinction *and* on the level of form; the grammaticalized expression of the perfect appears to frequently disappear, but it is not predictable which of the forms will absorb the old perfect's meaning. What is clear from the data of these varieties is that dialogic and contextual forces may motivate both the expansion of a perfect and the expansion of a Preterit. But how does such an expansion come about?

Based on the abovementioned empirical and theoretical considerations, it is likely that experiential constructions lead the change, because they (1) are the most tense-like of subfunctions, (2) have an abstract CR component, and (3) are generally defined temporally by contextual clues (temporal adverbs and also common ground/presuppositions).

7.4 How is the CR Reading Arrived at? The Creation of the Subfunction Variation

In the preceding sections, we have observed that there is substantial variation in the expression of experientiality in Porteño Spanish, as well as in other Spanish varieties. It also appears clear that the intertwined relationship between the Preterit and the Perfect easily enables one to enter the other's domain. Still, it is necessary to account for the microsteps taken as the Preterit acquires the possibility to express past with CR. How does this change in semantic scope come about? In this section, I suggest a two-step process for how the new interpretation is arrived at. First, I argue that a speaker-induced pragmatic strengthening allows the Preterit to express CR. This pragmatic process easily allows the Preterit to enter into the Perfect's domain, as I have shown, because of their initially intertwined semantics. Second, I argue that the hearer easily arrives at the CR interpretation because of the lack of temporal specification in the speaker's new use.

7.4.1 *Pragmatic Strengthening*

Even when a tense/aspect marker is used, contextual considerations play a substantial role in determining the intended temporal reference of a situation (Nicolle 2012). The scope of the past/past perfective, for instance, is contextually determined—either explicitly by the presence of temporal adverbials/quantifiers or by information derived from the previous discourse or extralinguistic context; as Comrie (1995) argues, it is underspecified. Consider the hypothetical examples (125) and (126), in which (125) is determined by discourse context:

(125) Mi hermano **vivió** en NYC en los noventas.
My brother live.3SG.PRT in NYC in the nineties
Yo lo **visité**
I him visit.1SG.PRT
'My brother lived in NYC in the nineties. I visited him'

Example (126), however, is determined by a temporal adverbial, here *en el 1995* 'In 1995':

(126) Yo **visité** mi hermano en el 1995
I visit.1SG.PRT my brother in the 1995
'I visited my brother in 1995'

As we have observed, Porteño Spanish now allows for these types of phrases, without temporal specification (explicit/indirect), expressing CR:

(127) Lo **visité** a mi hermano
Him visit.1SG.PRT to my brother
'I have visited my brother'

Note that in this example, the lack of temporal specification allows for a CR interpretation. While isolated, it is ambiguous with a past perfective reading; this isolation, however, is precisely where the CR interpretation arises. I return to this in section 7.5.1 below.

7.4.2 *Transitional Contexts*

In this section, I point to an intermediate stage in the expansion of the Preterit. This stage illustrates the further expansion of the Preterit, and can be labelled a transitional context, in line with Fried (2009: 277), who states that it is important to identify the features of such transitional, intermediate patterns because of the role these they play in the emergence of new structures.

The contexts in which the Preterit appears in an already established past context are transitional contexts, and I hypothesize that speakers in these contexts use the Preterit instead of the Perfect because they infer that the previously established past context is part of the intended meaning and that their recurrent use makes them associated with a specific form—in this case, with the Preterit. As we shall see, this analysis captures how experiential meaning arises in transitional contexts.

There is a difference in the interpretation of forms that appear with temporal specification and forms that do not. Dahl and Hedin (2000: 387), for instance, note that it is unexpected to find type-focusing sentences (that is, sentences without specific time reference) in out-of-the-blue contexts. It appears plausible, considering evidence from the behavior of the two categories in other languages, that the phrases that serve as transitional contexts in Porteño Spanish are noninitial. I now turn to evidence from other languages.

Comrie (1995: 154) provides crucial insights on this topic in a discussion of the German Perfect. He notes that there are instances in which a Perfect and a Preterit can be used interchangeably, and he argues that one such example is situations in which the Perfect introduces an out-of-the-blue context,

while the Preterit is used once this context is established. Comrie (ibid.: 155) states that: "it is more plausible for the addressee to be led to link later events to the preceding event, and the use of the Präteritum (*pflegte*, *saβ*) indeed leads the addressee in this direction." Again, the speaker chooses the Preterit over the perfect because the reference of the Preterit is linked to the situation introduced by the perfect. This is precisely what I suggest for Porteño Spanish: the speakers choose the Preterit when there already exists a link to a temporal reference.

In such transitional contexts, the novel use of the Preterit can arise either through a pragmatic strengthening and/or simply through the lack of explicit temporal reference, which may lead to a current relevance interpretation. Example (128) below shows a transitional context that precisely enables, but does not necessarily give rise to, a new interpretation. This is what we observe in the last sentence in example (128); there is variation between speakers, as the reanalysis expressed in informant 17 clearly has not yet occurred in informant 15.

(128) (01:35/15/17)

17:

No	**has ido**	para	la	Concordia	allá	para	allá
NEG	go.2SG.PRS.PRF	to	the	Concordia	there	to	there

afuera
out
'You haven't been to Concordia, out there, outside?'

17:

Para	allá	afuera	no	**fueron**	a	la	Concordia ?
To	there	outside	NEG	go.3PL.PRT	to	the	Concordia

'Out to Concordia you haven't been?'

15:

No	no	**he ido**
NEG	NEG	go.1SG.PRS.PRF

'No I haven't been there'

Note how the speaker first uses the Perfect and later substitutes it with the Preterit. What distinguishes these two sentences? Semantically, they both express experientiality. When it comes to information structure, however, the first sentence can be seen as establishing a past context. It is possible that in the second sentence, the speaker infers that the hearer is aware of the preestablished past context, and therefore employs the more general Preterit.

Note that it is natural to expect phrase-initial tenses/aspects to be anchored in time (see, e.g., Dahl & Hedin 2000: 389–390; Comrie 1995: 154).

Why are such examples found in the experiential and not, say, in the persistent-situation function? Here, it is assumed that the speaker may use the Preterit in this novel way because of the abstract CR component in the experiential. Thus, this predicts that we would not expect to find persistent-situation tokens in the transtitional contexts, and this prediction holds true; recall from Figure 14 that persistent situation shows no variation of expression in HABCULT texts.

7.4.2.1 Further Evidence for Transitional Contexts

As discussed in Chapter 6, data from age group II provide evidence to understand the change in question, because these speakers here alternate between using the Perfect and the Preterit to express past with CR.

The examples from this group illustrate a transition phase, because these speakers use both the Preterit and Perfect to express past with CR. Again, the data illustrate experientials expressed by means of the Preterit after a past situation already has been established. Note that these speakers exhibit no intrasentential variation, as do the HABCULT speakers above:

(129) (21:00/11)
El hotel se llama Arapey Hotel Resort. Y ahí estuve (. . .) Después me fui una semana a Punta del Este
'The hotel is called Arapey Hotel Resort. And there I was (. . .) After that I went one week to Punta del Este'

Conociste	Punta del Este?	Es	muy	lindo	Punta del Este
Know.2SG.PRT	Punta del Este	is	very	nice	Punta del Este

'Have you gotten to know Punta del Este? It is very nice Punta del Este'

The same holds for (130). In this sentence, the speaker uses a Preterit to express experiential after the past context has been established through pictures illustrating a past journey:

(130) (Interviewer and informant looking at pictures from the interviewer's travel to India)
(13:19/9)

Si,	**estuvo**	en	India
Yes	be.3SG.PRT	in	India

'Yes, she has been in India'

Similarly, example (131) below shows the Perfect establishing a context, followed by the experiential Preterit. This example is particularly telling because the interviewer uses the Perfect to express experientiality (*he vivido en Italia un tiem* . . .) while the informant answers using the Preterit (*viviste en Italia*). This example illustrates how the speaker employs the Preterit to respond to an established past context, and also the clearly intertwined relationship between the two forms to express the same functions:

(131) (34:16/12)
He vivido en Italia un tiem
Live.1SG.PRS.PRF in Italy a time
'I have lived in Italy for a while'

Ah **viviste** en Italia?
Ah live.2SG.PRT in Italy
'Ah you've lived in Italy'

Example (132) also shows a preestablished context followed by the Preterit to express experientiality (*ella vivió en Dolores*).

