

SALIENCY IN THE MORPHOLOGY AND MODERN CO-OCCURRENCE OF THE SIMPLE  
AND COMPOUND PAST TENSES IN SPANISH AND FRENCH

by

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(Under the Direction of Margaret Quesada)

ABSTRACT

The present study analyzes simple (SP) and compound (CP) past tense co-occurrence in Spanish and French sports journalism to evaluate the saliency of the relevance of information presented in CP as a factor in CP grammaticalization in the Romance languages. The Latin structure *habere + past participle* became a past tense through a shift in how speakers emphasize their perception of a past situation's relevance to the present. This results in the contextual saliency of CP in co-occurrence with SP in Spanish and French sports journalism, which dimensionalizes information to create a psychological impact on the reader. This suggests the present relevance associated with CP, as demonstrated in functions such as hot news, as a principle factor in the morphological tendency of CP toward more perfective value, and as a possible influence toward further developments in the compound past in Spanish and French.

INDEX WORDS: saliency, relevance, hot news, simple past tense, compound past tense, variation, aoristic drift, Spanish, French, pragmatics, newspapers, sports

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## DEDICATION

Zechariah 4:6, Romans 9:16, Genesis 49:21.

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## CHAPTER 1

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SIMPLE AND COMPOUND PAST TENSES IN SPANISH AND FRENCH

#### 1 Introduction

The status of simple and compound past tenses has long been a widely debated topic in Romance linguistics. Sentences like (1) and (2) below both mark past situations, but the first sentence in each example views the action as being related to the present, while the second sentence views the action as a single point in the past, expressing perfective value (all examples, unless otherwise noted, are this author's):

(1) Lo han vendido. / Lo *vendieron*. They have sold it. / They sold it. [compound / simple] (Whitley 2002: 112)

(2) Il s'est lavé les mains. / Il *se lava* les mains. He (has) washed his hands. / He washed his hands. [compound / simple]

Historically, the relationship between the simple past (SP) and the compound past (CP) in the Romance languages is marked by two characteristics: 1) CP has evolved from an aspectual marker denoting a present state resulting from a past action, into a past tense marker with a perfective value like that of SP, and 2) the evolution of the function of CP allows it to encroach on the semantic domain of SP to varying degrees in the different Romance languages. The development of CP into a tense marker has been shown diachronically to originate in a shift in



how a speaker emphasizes a past event based on his or her sense of that situation's relevance to the present.

Traditional approaches have defined these tenses through discrete grammatical categories and functions. This approach, however, does not take into account the historically pragmatic motivation of a speaker when choosing CP over SP. The sense of relevance evidenced in the morphology of CP as a present tense communicating the result of a past situation makes the current status of CP as a past tense form more salient in discourse than its exclusively perfective counterpart, SP. Recent cross-linguistic research on the relationship between SP and CP and their place in the Romance languages has moved toward a pragmatic analysis in order to gain an understanding of the influence of speaker perspective on the development of these forms.

### **1.1 Problem to be studied**

CP evolved from a mere aspect marker of present relevance to a full past tense marker based on a reinterpretation of the Latin present tense structure *habere + past participle*. Therefore, neither a synchronic perspective nor a grammatical analysis fully accounts for how CP's wide range of functions evolved and why they tend to overlap with the functions of SP. Furthermore, there is a distinct lack in the literature of studies devoted to the co-occurrence of SP and CP. There is actually more research available on SP/CP co-occurrence in French than in Spanish. This is understandable given the unique status of SP in French, but is nonetheless surprising because of the rarity of actual SP/CP co-occurrence in French. Considering the relative regularity of SP/CP co-occurrence in all registers of Spanish discourse, the dearth of research on the subject was equally surprising.

## 1.2 Purpose of study

The present study was conceived with the goal of addressing the cause of CP grammaticalization and overlap with SP function, especially in co-occurrence with SP. The present study was also motivated by the lopsided situation of research on SP/CP co-occurrence in Spanish and French. This study uses the ample research on SP/CP co-occurrence in French as its foundation and as a point of comparison to the situation of SP/CP co-occurrence in Spanish.

