Variation in Spanish past perfectives

Aoristic drift in a situation of complex language contact.
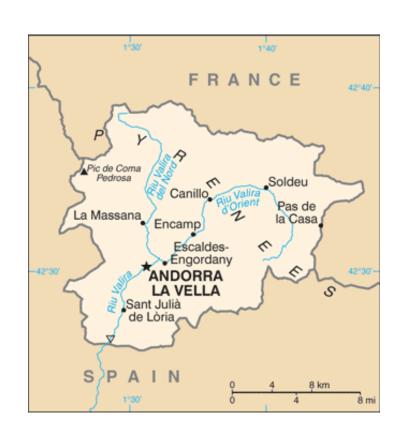
James Hawkey (University of Bristol)

Romance Linguistics Circle 2023
(University of Cambridge / University of Newcastle)

Presentation structure

- Context: Spanish in Andorra

- Linguistic background: Preterit and Present Perfect in Ibero-Romance

- Research Hypothesis

- Methods and Data

- Conclusions

Context: Spanish in Andorra

- Population – 76,177 (2018)

- Area – 468 km²

- Migrant population (Dec 2018)
  - 24,416 (32%) Spain
  - **10,770 (14%) Portugal**
  - 49,731 (65%) Migrant total

- Official language – Catalan

- Language competence (2014):
  - Catalan 8.1/10
  - **Spanish 9.2/10**
  - French 4.8/10
  - Portuguese 2.5/10
  - English 3/10

Linguistic background: Preterit/PP in Ibero-Romance

- **ANT**erior aspect: 'situations that occur prior to reference time, and [are] relevant to the situation at reference time' (Bybee *et al* 1991: 53).

- **AOR**istic aspect: 'a past action that is clearly finished and is disconnected from the moment of speech' (Kempas 2006: 41).

	Present perfect functions	**Romance example**
Stage I	Resultative usage only: Present states from past actions	Sicilian
Stage II	Durative/iterative situations that began in the past and continue to the present	Portuguese, Galician, Latin American Spanish
Stage III	Past situations relevant to the present (i.e. ANT)	Peninsular Spanish, Catalan
Stage IV	Fully includes AOR aspect	French, Romanian

adapted from Harris (1982)

Linguistic background: Preterit/PP in Spanish 🇪🇸

- Stage III Perfects. PP used to convey past events with ANT aspect:

(1) Alguien **ha comido** un bocadillo aquí. Veo las migajas.

- PP used when the temporal frame includes the moment of speech:

(2) <u>Este mes</u>, **hemos ido** a Gales.

- PP used to express **HOD**iernal past:

(3) <u>Esta mañana</u>, **he ido** al supermercado.

So, where did *this* one come from?

Linguistic background: Preterit/PP in Spanish 🇪🇸

- Extension of PP to refer to ANT > Use of PP to refer to all HOD pasts (ANT or AOR).

- Will Peninsular Spanish undergo aoristic drift to be like French? (PP over preterit)

- High reported usage of PP in **PREH**odiernal contexts (Serrano 1996, Kempas 2006), but nearly always to express ANT, not AOR.

Linguistic background: Preterit/PP in Spanish 🇪🇸

- Potential evidence for aoristic drift towards stage IV (Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2008, Copple 2011):
  - Near-exclusive use of PP in HOD past (including AOR)
  - Preference for PP in situations of indeterminate temporal reference.
  - Semantic class of verbs affects choice of PP/preterit.
- <u>IMPORTANT NOTE</u>: Galician Spanish
  - Under contact with Galician (stage II perfects), distinct preference for preterit over PP (cf. Gili Gaya 1993: 161). So, contact plays a role…

Linguistic background: Preterit/PP in Catalan 🇦🇩

- Minimal differences between Catalan and Peninsular Spanish regarding PP usage.

- Aoristic drift between stages III and IV (Squartini and Bertinetto 2000) – Peninsular Spanish is canonical stage III, Catalan is a *tiny* bit further along.

- <u>IMPORTANT NOTE</u>: Northern Catalan
  - Under contact with French (stage IV perfects), extensive neutralization of PP/preterit distinction in favour of PP (Hawkey 2020). So, again, contact plays a role…

Linguistic background: Preterit/PP in Portuguese

- Any completed past action (regardless of relevance to the present) necessitates the preterit (HOD or PREH):

(4a) **Comi** uma maçã há instantes

(4b) *****Tenho comido** uma maçã há instantes

- Stage II Perfects. PP used for actions that began in the past and continue to the present (cf. Campos 1997):

(5a) Ele **tem estado** doente de há cinco dias para cá

(5b) Ele **está** doente há cinco dias

(6a) Ele **esteve** doente há cinco dias

(6b) *Ele **tem estado** doente há cinco dias

- Limited ANT functions and *no* AOR function.