(132) (35:48/10)
(Informant's brother imitating Uruguayan Spanish)
I: Me hace acordar a como hablan en Dolores
'It reminds me of how they speak in Dolores'

Ella **vivió** en Dolores en el Uruguay en el interior
She live.3SG.PRT in Dolores in the Uruguay in the interior
'She has lived in Dolores in Uruguay in the interior'

Note that this informant uses the Perfect too in these constructions, as in example (133):

(133) (14:55/19)
No **has ido** a Uruguay, Tony?
NEG go.2SG.PRS.PRF a Uruguay Tony?
'Have you not been to Uruguay, Tony?'

These examples suggest that age group II speakers find themselves in a transitional phase. For these speakers, the new use of the Preterit is not yet favored in any clear contexts but appears to coexist with the Perfect randomly. This variation further indicates that the Preterit use to express past with CR is indeed novel, and we observe a coexistent variation of the two types in these informants.

7.4.2.2 Age Group I: The Change Has Taken Place

In age group I, the novel use of the Preterit has conventionalized and appears in all the subfunctions previously associated with the Perfect. On a general note, in the language of the young informants, in which the novel use has taken hold within the already existing system, the Preterit can now appear phrase initially, "out of the blue," and conveys past with CR, without a temporal location being previously identified:

(134) (27:47)
Viste el hotel Rivadavia no sé si lo conoces
See.2G.PRT the hotel Rivadavia NEG know if it know
'Have you seen the hotel Rivadavia? I don't know if you know it'

Example (135) similarly provides a series of uses of Preterit to express token-focus:

(135) (21:55/7)
Viste que hay mujeres que tienen suerte a mi
See.2SG.PRT that are women who have luck to me
todo me **costó** bueno **estudié** lo
everything me cost.3.SG.PRT well study.1.SG.PRT that
que **quise** estudiar y **pude** laburar de
what want.1SG.PRT study and can.1SG.PRT work from
lo que **estudié**
that which study.1SG.PRT
'You see there are women who are lucky, but to me everything has cost. Well I have studied what I wanted and I have been able to work with what I studied'

Since it has become conventionalized, the form may also contradict the source meaning, and the source and the target may occur side by side. All these elements are present in age group I. See, for instance, example (136), in which

the Preterit expresses persistent situation, arguably an imperfective notion, far from the original past perfective meaning of the Preterit:

(136) (14:38/5)
En ningún momento **desconfié** de Martín para
In no moment distrust.1SG.PRT of Martín for
nada, siempre **confié** en el cien porciento
nothing always trust.1SG.PRT in him hundred percent
'I've never distrusted Martin, no way; I've always trusted him a hundred percent'

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the age group I corpus has only eight Perfect tokens, clearly too few to serve as generalizations (much less so for statistical uses). In the analysis presented here, it is therefore not unexpected to find that the Perfect tokens that do occur in the young and adolescent speakers do so in contexts with no preestablished past context; they are unidentified as to temporal location:

(137) (01:04:43/8)
Y que **has hecho** de parte de estudiar? Donde
And what do.2SG.PRS.PRF from part from study where
estás viviendo?
are living
'What have you done besides studying? Where are you living?'

(138) (01:07:25/8)
Noruegos acá no te **has comunicado** con
Norwegians here NEG you communicate.2SG.PRS.PRF with
noruegos acá?
Norwegians here
'Norwegians, you haven't been in contact with Norwegians here?'

We have observed examples in which it appears that the Preterit is used instead of the Perfect when there is an established past context. HABCULT data correspond to the stage referred to as "transitional contexts." In age group II, the new use appears to have been conventionalized, but it is still not preferred or obligatory. Table 23 summarizes the changes involved in the transitional context.

TABLE 23 *The transitional context allowing for* CR *interpretation*

Transitional context	Preterit's original use	Preterit in transitional context	Preterit's novel use
Out-of-the-blue contexs	No	No	Yes
With preestablished time frame	No	Yes	Yes
Corresponding speaker group/material	HABCULT, Age group 2, introductory texts, UYCORP	Age group 1, age group 2, UYCORP	Age group 1

Age group 1 shows a clear preference for the new form and the exclusion of the old one. These gradual stages are compatible with a view of change as originating in microdynamics of pragmatic innovation, which gives rise to constant innovation. The latter may or may not give rise to new conventionalized meanings, but in this case, it has.

7.5 The "Why": Pragmatic Motivations

Given the assumption that the Preterit occurs first to express past with CR without temporal specification, and after a past context has been established, as we saw in, for instance, example (122), it can be hypothesized that this pattern illustrates a process to some extent compatible with the assumptions put forward in frameworks such as Traugott and Dasher's (2002), an approach that attempts to intergrate external and internal factors. In this view, also discussed in 2.1.2.3, it is assumed that semantic change occurs through the conventionalization (semanticization) of inferences. The basic idea is that speakers are able to intentionally shape their language and instigate reanalysis and, further, can invite certain pragmatic inferences, volitionally implying the unsaid, subsequently becoming part of the information conveyed. The implicature is in a sense absorbed—semanticized through frequent use.[6] The new meaning arises via a detour; the sentence may give rise to further information, and

6 Traugott's broad use of implicature is taken to be the result of the invited inference.

only via this detour can the new meaning arise. The fact that context plays a crucial role in grammaticalization established (Diewald & Smirnova 2010: 112). Even though the Porteño Spanish expansion is not a grammaticalization, it is difficult to imagine how such a change would be triggered by anything but context (see introduction).

Traugott and Dasher (2002) differentiate three levels of meaning. The coded meaning refers to semantics, the convention of a language at a given time. Utterance-type meanings are generalized invited inferences (GIINs), preferred meanings, and conventions of use in language-specific communities, meanings that may be cancelled by context. Utterance-token meanings are invited inferences (IINs) that have not been crystalized into commonly used implicatures and that arise in context, on the fly. Note that generally, when change occurs, it is in the direction of coded meaning > IIN > GIIN > new coded meaning. This is what might have occurred in Porteño Spanish. It is assumed that the act of speaking (and writing) is governed by a set of principles—heuristics—guiding the choice of the right expression to suggest a specific interpretation and to account for preferred interpretations. These principles are further developments of Grice's original maxims of conversation (Grice 1989) and include the following, here schematically presented (Traugott & Dasher 2002:18–19):[7]

- The Q(uantity)-heuristic: "Make your contribution as informative as required, and imply no more thereby." This maxim can retard change, impede inference beyond what is said, and function to preserve and privilege literal meaning.
- The R(elevance)-heuristic: "Say/write no more than you must, and mean more thereby." This is where change occurs, as it may lead to rich interpretations and pragmatic strengthening.
- The M(anner)-heuristic: "Avoid prolixity"; that is, avoid especially marked, complex expressions or "marked expressions." This heuristic may be exploited as old form-meaning pairs are used to mark the content/situation and thus lead to change.