The study first traces the pragmatically motivated trajectory of evolution in the morphology of CP from Latin to Modern Spanish and Modern French. After identifying the influence of the notion of relevancy on the modern form and meaning of CP, the study reviews the current literature on the state of CP in Modern Spanish and Modern French, especially in conjunction with SP use. The review of the literature will show a need for further research that takes into account the pragmatic nature of the function of CP. Since the modern grammatical unit of CP and its semantic status as a past tense structure with present relevance developed through a context-based reinterpretation of the relationship between past and present, current studies evaluating the status of CP should adopt a context-based analysis. Ultimately, the purpose of this study is to show that the co-occurrence of SP with CP in Spanish and French accentuates the saliency of information given in CP because of its associated meaning of relevance, and that it is this emphatic capacity of CP that provides the impetus for grammaticalization of the perfect both historically and in the modern Romance languages. This study also includes a discussion of the ‘hot news’ function of CP as one specific manifestation of CP’s tendency to encroach on SP’s perfective meaning based on the notion of relevance.

Since CP expresses relevance, it is well-suited to the genre of news writing. Sports articles in particular can yield a high number of perfective past tense situations, especially in the

recapitulation of a game. The present study builds on previous research of SP/CP co-occurrence in French news articles (Do-Hurinville 2006; Engel and Labeau 2005; Maingueneau 2000; Facques 2002; Waugh and Monville-Burston 1986; Engel 1990; MacNamara 2005) by including Spanish sports news articles as well as French, and by analyzing SP and CP tokens according to pragmatically emphasized categories based on the syntactic, stylistic, and thematic context.

### **1.2.1 Latin origins of CP and SP**

Latin originally had only one tense that expressed both past perfective and present perfect meaning. Thus, the form *cantavi* meant both ‘I sang’ and ‘I have sung.’ In the present perfect capacity, the simple form *cantavi* was eventually replaced by a compound form using the Latin verb *habere* with a past participle, such as *habeo cantatum*, ‘I have sung.’ The introduction and development of compound forms in Latin profoundly affected the tense system of the Romance languages. A new future tense morpheme evolved, and a conditional tense was added to the tense repertoire. In addition, forms like *habeo cantatum* entirely took over the domain of perfect meaning.

The structure *habere + past participle* began as a true expression of possession that included a direct object that was being possessed. The use of the past participle was adjectival in function, describing the state of the direct object as a result of a past action. For example:

(3) *Habeo cultellum comparatum*. I have the bought knife. (Penny 2002: 165)

Here, the past participle *comparatum* acts as an adjective describing the state of the direct object, *cultellum*, and indicating the means by which the owner of the knife obtained it. The sentence could also be understood in the following way:

(4) I have the knife [that is] bought.

Eventually, the implicit past action came to be so closely associated with the subject of the verb (Price 1971) that the possessive meaning eroded from a literal sense to a more abstract sense in sentences like:

(5) *Habeo illud auditum*. I have it heard. (Penny 2002: 165)

The direct object pronoun in (5) refers to something intangible. When a direct object of any kind (nominal or pronominal) was no longer obligatory, as in (6), the formation of CP as a verb tense was solidified (Penny 2002: 165):

(6) *Habeo intellectum*. I have understood. (Penny 2002: 165)

It is important in the discussion of SP/CP function to see that the shift in CP meaning originated from a shift in the speaker's perception of how a previous action related to his or her present situation. Therefore, CP as a modern tense in the Romance languages carries an embedded pragmatic impetus to move toward more perfective value based on a progressively tighter experiential link between the past and the present in the mind of the speaker.

### **1.2.2 The current state of the relationship between SP and CP function in Spanish and French**

The past tense use of CP has progressed in the modern Romance languages to the extent that it has taken over the perfective function of SP in French, Romanian, and the regional dialect of Northern Italy (Vincent, Harris, and Cremona 1982; Fleischman 1983; Squartini and Bertinetto 2000). Certain uses of CP in Spanish (particularly European Spanish) can also have perfective past tense qualities. Since SP and CP once competed for the same semantic space in Latin and early Romance, the current literature often seeks to catalogue and differentiate their functions. In general, the perfective value is considered the primary function of SP, while the notion of current relevancy belongs exclusively to CP. Aspectually, however, the action communicated by CP is perfective in nature, in that it views past situations as a single point rather than as a process in time.

While categorizing distinct functions is useful for pedagogical purposes, it fails to explain adequately the nuance of meaning that results when both forms appear in the same discourse context. In French, where SP has almost completely disappeared except in formal (usually written) discourse, this is possible almost uniquely in journalism (Waugh and Monville-Burston 1986: 848). In Spanish, however, SP/CP co-occurrence is quite regular in most discourse contexts, including journalistic ones. If, as is the case in French and to a smaller extent European Spanish, there is a degree of semantic overlap of perfective meaning in SP and CP, what, then, is the effect of their co-occurrence?