Research Hypothesis: Background

- We know the following:
    - Peninsular Spanish is potentially on a process of aoristic drift towards more generalized PP usage (cf. Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2008, Copple 2011).
    - Language contact affects PP usage (cf. Gili Gaya 1993 for Galician Spanish, Hawkey 2020 for Northern Catalan).
        - Peninsular Spanish (stage III) becomes more stage II under contact with Galician (a stage II language); Catalan (stage III) becomes more stage IV under contact with French (a stage IV language).

- Since both Spanish and Catalan are stage III, we can discount the possibility of Catalan affecting Andorran Spanish PP usage
    - (cf. Schwenter 1994 for Catalan Spanishes behaving similarly to other varieties of Peninsular Spanish)

Research Hypothesis

- **Under contact with Portuguese** (stage II)**, will Andorran Spanish display more stage II traits than other Peninsular Spanish** (stage III) **varieties?**
  - Might we see less generalization of the PP and more preterit usage?

Methods

- Semi-structured interviews with 9 members of a Portuguese cultural association in Andorra (5 female, 4 male).

- 8 participants born in Andorra; 1 moved to Andorra aged three months.

- Average age: 24.8 (skewed by one 47yo participant, all others were under 26).

- 750 instances of the variable: 434 preterit, 316 PP.

Coding and Analysis

- Mixed-effects logistical regression using Rbrul (Johnson 2009, 2019).

- Binary (PP) variable as the sole dependent variable, with variants 'PP' (application value) and 'preterit'.

- Random effects: *speaker* and *verb.*

- Fixed effects / Independent variables (all categorical):
    - Participant sex (M, F)
    - Temporal distance (VR, PREH, IND, IRR)
    - Polarity (positive, negative)
    - Aktionsart (achievement, accomplishment, semelfactive, activity, stative)
    - Semantic class (mental, relationship, material, verbal, existential, modulation)
    - Co-text (Y, N)
    - Person/number (1SG, 2SG, 3SG, 1PL, 3PL)
    - Temporal adverbial (current temporal frame, definite time, none)

Data

Random effects: Speaker, Verb.		Application value: PP	Total N = 737	
R^2 (fixed) = 0.647		R^2 (random) = 0.032	Intercept = 0.601	

Predictor	Factor	Factor weight	N	p-value
Temporal Distance	IRR	.797	201	1.85^{e-42}
	IND	.677	88	
	PREH	.108	448	
Temporal Adverbial	Current temporal frame	.904	78	3.98^{e-13}
	None	.485	518	
	Definite time	.102	141	

Non-significant predictors: Semantic class (p=0.057), Co-text (p=0.109), Person/number (p=0.147),

Aktionsart (p=0.195), Subject (p=0.234), Sex (p=0.4), Polarity (p=0.784).

Discussion: PP becoming default?

- What's PP usage like in the *least specified* and *most frequent* contexts? (Schwenter *et al.* 2008)

General preference for preterit in the data (only 42% of all tokens were PP)

Temporal Distance

Temporal Adverbial	IND	IRR	PREH	Total
Current frame	1.000	0.947	0.857	0.949
Defined time	0.000	0.417	0.040	0.070
None	0.778	0.875	0.168	0.435
Total	0.778	0.868	0.143	0.419

Least specified: igual que yo **he sentido** la discriminación entre adultos…

Most frequent: son pocos los que **se han esforzado**…

Most frequent: hace años lo **vi**…

Most frequent: ese sentimiento de **'tuve** que huir…'

Discussion: What about social structures?

- Dense, multiplex social networks (Milroy 1980)

- Vernacular norms are maintained when speakers form dense and multiplex networks in migration scenarios with people from the same place of migrant origin (Cashman 2003, Evans 2004, Van Buren 2017).