How can such maxims be relevant for the present case? The R-heuristic might to some extent shed light on the development. Recall that the speaker selects not only content but also expression of that content. In this view, it could be

7 Note that Dahl (1985) has a critical discussion on the maxims and their applicability to, e.g., accidence categories. I will not address this discussion for the time being.

assumed that the speaker uses the Preterit in an innovative way, in which it is detached from the past context and intended to convey past + CR meaning. But why would a speaker use the Preterit to convey CR? Porteño Spanish already had a morphological category expressing CR. This in itself, however, is not an argument against the formation of new categories. This is the norm in language, and note that I reject functionalist explanations for grammatical change and grammaticalization in particular (see Bybee et al. 1994: 297–300 for good discussion).

It is possible that the innovative uses of the Preterit, in which the past context was not specified, exploited the R-heuristics of communicating efficiently, inviting the inference that what is meant is more than what is said (here, the past reference expressed phrase initially), on the assumption that the speaker will not elaborate when less will do.

Note, also, that common motivations for speaker-induced changes such as "speak extravagantly" (Keller 1994) clearly do not apply here. In Keller's view, a speaker may obtain a short-term advantage by using a stronger expression than is warranted by the true circumstances. This is compatible with the assumption that the origins of change can lie in the emergence of new expressions through processes such as increased expressiveness and innovations due to the desire to avoid being misunderstood (Croft 2001: 74–75). Subsequent overuse of such expressions, leading to their devaluation, is common in semantic change, and such inflationary mechanisms may trigger change, in a process reminiscent of the way in which a perfect is used frequently to express CR and subsequently loses semantic components (see Chapter 2). Again, this is not observed in Porteño Spanish; as observed initially, the Preterit becomes able to express more specific semantic content, not the other way around.

It is in fact difficult to imagine how a speaker would obtain any effects from choosing the Preterit over the Perfect. As discussed, an expanding Perfect is often explained by pointing to its CR component, which increases in frequency and subsequently loses semantic components: an inflationary process such as the one referred to above (see also Chapter 4). In the expansion of a Preterit, no such elements can be pointed to.

Notably, the use of a Preterit instead of a Perfect can be interpreted as an act of economy, or to be "quick and easy," in Slobin's words (1977: 187). In not expressing the past context explicitly, the speaker is being economical, deleting "surface forms and expressions," perhaps in order to communicate a lot of information before the hearer "gets bored or takes over the conversation" (ibid.). This explanation would, however, conflict with the other principles involved in language change, notably the desire for clarity, or, in Slobin's words,

the desire to "be clear," "be expressive," and "be humanly processible in ongoing time" (ibid.: 186).

7.5.1 *The Lack of Temporal Specification*

So far, focus has been on the speakers and their innovation. Obviously, the hearer plays an important role in the spread of a change; Schwenter and Waltereit (2010), for example, note that the role of the hearer is important because there simply is no way a novel use can be conventionalized if hearers do not perceive the innovation. In this view, a hearer can assume a novel conventional meaning for some element of an utterance, if it deviates from the utterance's literal meaning. The conventionalization and spread to the linguistic community clearly go via hearers, not speakers. In this case, the aim is to provide a hypothesis on how hearers arrive at the CR interpretation that is today conventionalized in Porteño Spanish. How is this meaning arrived at?

Once the hearer is presented with a Preterit whose intended temporal reference is not set to a defined past moment (either inferred from discourse or explicitly derived from temporal adverbs), she is forced to interpret the utterance in a meaningful way. Here, the fact that she arrives at a CR interpretation might be possible to account for by means of assumptions of optimal relevance (Nicolle 1998; 2011; see Fløgstad & Falkum 2013 for application to grammaticalization).

Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2008) study the distribution of Perfect and Preterits in Penisular Spanish and Mexican Spanish. They argue that the route uncovered, by which hodiernal perfectives become default past tenses, is through the temporally indeterminate contexts. They also find that in Mexican Spanish, the Perfect is most strongly favored when temporal distance is irrelevant, that is, in which temporal anchoring is left unspecified by the interlocutors. The Mexican Perfect, then, is retained in this canonical context. The Porteño Perfect is not, but interestingly, the data here presented suggest that these contexts are precisely where the overlap occurs. A majority of all examples of temporally indeterminate contexts are expressed by means of Preterits. Apparently, temporal indeterminacy may be a context that opens for both expansion toward default past, and toward current relevance interpretation. How can both be true? According to Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (ibid.: 31) "indeterminate contexts are more open to the generalization of the PP than determinate (specific, definite) temporal reference, due to their lack of temporal anchoring". This explanation for the expansion of a Perfect into a Past or Perfective, is remarkably similar to that provided by Dahl and Hedin (2000) for these context's being the locus of CR interpretation, to which I now turn.

7.5.1.1 Perfects and Semantic Interpretation: CR and the Spatio-Temporal Location Constraint

On the same note, Dahl and Hedin (2000) argue that the absence of a temporal specification can produce a CR interpretation. When adverbs are used, the time reference (past) takes over the attention of the temporal point of reference. Sentences that are intended to be used in CR contexts license a breach in the spatiotemporal location constraint, in a process reminiscent of preemption (Boyd & Goldberg 2011). Preemption is a particular type of indirect negative evidence that results from repeatedly hearing a formulation B in a context where one would expect to hear a semantically and pragmatically related alternative formulation A. Eventually, speakers implicitly recognize B over A as the appropriate formulation. In this case, it is possible to imagine that it is precisely the absence of the adverbial that triggers the CR interpretation. If there is no temporal specification, hearers in a meaning negotiation will do their best to accommodate their interpretation.

More specifically, Dahl and Hedin (2000) note that whether a sentence takes a CR interpretation influences its need for temporal specification. This is the case for, for instance, Russian. In Russian, the use of a temporal adverbial in fact prevents a CR interpretation. This means that in example (139), it is possible that Yeltsin still is in Moscow (Dahl & Hedin 2000: 394):

(139)	El'cin	**priexal**	v	Moskvu	
	Yeltsin	arrive.PFV.PST	in	Moscow	
	'Yelstin has arrived in Moscow'				

This interpretation is impossible in (140), according to Dahl and Hedin:

(140)	El'cin	**priexal**	včera	v	Moskvu
	Yelstin	arrive.PFV.PST	yesterday	in	Moscow
	'Yelstin arrived yesterday in Moscow'				

In (139), therefore, it is the absence of an adverbial that makes the CR interpretation possible. The fact that a sentence is intended to have CR meaning licenses a breach in the spatiotemporal constraint. It is possible that a time adverbial shifts the focus of the result to the attention to the past-time situation.

The notion of a breach in the temporal constraint as a trigger of CR interpretation applies particularly well to this case. Recall example (141) repeated below for convenience. Here, the hearer (informant 15) clearly attributes the Preterit a CR meaning, because she replies using a Perfect experiential (*he ido*).

(141) (01:35/15/17)

17:

Para	allá	afuera	no	**fueron**	a	la	Concordia ?
To	there	outside	NEG	go.3PL.PRT	to	the	Concordia

'Out to Concordia you haven't been?'

15:

No	no	**he ido**
NEG	NEG	go.1SG.PRS.PRF

'No I haven't been there'

This clearly indicates the CR interpretation of the Preterit. B responds to A's question using the Perfect, clearly interpreting A's Preterit as expressing CR. It is possible that this interpretation is particularly available precisely because of the lack of a temporal adverbial, as in the examples illustrated above.

In addition, it illustrates the variation found in A's speech, as well as B's reanalysis, but also how the novel construction has not reached the level of linguistic expression. Note also that speakers tend to be less aware of changes in morphosyntactic form than they are of phonetic elements, since the latter are concrete and observable, the former abstract entities). It is thus possible to question whether B is aware of A's innovative use of the Preterit.