Examples (7) and (8) below present two instances of SP/CP co-occurrence taken from French and Spanish newspaper articles:

(7) Débarqué d'Independiente à l'été 2006, le jeune argentin de 19 ans, après une première saison encourageante, au cours de laquelle il *inscrivit* [SP] 6 buts en 38 rencontres, est pour beaucoup dans les bons résultats des Colchoneros... Plus jeune joueur à avoir disputé un match professionnel en première division argentine, avec Independiente face à San Lorenzo en 2003, à seulement 15 ans, dépassant ainsi la légende Diego Maradona, Agüero a inscrit [CP] 22 buts en 52 matches sous les couleurs de son club formateur. (Chauvet 2007)

The two sentences given in example (7) are both reporting the performance of the same soccer player, Sergio Agüero, at different points in his career. The tense order, however, is unexpected. The first sentence uses SP to give the number of goals scored by Agüero during the season that had just ended at the time of the article's writing. The second sentence, which highlights Agüero's talent at a younger age, reports in CP the number of goals he scored in all the seasons *prior* to the most recent season. The situation in (8) is equally perplexing:

(8) **Charlton Heston: Polémico y contradictorio, el actor, que ganó un Oscar por su papel en 'Ben Hur', ha fallecido [CP] a los 84 años**

El actor estadounidense Charlton Heston, que interpretó para la inmortalidad papeles históricos, como Moisés, Miguel Ángel y El Cid, *falleció* [SP] hoy en su residencia

de Beverley Hills, en Los Ángeles, a los 84 años, según confirmó su familia.  
(Agencias 2008)

Example (8) is the headline and first sentence of an article announcing the death of American actor Charlton Heston. Heston's death is stated twice using the same verb, but in the headline the CP form *ha fallecido* is used, while in the first sentence, *falleció* occurs in SP. This alternating of forms does not establish a chronological order nor does it distinguish one past situation as being more relevant to the present than another. This is clearly the case since both forms refer to same event.

The value that differentiates CP from SP absolutely is that of relevance. In these two cases, the co-occurrence of SP and CP in parallel contexts licenses the inference that information given in CP is more relevant to the reader's present than information given in SP. Since the distinction is not chronologically nor informationally motivated, the relevance of the reported events is purely psychological. This is the 'hot news' function of CP. In (7), the context of the CP *a inscrite* is highlighting Aguero's impressive achievements at a young age. The CP *ha fallecido* in (8) appears in the headline and conveys the first announcement of the news item that the reader will see. As a longtime internationally recognized public figure, Heston's death is literally "hot news." These examples make it clear that the writer is intentionally juxtaposing SP and CP in order to make an emotional impact on the reader.

When the present resulting state of CP carries only an emotional relevance to the hearer or reader, and not to an actual present resulting state (like other CP), this constitutes the essence of the 'hot news' function of CP. This function of psychological foregrounding potentiates the grammaticalization of CP, since it distills the prototypical use of CP to its bare minimum, the

function of bringing a past situation into the present. In meaning, it communicates a situation that is wholly perfective, as SP would. The only degree of separation between this kind of CP function and that of SP, therefore, is the salience of CP due to its relevance at speech time.

### **1.2.3 Salience of CP and the path of grammaticalization**

The function of CP in this role is uniquely pragmatic. The speaker identifies a past situation as containing some surprise value for the listener, and chooses to use CP in order to grammatically encode an element of shock (Schwenter 1994: 997). This is possible with CP because of its historical association linking a past event to the present situation, which has evolved from a possessive structure that marked the result of a past action, to a psychological inference of current relevance. As examples (7) and (8) showed, SP use in conjunction with CP can potentiate the effect of surprise or interest within the context of the discourse.

Schwenter (1994) sees the hot news function of CP as the last step in the path of grammaticalization toward replacing SP as the primary past perfective verb form. It is distinguished from other CP functions by marking “a past situation as salient due to its surprise value” (Schwenter 1994: 997), as demonstrated in the examples above. Hot news CP differs from SP only in its ability to bring an unexpected or unknown past event to the attention of the hearer/reader; semantically, a hot news CP communicates no other resulting state or relationship to the present than the fact that the recipient was previously unaware of the information. For example, in (7), the phrase “Aguero a inscrit 22 buts en 52 matches” does not imply a present state resulting from Aguero’s scoring record. The only result relevant to the reader is the potential psychological impact that the information might have on the reader.