- *Pero son gente que van de la casa al trabajo, del trabajo a casa, porque es así, ¿eh? La gran mayoría de los portugueses es trabajo, casa, casa, trabajo, no hay luego nada más, y lo poco que hay es en [la asociación cultural], por ejemplo, y siguen estando en comunidad portuguesa, entonces, no hacen gran cosa.*

  - "But these are people who go from home to work, work to home, because that's just how it is, yeah? For the vast majority of Portuguese people, it's home, work, work, home, there's nothing else, and what little else they have is at [the cultural association], for example. So, they're always within the Portuguese community and don't do much else."

Conclusions

- **Under contact with Portuguese** (stage II)**, will Andorran Spanish display more stage II traits than other Peninsular Spanish** (stage III) **varieties?**

  - **Hypothesis REJECTED!**

- Migrant communities in situations of societal multilingualism constitute interesting sites in which to study ongoing processes of language variation and change, due to the complexities of speaker repertoires, as well as the density and plexity of the social networks involved.

References

- **Hawkey**, J. (2023) 'Variation in Andorran Spanish past perfectives: Insights from the Portuguese diaspora', *Spanish in Context* 20.1.

- **Bybee**, Joan L., **Pagliuca**, William and **Perkins**, Revere D. 1991. 'Back to the future'. In Elizabeth C. Traugott and Bernd Heine (eds.) *Approaches to Grammaticalization: Volume 2.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 17-58.

- **Campos**, Maria Henriqueta Costa. 1997. *Tempo, Aspecto e Modalidade. Estudos de Linguística Portuguesa.* Porto: Porto Editora.

- **Cashman**, Holly R. 2003. "Red social y bilingüismo (ingles/español) en Detroit, Michigan." *Revista Internacional de Lingüística Iberoamericana* 3:59-78.

- **Copple**, Mary T. 2011. 'Tracking the constraints on a grammaticalizing perfect(ive)', *Language Variation and Change* 23, 163-191.

- **Evans**, Betsy. 2004. "The role of social network in the acquisition of local dialect norms by Appalachian migrants in Ypsilanti, Michigan." *Language Variation and Change* 16.2:153-167.

- **Gili Gaya**, Samuel. 1993. *Curso superior de sintaxis española* (fifteenth edition). Barcelona: Vox.

- **Govern d'Andorra**. 2016. *Coneixements i usos lingüístics de la població d'Andorra. Situació actual i evolució (1995-2014).* Andorra: Govern d'Andorra.

- **Harris**, Martin. 1982. 'The 'past simple' and 'present perfect' in Romance'. In Martin Harris and Nigel Vincent (eds.) *Studies in the Romance Verb.* London: Croom Helm, 42-70.

- **Hawkey**, James. 2020. 'Language attitudes as predictors of morphosyntactic variation: Evidence from Catalan speakers in southern France', *Journal of Sociolinguistics 24.1,* 16-34.

- **Johnson**, Daniel Ezra. 2009. "Getting off the GoldVarb standard: Introducing Rbrul for mixed-effects variable rule analysis." *Language and Linguistics Compass* 3.1:359-383.

- **Johnson**, Daniel Ezra. 2019. *Rbrul, version 3.1.3*. Consulted online at http://www.danielezrajohnson.com/rbrul.html,12 March 2021.

- **Kempas**, Ilpo. 2006. *Estudio sobre el uso del pretérito perfecto prehodiernal en el español peninsular y en comparación con la variedad del español argentino hablado en Santiago del Estero.* University of Helsinki: Unpublished PhD thesis.

- **Milroy**, Lesley. 1980. *Language and Social Networks.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

- **Schwenter**, Scott. 1994. 'The grammaticalization of an anterior in progress: Evidence from a Peninsular Spanish dialect', *Studies in Language* 18.1, 71-111.

- **Schwenter**, Scott and **Torres Cacoullos**, Rena. 2008. 'Defaults and indeterminacy in temporal grammaticalization: The 'perfect' road to perfective', *Language Variation and Change* 20, 1-39.

- **Serrano**, María José. 1996. 'Accounting for morpho-syntactic change in Spanish: The present perfect case', *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics* 3 (1), 51-61.

- **Squartini**, Mario and **Bertinetto**, Pier Marco. 2000. 'The simple and compound past in Romance languages'. In Östen Dahl (ed.) *Tense and Aspect in the Languages of Europe.* Berlin/New York: Mouton De Gruyter, 189-226.

- **Van Buren,** Jackelyn. 2017. "The role of social networks in the retention of /f/ aspiration among Mexican migrant workers in the Pacific Northwest." *Studies in Hispanic and Lusophone Linguistics* 10.1:161-188.