7.6 Subfunction Variation as the Key to Understanding the Preterit's Expansion

So far, I have shown how speakers from all sources except those from age group I exhibit variation between Preterit and Perfect in their expression of experientiality. This variation is taken to be crucial in the understanding of the Preterit's expansion.

In addition, two processes may shed light on the emergence of subfunction variation in the expression of experientiality. One is so-called pragmatic strengthening; the other is the way the lack of temporal specification may trigger the CR reading. It is hypothesized that this change may have started as a pragmatic routine here because this subfunction is semantically closer to the Preterit category that replaces it. It is difficult to imagine how a form expressing persistent situation, for example, could occur in a context in which the expression of CR would become inherent to it. How could the imperfectivity expressed by this form be inferred in the verb, with no explicit expression?

I take the lack of variation found in this subfunction in the oldest sources to illustrate the unlikelihood of this option. There is variation between Perfect and Present constructions to express persistent situation in the oldest sources. One could imagine this Present construction expanding, but such expansion is not observed in the younger speakers.

7.6.1 *A Note on Variation*

The subfunction variation in Porteño Spanish illustrates a pervasive and ubiquitous morphosyntactic variation, similar to phonological variation (Croft 2010) or gradualness (discussed in Chapter 2). The variation found in one subfunction may have spread to other subfunctions through microsteps. It is also shown that these microsteps have gone to completion in the language of young and adolescent speakers of Porteño Spanish, but it is also stressed that it need not (as in, e.g., the current Mexican system; see 4.3.1). Finally, I discuss whether contact has played a part in the Preterit's spread through society, assuming, as Blythe and Croft do (2012), that innovation is triggered by language use (here, this refers to the emergence of the possibility to express past with CR by means of Preterits), while the further spread has a social component (here, this refers to the Preterit's spread throughout society).

Croft (2010), in a study of different verbalizations of the so-called Pear Story, notes that his data do not provide evidence in favor of the assumption that new, analytic forms tend to expand at the expense of old, synthetic forms. This is particularly relevant to the present case. Recall that the Preterit is a synthetic, irregular form, as opposed to the analytic, more regular Perfect. Croft still argues that frequency is the main force behind change. In certain contexts, he argues, as the old and the new form compete in a synchronic variation, the frequency of the old form may be just as high as that of the new emerging form, making the expansion of the former just as likely as the expansion of the latter. Such expansion is likely to have been the case in Porteño Spanish's age group II. Both Preterits and Perfects were used to express past with CR. Given Croft's observation that there is no determinacy in whether analytic or synthetic forms expand, both forms can be as likely to expand. In Porteño Spanish, the Preterit has.

7.6.2 *Microsteps*

The different data samples here presented provide different synchronic pictures of Porteño Spanish. Other Latin American varieties also show heterogeneous distributions (see Chapter 2 and 3). In my view, this variation is not unexpected. These stages are the individual results of microsteps taken

in diverse directions, all enabled by the intertwined semantic relationship between perfects and pasts. The micro-/macrostep metaphor provides a good illustration of how these changes can go to completion (as in young Porteño Spanish speakers) but need not. Mexican Spanish, for example, has a system in which the Perfect prevails as conveyor of persistent situation (Schwenter 2011); recall the so-called "Latin American norm" discussed in Chapter 3.

As I showed in Chapter 2, microsteps are crucial to the usage-based understanding of the nature of change as gradual, not abrupt. In this view, macrochanges are the result of successions of microsteps. It is important to note that there is no determination assumed once a microstep has been taken: the change need not come to completion. 19th century Argentinean sources may indeed provide evidence for the nondeterminacy of semantic change. I now turn to this.

7.6.2.1 A Dead End: Microsteps not Gone to Completion

A methodologically useful way to begin a diachronic study is to seek evidence in a historical corpus for the transition from an earlier stage to the synchronic one studied, all the while watching for developments that may have dead-ended (Traugott & Dasher 2002). Such dead-ended developments frequently show incipient conventionalization of a meaning that is not replicated, or not replicated for any considerable length of time, whereas it may become a highly salient meaning in another language. For example, there is some sporadic evidence of incipient *because*-meanings for while in Middle English; these meanings never conventionalized in English, but conventionalization did develop for the cognate *weil* in German.

There is indeed evidence for such a dead end in old Porteño Spanish texts. In a text from 1880 (Sánchez's *M'hijo el dotor*), there is clear evidence that the Perfect preferred to express past with current relevance, as observed in Table 24.

TABLE 24 *Perfect and Preterit distribution of past with current relevance in Sánchez (1880 [1966])*

M'hijo el dotor	Experiential	Recent past	Resultative	Persistent situation	Total (%)
Preterit	2	–	4	–	6 (5%)
Perfect	54	4	56	9	123 (95%)
Total	56	4	60	9	129 (100%)

The numbers are striking: Sánchez's play, arguably one that attempts to depict the vernacular of the area, shows clear preference (95%) for the Perfect. In addition, there is evidence tht the Perfect was also used in contexts previously restricted to the Preterit: prehodiernal (referring to situations occurring before today; see 2.3.4.2), with a specific-time adverbial (for further evidence, see Fløgstad 2007):

(142) Anoche **ha cruzado** la pierna y se
At.night cross.3SG.PRS.PRF the leg and REFL
ha puesto después a palmearlo
start.3.SG.PRS.PRF afterwards to slap.it
'Last night he crossed his leg and after that he started to applaud it'
(Sánchez 1880 [1966]: 46–47)

Recall also Abeille's early and surprising claim (1900 [2005]), discussed in Chapter 3, that 19th-century Porteño Spanish was characterized by the use of Perfect where other varieties prefer Preterits.

It is well known that only a small subset of novel uses undergoes conventionalization (Ariel 2008: 211; Blythe & Croft 2012). The developments that have occurred in other Latin American varieties, in which the Perfect to various extents is in use, may therefore be interpreted as having taken different microsteps in various directions.

So far, I have pointed to contexts in which such steps may originate. These sections have provided a tentative analysis of the expansion as being triggered by how language is used. The combination of interviews, crosslinguistic comparisons, and theoretical assumptions suggests a starting point. The functional overlap between the experiential and the Preterit categories is such that the boundaries are fuzzy and easily bleed into each other's domain. Thereby, speakers may exploit pragmatic maxims (here, the R-heuristic), practices that become pragmatic routines and later conventions. In addition, the absence of temporal specification allows the CR interpretation to be arrived at. Note, however, that contexts that may facilitate change are a necessity, but such contexts are not sufficient for change to occur.

7.6.3 *Further Spread*

Focus thus far has been on the synchronic variation that triggers the expansion of the Preterit in Porteño Spanish—that is, on the first step in the process of change, namely innovation. However, in age group 1, the Preterit has spread to all four subfunctions associated with the Perfect: experiential, resultativity, recent past, and persistent situation. The data present two types of evidence

for how this spread has come about: (1) The Preterit first spreads to experiential, and (2) the Preterit last spreads to persistent situation. Recall that recent-past tokens are practically absent from the corpus, while resultativity shows variation in its expression in age group II. It is possible to imagine an expansion in line with a modified version of Croft's model from section 7.3.2.1:

First to be expressed by means of Preterit
Experiential
↑
(Recent past)
↑
Resultative
↑
Persistent situation
Last to be expressed by means of Preterit

Recent past is placed after experiential because there is no evidence that this function has Preterit expression in other Latin American or Romance varieties. However, according to Croft (2013: 142–143), this is the subfunction that has most in common with a tense, so it is not unlikely that it expands early. The further spread occurs in a process in which an earlier structure is restructured to match an existing one; here, the Preterit is restructured to express not only experientiality but gradually other subfunctions, leading to the Perfect's eventual demise. This gradual expansion occurs at different paces, and as we have seen, there is no assumed determinacy in its completion.

7.7 The End Result: The Unstable Perfect

This section focuses on the macrochange: the full expansion of the Preterit to convey all subfunctions of Perfect among Porteño Spanish speakers.

A disappearing perfect is in itself not newsworthy, and the perfect is known to be an unstable category (Lindstedt 2000). Crucially, however, the perfect is assumed not to disappear but to become something else, as the European Perfect > Past expansion clearly shows. One important finding of this study is that this instability should not be interpreted as being related to the specific perfect category; rather, the instability should be viewed as having to do with the instability of the distinction. The intertwined relationship between Perfects and Preterits leaves room for functional overlaps that in turn enable the expansion of both. When the microchanges these overlaps lead to provoke macrochanges, it can be observed that the end result is the same as that occur-

ring at the level of semantic categories in languages in which a Preterit and a perfect expand. The nature of the microsteps is not identical. But the result of the macrochange is: the loss of one category and the expansion of the other. The surviving category comes to convey both perfective function and past with CR. In French, it is the old Perfect that conveys both perfective and past with CR.

French:

Perfect > Past perfective and past perfective with CR

Porteño Spanish:

Preterit > Past perfective and past perfective with CR

Dahl (1985: 139) claims that it is not uncommon for a perfect to develop into a perfective and notes that this has happened in a number of Romance languages, such as French. He suggests that one explanation for this tendency is that peripheral tense/mood/aspect (TMA) categories tend to be attracted toward the center of the TMA system, thereby acquiring properties that are typical of the central categories. This observation, he argues, may provide an explanation for the general tendency for grammaticalized expressions of perfect to disappear.

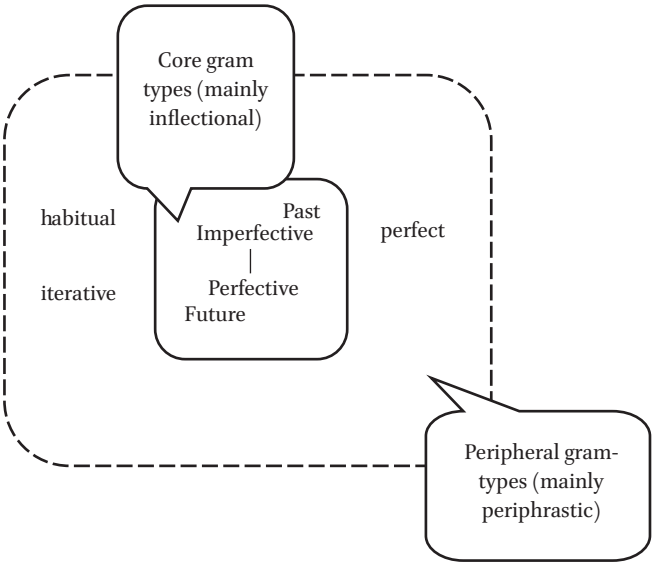

FIGURE 16 *The center of the TMA system, simplified after Dahl (1985:139; 2000: 15).*

On the category level, we are clearly dealing with a simplification. Semantically, however, the result of the change is more difficult to interpret. Here, I briefly discuss the semantic process involved in the change.

7.7.1 *Loss vs. Gain, Broadening vs. Narrowing*

The generalization of a Perfect to a past/perfective (as seen in, e.g., French) is often assumed to be a generalization of meaning and a loss of specific meaning components, since it is assumed that the CR component disappears (see Bybee et al. 1994; Heine & Kuteva 2006; discussion in Chapter 4). This view is in accord with the assumption that increased frequency of use leads to semantic bleaching, which is particularly prevalent in Bybee's view of meaning change in grammaticalization (Bybee 2010). When a perfect expands, therefore, it is usually argued that the CR component is lost and that the category loses specific restrictions. The remaining category is argued to be broader and to have less specific meaning components. In this sense, there is clearly talk of both a frequency-driven bleaching or generalization of meaning, or "loss."

In my opinion, however, it is overlooked that the end result of the expansion of Perfects, such as in French, does not only entail loss. When the Perfect expands, it is not the case that it ceases to express past with CR. Rather is it used both to express this notion as well as past perfective. In this sense, the outcome is strikingly similar to the end result of the expansion of the Preterit in Porteño Spanish.

In this sense, it appears to be most fruitful to define the Porteño Spanish change as a broadening or strengthening since the possibility to express CR is added to the category scope (Traugott 1988). In addition, the previous restriction on the Preterit, that it required a specific time frame, is also lost, allowing for a broader temporal scope. In a sense, the category has experienced both the addition of specific semantic components and semantic broadening. The remaining Preterit is both more general and more able to express a wider array of functions—among them the specific CR component.

7.7.2 *Summary of Analysis*

I have proposed that the experiential served as the turning point for the expansion of the Preterit in Porteño Spanish and that this function is where Preterit first was used to convey past with CR. I have argued for this both on the basis of the variation found in the experiential (and less so in other subfunctions) in the materials collected for this study, and also through other linguistic sources providing similar evidence, combined with theoretical insights about the nature of the experiential and its relationship to pasts and perfectives. In addition, I have shown that this variation in the expression of this function may have

arisen through conventionalization of inference and that the hearer reanalysis has come about through a breach in the temporal constraint on the Preterit. Together, these mechanisms allow for a variation in the expression of past with CR, which in turn allows for the expansion of the Preterit. I have stressed that such developments do not necessarily lead to macrochanges; they may indeed constitute microchanges only, which may account for the substantial variation found in the Latin American varieties. This model allows for the following:

- It provides an account for the variation in experiential/recent past (functional overlap) and the lack of such in persistent situation (less semantic overlap).
- It suggests why certain Latin American varieties still preserve the Perfect in persistent situation (e.g., Mexican; see Squartini & Bertinetto 2000) and explains the general heterogeneity of the Latin American varieties.
- It provides a usage-based explanation without alluding to predictions of form and meaning correlations in paths of development.

7.8 Contact? A Note on the Further Spread and its Causes

So far, the question of how the Preterit got passed on to society, and subsequently spread to the language as a whole, has not been treated. As briefly discussed in Chapter 2, I assume that the mechanisms behind innovation are largely language internal (such as, for instance, the mechanisms behind the emergence of variation in the expression of past with CR) but that the further propagation into society clearly has a social part. I now provide a brief discussion of whether contact may have accentuated the Preterit's spread in Porteño Spanish.

As discussed in Chapter 3 (see also Fløgstad 2014), Argentina received more than four million immigrants between 1850 and 1930, an immigration wave that peaked around the turn of the 20th century, with almost half of the population in Buenos Aires being of non-Argentinean decent. Given the fact that this radical change in the demographics of the Porteño Spanish population appears to coincide with the time span of the change (see Chapter 6 for age-based variation), a note on contact is pertinent. A discussion of contact is also pertinent because Argentinean Spanish (but note, not Uruguayan Spanish) is assumed to be the Latin American Spanish variety in which the expansion of the Preterit has gone the furthest, combined with the fact that Buenos Aires also was the urban center in this region that experienced the most intense level of contact.

In this section, I discuss whether the expansion of the Preterit (i) was the result of contact of direct transfer from Sicilian Italian (knowing that these scenarios, i.e., influence from immigrant language on the language to which immigrants shift, tends to be rather rare; Sankoff 2001) or (ii) occurred indirectly as a postcontact simplification, generated by adult immigrants' imperfect learning.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the expansion of a perfect has been explained by pointing to its CR component, which makes speakers use this form more frequently in order to add relevance to their contribution (Bybee et al. 1994: 86). In Porteño Spanish, however, it is the Preterit that has expanded, and the possibility to express CR has been added to its semantic scope. How can this spread be accounted for? As, for instance, Thomason (2001) notes, contact may be a source of change if it is less likely that the change would occur outside the contact situation. Following predictions from grammaticalization theory, the expansion of a Preterit is indeed unexpected. Therefore, it is relevant to ask whether there are any factors idiosyncratic to Porteño Spanish that may account for the expansion.

7.8.1 *Contact with Sicilian*

Italians made up half of the immigrant population in Buenos Aires, which in 1887 constituted almost half of the entire population in Buenos Aires. Southern Italian immigrants made up almost half of the Italian immigrant population (see details below). Coincidentally, in Sicilian, the Preterit is used more frequently than it is in other Italian varieties, and the Perfect is rare (Harris & Vincent 1988; Squartini 1998). Crucially, this is not a novel use in Sicilian. Rather, it is assumed to be an archaic feature and the result of the Perfect never properly developing in this variety. It is therefore likely that Sicilian immigrants spoke a variety in which the Perfect was highly restricted. Can contact with Sicilian have triggered the use of Preterit in contexts previously restricted to Perfects in Porteño Spanish?

This type of change would correspond to the notion of borrowing: "the incorporation of foreign features into a group's native language by speakers of that language" (Thomason & Kaufman 1988: 37). In this view, the native language changes owing to incorporation of new elements. If such a contact-induced change has occurred, it is likely that elements other than the one in question were also transferred from language to language (Thomason 2001). "Invariably (. . .) in a borrowing situation the first foreign elements to enter the borrowing language are words," argue Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 37). Changes in the sound system generally require strong cultural pressure from

source-language speakers on speakers of the borrowing language. We find both elements in Porteño Spanish; lexically and prosodically, the Italian impact is unquestionable, and the intonation pattern is argued to have changed because of contact with Southern Italian varieties specifically (see 3.3.2.4). This impact, combined with the fact that the time span of the change seems to coincide with the initiation of the spread, may call for a contact explanation.

Theoretical and demographic considerations, however, seem to disfavor a contact hypothesis. The rapid shift to Spanish did not give rise to a long period of bilingualism, usually a prerequisite for structural change (see, e.g., Sankoff 2001: 641–642; Thomason 2001). In addition, the influence of immigrant language on the language to which immigrants have shifted tends to be restricted. Sankoff (2001: 656) describes how the Norse invasion of England led to morphological changes in the receiving language caused by the newcomers, but notes how this is a rare change, made possible only because of the massive numbers of the newcomers and the intimacy of the contact between them and the pre-existing population. Further complicating the picture is the fact that the Porteño Spanish case does not represent a morphological or syntactic change in itself; rather, it is a change in semantic restrictions, leading to category change. A growing body of research in grammaticalization does point to the fact that grammaticalizing constructions (and thus changing semantic and functional restrictions on constructions) may spread because of contact (Heine & Kuteva 2006); however, this process also seems to apply to areas in which long-term bilingualism has been found.

However, the main question may be demographic rather than linguistic. The Italian immigrants came primarily from two parts of Italy: from Piedmont, situated in the northwest, and from the south, that is, Sicily and Calabria (Baily 1999: 62). Before 1900, about 50% of the Italians that immigrated were from the north, but after 1900, the tendency changed and the number of immigrating southerners increased from about 39% to comprise over 50% of the total of Italian immigrants to Argentina.

Despite this, it is in fact the Ligurian Italian variety, and especially Genovese, that is argued to have had the most lexical influence on Porteño Spanish and that also is assumed to form the lexical base for Lunfardo (see 3.3.2.5) (Gobello & Olivieri 2005). In Ligurian Italian, the opposite distribution to that in Porteño Spanish is found: the Perfect has expanded to perfective, as in, for instance, spoken French (Squartini 1998). Another piece of evidence comes from theater plays. Sánchez (1880 [1966]), in a play imitating Italian immigrant language, frequently includes the Perfect, as in the phrase *Ha capito* (It. 'Has understood'), *Ha comprendido* (Sp. 'Has understood'), perhaps

indicating that the Perfect did indeed exist in the Sicilian immigrants' language to the extent that this was included when imitating them.[8]

Still, since prosodic features present in Sicilian Italian have been passed on to form part of Porteño Spanish, influence from this group clearly has occurred. This may be a typical case of covert prestige; recall that Sicilian immigrants' economic, social, and cultural statuses generally were seen as low. The demographic profile of Sicilian immigrants (they were typically single, young males) would in addition conform to the assumption that a variable is weighted in terms of whether it is used by nonconforming but socially mobile individuals (Labov 2001: 511–518).

In sum, the typological proximity between Spanish and Italian would facilitate structural change, but the short period of bilingualism would suggest lexical/phonological impact only—which is precisely what is found. I therefore assume that the uncertainty of the demographic data, combined with the short period of bilingualism, makes a contact explanation less likely. What cannot be excluded, however, is the possibility of multiple causation, with contact's intensifying a change that was likely to occur anyway. Such intensification has happened, for instance, in the Spanish spoken in Los Angeles, in which a common process toward the loss of the subjunctive category has merely been accentuated by contact with English (Silva-Corvalán 1994).

It should be noted that a contact-induced further spread of the Preterit would be particularly compatible with Blythe and Croft (2012). Their model is highly complex, and here I will only note that they argue that innovation (their term is "first-order variation") comes about through language-internal processes (compatible with, e.g., the mechanisms proposed for the expansion of the Preterit). Crucially, however, they see the further spread throughout society (second- and third-order variation) as being socially conditioned through, for instance, processes of covert prestige.

7.8.2 *Buenos Aires: A High-Contact Society? Categorical Simplification as a Postcontact Phenomenon*

In this section, I briefly discuss the Porteño Spanish data in light of the hypothesis that societal structure correlates with linguistic structures and that distribution of linguistic features is not just areal or random (McWhorter 2011; Trudgill 2011). Trudgill (2011) argues that certain societies and social structures

8 Östen Dahl (personal communication) suggests that hypercorrection toward what is *perceived* as a local norm may lead newly arrived immigrants to the overuse of a Preterit in all functions.

(and thus the degree of contact-induced change) tend to be associated with certain linguistic structures, even when we are not dealing with processes such as creolization and pidginization, in which this is well-known. This corresponds to the concept of interference through shift (Thomason & Kaufman 1988: 38–39), which involves a group of speakers that shift to a different language but fail to learn the target language perfectly. The errors made by the group of learners spread to the native speakers of the target language. In this view, phonological and syntactic features are thought to interfere before lexical ones.

The idea is that noncultural features of a society correlate with structural (nonlexical) features of a language. Such features defining a society may be community size, density of social networks, social stability versus instability, and degree of contact versus isolation. In large, unstable communities, with dense social networks and a high degree of contact, this contact is typically short-term and/or involves imperfect language learning by adults (the inability to learn certain aspects of the language, those which are "L2-difficult," according to Dahl 2004). These communities are where change tends to occur rapidly and where different types of simplification associated with pidginization may occur. The deciding factor is not, therefore, the society per se but rather the presence (or not) of past-threshold learners (McWhorter 2011).

Buenos Aires was clearly a high-contact society around 1900, experiencing short-term, intense contact. It was not a case of long-term contact involving childhood (therefore proficient) bilingualism: as observed in Chapter 3, the shift from immigrant languages to Spanish was rapid. In addition, the demographic information on the immigrants that entered Buenos Aires and Argentina confirms that a majority of those who arrived were indeed past-threshold learners—that is, adults well past the critical age for language acquisition; 80%–85% were males of prime age (Sánchez-Alonso 2000). The immigrants did not speak only languages typologically proximate to Spanish but also spoke, for instance, Arabic, German, Polish, and Russian (see 2.1).

The change in the use of the Preterit in Porteño Spanish is indeed a simplification in the sense that two categories have been reduced to one. Formally, however, the expansion of the Preterit has more in common with complexification, as it involves irregularization and an increase in opacity. The Preterit as a category is both more irregular and more opaque than is the Perfect, which it replaces; the Perfect is formed with the auxiliary *haber* 'to have' and a past participle of the verb, as opposed to the synthetic Preterit. Changes in this direction are rather associated with small, tightly knit societies that are more able to encourage the preservation of norms and the continued adherence to norms, and in which complexity is more readily maintained (Trudgill 2011).

But while the formal properties of the Preterit may be associated with low contact societies, Buenos Aires certainly was not (and is not) such a society. More importantly, no other grammatical features of Porteño Spanish show signs of simplification due to contact itself (à la pidginization). I therefore assume that it is unlikely that the loss of distinction between Perfect and Preterit in this variety is a postcontact phenomenon, despite Buenos Aires's complying with the criterion of being a society in which such changes tend to occur.

7.8.2.1 Uruguayan Data

As discussed in 6.6, data from Spanish spoken in Montevideo, the capital of Argentina's neighboring country Uruguay may shed additional light on the question of contact. Data from young speakers of Montevideo and Dolores Spanish suggest that there, the Perfect is used more frequently in CR contexts than it is in neighboring Buenos Aires. This difference is also suggested in Henderson (2010). However, demographically, the two cities had features in common. In 1860, Montevideo consisted of 48% foreigners (compared to 36% in Buenos Aires). At that time, 28% of immigrants were Spanish, 27% Italian, and 22% French, mainly Basques. These numbers are similar to those of Buenos Aires in 1887 (see section 3.2).

Similarities aside, there also were important differences between the two countries, as discussed in Chapter 3. Recall that Uruguay soon became a country of transit rather than of permanent settlement. Between 1874 and 1901, only 1,596 foreigners became Uruguayan citizens, and in the decade between 1905 and 1914, the ratio of new immigrants to the total population of Uruguay was only one-tenth of that for Argentina (Finch 1981). This fact may be important in understanding the rapid spread of the Preterit in Buenos Aires Spanish as opposed to in Uruguayan Spanish. In the latter, the expansion of the Preterit appears to be less pronounced, and no features point to structural simplification due to contact.

7.8.3 *Increased Morphological Complexity without Contact*

As mentioned in 7.5, many theories of language change emphasize two competing tendencies: clarity, on the one hand, making speakers produce more analytic forms, and economy, on the other, making these analytic constructions reduce in terms of phonetic substance, causing cyclic analytic-synthetic-analytic alternations. But how clear-cut is this picture really? As I have shown, there are several examples of increased morphological complexity in the development of the Preterit in Romance. Typologically, morphological complexification (in the sense of an increased number of morphological slots in a verbal template) is not uncommon. Gildea and Meira (2014) note that in the

Cariban language family, changes that lead to both increased and decreased morphological complexity occur. Crucially, such changes are widespread and can occur without contact as an explanation, and they may show that changes in complexity do not show consistent directionality. The complexification observed in Porteño Spanish is of a different type than the ones referred to by Gildea and Meira in that the Porteño Spanish case involves a broadening of semantic scope, as well as preference for an already-existing synthetic form. Still, Gildea and Meira's observation adds to the evidence that complexification may occur spontaneously, without contact.

7.8.4 *Summary of Contact Discussion*

In sum, the inconclusive historical and demographic data make it difficult to conclude whether the expansion of the Preterit has been triggered by contact. I have argued that a semantic/pragmatic motivation is more likely for the initial expansion of the Preterit in Porteño Spanish, but the nature of the further spread may well have a socially conditioned motivation. Such motivations are obvious possibilities for further research.

CHAPTER 8

Synthesis

In this chapter, I offer a synthesis of the findings on the evolution of the Perfect and Preterit in Porteño outlined in this book. First, I zoom in on the specific findings, the nature of the change, and the semantic end point. Second, I zoom out and discuss the end result in a cross-linguistic perspective. Finally, I discuss the findings in light of diachronic-semantic theory.

8.1 Results: Empirical Findings

This study has provided new evidence on the spread of the Preterit category in Porteño Spanish. I have pointed to two general tendencies.

First, the global finding is that there exists an age-based variation in speakers from two age groups; older and middle-aged speakers show substantial variation in the expression of past with CR, while young and adolescent speakers exhibit radically less such variation.

Second, the additional finding is that speakers who do exhibit variation in the expression of past with CR do so to a larger extent in the experiential function. In addition, some speakers show variation only in the expression of experientiality and in none of the other subfunctions of the Perfect. This finding differs from those of Rodríguez Louro (2009: 233), who concludes that experientiality is expressed by means of Perfects in Porteño Spanish and the Perfect is reserved to express type-focus because the Preterit, in her view, is unable to express unanchored time. This inability is not confirmed in this study. Quite the contrary: I have pointed to a development toward Preterits being able to express type-focus without temporal specification.

I have argued that the variation in the expression of experientiality in age group II and HABCULT is crucial to understanding the change in question, on the assumption that variation is both the origin and the end point of change. But why is there such variation in the expression of experientiality? I have argued that the functional overlap between Perfect and Preterit to express experientiality enables further spread through the following processes:

1. Strengthening: The Preterit is used to express experientiality in noninitial, transitional contexts, where the omitted temporal specification becomes part of the form's meaning through a process of pragmatic strengthening.

2. Breach in restrictions on temporal specification: CR interpretation is triggered because of lack of temporal specification. The lack of such specification licenses a breach in the temporal-specification requirement and opens the way for CR interpretation.
3. The cross-linguistic comparison has revealed that in Romance, the competition between a Perfect and Preterit may motivate the expansion of both.

8.1.1 *Nature of the Expansion*

The nature of this change provides clear evidence for the gradual nature of grammatical change. As we have observed in the four types of empirical sources, the Preterit gradually enters the Perfect's domain (illustrated through the analysis of its subfunctions) through microsteps.

The result of the microsteps, the total expansion of the Preterit in age group 1, illustrates a macrostep. It is stressed that such macrosteps are not the necessary result of microsteps. In fact, microsteps can be taken in diverse directions and never lead to macrochanges (as we observed in the old Porteño Spanish sources, as well as in the examples of putative dead ends). In addition, it is important to note that the variation created by the microsteps can also be stable; there is no such thing as an "expected development" once a form begins to change, as I will stress below.

8.1.2 *Semantic End Point: Porteño Spanish*

As we have observed, it is difficult to define the specific nature of the semantic change that has occurred in Porteño Spanish. Clearly, this is so because CR—the notion that is added to the Preterit's scope—is notoriously difficult to define (see 2.2.7). In a sense, the added ability to express CR is a pragmatic strengthening (as I argued in Chapter 7); CR is a specific component that, when used, allows the Preterit to express a notion of, for instance, abstract, psychological relevance (as when expressing experientiality) or concrete, tangible relevance (as when expressing resultativity). In this sense, the generality of the meaning, taken to be typical of grammatical change (see, e.g., Bybee et al. 1994: 9), is not increased.

It remains difficult to define, however, whether the addition of this component to the Preterit's scope is best understood as a specification or whether focus is best put on the fact that it becomes compatible with a larger scope of contexts. In the latter view, it is best understood as a broadening or generalization of meanings.

The result of the expansion includes an extension of meaning, and I believe it is fruitful to employ the distinction between process and result (as discussed in Chapter 2). Recall that in grammaticalization, approaches that emphasize

the process of change often focus on the loss or reduction of meaning, while approaches that emphasize the result usually focus on the semantic expansion.

If losing the CR component involves loss or bleaching (as is argued by, e.g., Bybee et al. 1994: 86 for French), the addition of this component in Porteño Spanish clearly must involve a gain of specific semantic components. The result, however, is a category that is extended in meaning and use. But has the French Passé Composé, for instance, really lost its CR component? It can still be used to express past with CR. In this sense, the end points in both French and Porteño Spanish are similar: one category comes to express a larger set of contexts. I now turn to the details of these expansions.

8.2 Cross-Linguistic Considerations

If the Preterit completely replaces the Perfect in Porteño Spanish (which is likely, considering the data from age group 1; see 6.3), the end result is a simplification in a banal sense; where there used to be a perfective/imperfective distinction, as well as a Perfect category, this tripartite system is reduced to two. The grammaticalized expression of the past with CR disappears. This is in line with the assumption that categories that belong to the peripheral parts of the tense and aspect system tend to disappear, which I demonstrated in Chapter 7 (Dahl 1985: 139; 2000: 15). Dahl notes that the peripheral parts are those that are generally expressed periphrastically and that are less obligatory in their uses. He further suggests (1985: 139) that the tendency for a perfect to develop into a perfective may be due to a tendency for the peripheral categories in a tense-aspect system to be attracted toward the center of the system, thereby acquiring properties that are characteristic of the central categories.

The concept of the perfect as peripheral to the tense-aspect system can be extended to the present case. We can therefore observe a tendency for a peripheral category—a perfect—to disappear. The end result is thus a system consisting of two core categories in a tense-aspect system: a perfective and an imperfective. This end result is observed both on the European mainland and in Porteño Spanish. What varies is which form survives. In Porteño Spanish, the Preterit has expanded at the expense of the Perfect. In French, for instance, the Perfect has expanded at the expense of the Passé Simple. The real tendency, then, is for the morphological expression of past with CR (i.e., Perfect), to disappear.

So, in Peninsular Spanish, the grammaticalized *haber*-construction expresses past with CR through a separate category:

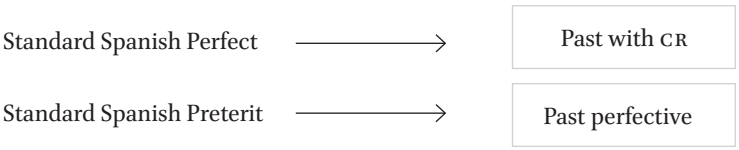

FIGURE 17 *Functions of Peninsular Spanish Perfect and Preterit.*

This separate category disappears in Porteño Spanish (and possibly in other Romance languages), and the Preterit category comes to express both its original content and the content of the disappearing Perfect category:

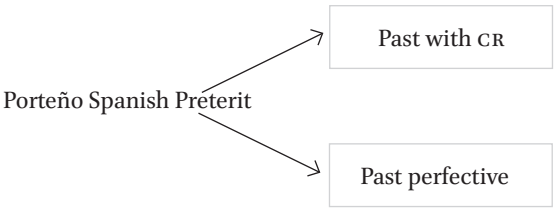

FIGURE 18 *Functions of Porteño Spanish Preterit.*

In French, the Passé Composé has taken on those functions:

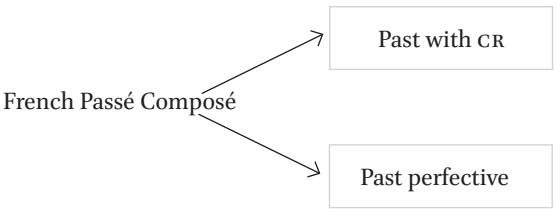

FIGURE 19 *Functions of French Passé Composé.*

Given the history of the Perfect, then, it would not be unexpected to witness the emergence of an analytic Perfect in Porteño Spanish. This category would not, however, be expected to live a stable life. As Lindtedt (2000) reminds us, the Perfect is an unstable category. In the present work, however, I have shown that this instability does not only entail the Perfect's "becoming something else" (Lindstedt 2000); it also entails its disappearing.

8.3 Theoretical Remarks

I have shown that the expansion of the Preterit is the result of the competing relationship between a Perfect and a Preterit. As observed in Chapter 4, the expansion of a perfect is often explained alluding to domain-general, usage-based mechanisms leading to semantic bleaching. These mechanisms are taken to operate in predictive ways once specific source meanings begin to grammaticalize, placing the developing perfect on a predictable path. The expansion of the Preterit in Porteño Spanish serves as an illustration that this path is not the only possible outcome of competition between a perfect and a perfective. In fact, a cross-linguistic sample (see 4.3.1.1) illustrates the variation of the distribution. The result of the primary grammaticalization has been present in all the Romance varieties, while the secondary grammaticalization—its further semantic and functional development—has been diverse. These developments illustrate not only the importance of distinguishing between primary and secondary grammaticalization but, more importantly, that the tendency for Perfects to become pasts or past perfectives appears no stronger than for the Preterit to do so.

Thus, the data presented here should be seen as evidence not against unidirectionality in the sense of primary grammaticalization (grammaticalized forms that cease to increase in frequency are not in themselves a counterexample) but against certain developments being conceived as the normal, "unmarked" outcome of a competition, as Joseph (2006) puts it. Clearly, most scholars see unidirectionality as a statistical tendency and would not disagree with Joseph's claim (ibid.) that much more goes on in language change than simply the oft-cited movement of lexical > grammatical that characterizes grammaticalization (2011: 198). Despite this apparent acknowledgement of the diversity of the developments, it is a paradox that grammatical developments that do not fit into preestablished pathways of change are accorded little interest in the usage-based view. In this respect, however, certain recent approaches, such as the constructionalist model of Traugott and Trousdale (2013) (see Chapter 2) are worth mentioning. This approach stresses that constructions that have undergone expansion may indeed become restricted and may also disappear (ibid.: 112), and in so doing, puts less emphasis on the determined paths of development.

The findings presented here clearly indicate that there is no tendency in Latin American varieties of Romance for a Perfect to expand to perfective. Rather, what tends to occur is that the morphological expression of the past with CR disappears. The expanding form may be the Preterit or the Perfect.

In this respect, it is important to mention that there is no reason to believe that Latin American Spanish is particularly unique in its variation in expression of past with CR. Rather, it should be seen as alarming that the intensely studied Romance language family, viewed as the prime example of the regularity of the perfective path (recall discussion in 4.1), exhibits such variation in its expression of past with CR. The same holds for the assumption that the perfective path is suited as a diachronic universal.

This variation points to two tendencies: (1) the subfunction variation found in the Perfect's subcategories, illustrating the overlap between the two categories, and (2) the way this variation leaves room for expansion of one of the competing forms, which in turn expands gradually, again creating synchronic variation. This gradual spread is indeed triggered by usage-based motivations—illustrating that such motivations may trigger widely different outcomes in similar competing relationships.

Returning now to Bybee's initial quote, "The more it changes, the more it stays the same": The present findings provide clear evidence in favor of change occurring gradually, triggered by the microdynamics of speaker-hearer interaction. Perfects and Preterits are indeed in constant flux. But do they "stay the same"? Formally, the answer is no: the surviving form may be either a Preterit or a Perfect. Remarkably, however, the expanding forms—be it the former Perfect or Preterit—come to cover the same functions as they expand.

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