The hot news function is therefore the most salient function of CP, and is closest to the perfective meaning of SP. As such, it manifests the pragmatic impulse embedded in the



morphology of CP to strengthen the link of past to present. This impulse originated with the speaker's judgment of the closeness of a past situation to his or her experience of objective reality at speech time. While this study does not evaluate the hot news function specifically, being able to observe the salience of CP in Spanish and French will demonstrate the tendency of CP to evolve toward more perfective value, suggesting that the notion of relevance (of which hot news is one manifestation) is a principle factor in the trajectory of CP morphology and a factor in tense selection in SP/CP co-occurrence in Modern Spanish and Modern French.

### **1.3 Methodology**

There is ample precedent in the French literature for the study of SP/CP co-occurrence in journalism, and specifically in sports news (Do-Hurinville 2006; Engel and Labeau 2005; Maingueneau 2000; Waugh and Monville-Burston 1986; Engel 1990; MacNamara 2005; Gardes-Tamine 1988). Since newspapers provide a discourse context where SP/CP co-occurrence is possible in both Spanish and French, the corpus for the present study was taken from French and Spanish online newspapers.

The body of data comprises articles gathered through live web feeds from the websites of the national Spanish and French newspapers *El País* (elpaís.com), *Le Monde* (lemonde.fr), and *Le Nouvel Observateur* (<http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com>). For the sake of uniformity, all three websites used were online versions of national newspapers with a moderately liberal affiliation. Articles were selected based on the presence of both SP and CP within the same article. Based on the French literature (Engel and Labeau 2005; Maingueneau 2000: 100), which suggested potentially higher rates of punctual past events in sports stories, only articles under the sports rubric were considered. Articles were gathered through web-based referencing software that

accessed and catalogued live web feeds from the sports sections of all three newspapers. Articles used in the corpus are dated between October 2007 and May 2008.

It should be noted that, although CP can be presented by a number of different structures in the Romance languages, this study is principally concerned with the forms that derive from the Latin *habere + past participle*. Thus, tokens taken from Spanish will be forms of *haber + past participle*. For French, I include tokens of *être + past participle* as well as *avoir + past participle* only when the semantic function of *être + past participle* is clearly that of a perfect form and not a present tense construction.

A survey of 80 articles in both languages (combined) yielded 34 articles that had SP/CP co-occurrence. Only five of these were French, while 29 were Spanish. A total of 188 SP and CP tokens were included in the database and analyzed according to four categories of pragmatically weighted contexts where information is clearly foregrounded or backgrounded: 1) Quotative/Non-quotative, 2) Title/Body, 3) Main/Subordinate Clause, and 4) Main Theme/Supplementary Detail. The Quotative/Non-Quotative category refers to tokens that introduce direct speech, i.e. speech contained in quotation marks. The category of Title/Body Distribution allowed tokens to be classified according to where they appeared in an article. There were also four sub-categories under Body: First Verb, First Paragraph, Body, and Final Paragraph. All tokens in the corpus were also classified according to whether they appeared in the main clause of a sentence, or in a subordinate clause. Finally, the category of Main Theme/Supplementary Information identified SP and CP tokens according to the nature of information they presented.

## 1.4 Structure of thesis

In order to discuss the chronological and aspectual values of CP and SP, I begin by defining the universal concept of time as it relates to how speakers observe and express events. In Chapter 2, I present Bull's (1971) explanation of time as both a universal and personal reference point for observing events. Bull's theory of systemic tense definition serves as a framework for the discussion of the concepts of *tense*, *discourse*, and *aspect*. This will establish the perspective of the speaker as the source of change in the functional values of CP and SP. Chapter 2 also includes a focused review of the morphology of SP and CP from Latin, showing that the Latin synthetic perfective past tense eventually became the modern SP forms in Spanish and French. The review of the history of CP traces the transition of the structure *habere + past participle* from aspectual to temporal marker and its eventual competition with the Latin synthetic perfective forms.

Chapter 3 discusses the pertinent literature defining SP and CP in Spanish and French grammar. First, it presents traditional grammatical definitions of SP and CP and their functions and contexts, showing the need to include a pragmatic perspective in addition to linguistic and grammatical classifications in describing verbal morphemes. The current research shows more consciousness of how a speaker's internal experience of a situation influences the selection of verb forms. This will lead to the discussion of the salience of CP, including the discourse function of hot news, and how the sense of relevance is manifested through SP/CP co-occurrence in Spanish and French journalism. In conjunction with the diachronic analysis of SP/CP function in Romance in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 additionally examines the four-stage model proposed by Harris (1982) and developed in Fleischman (1983) and Squartini and Bertinetto (2000). In particular, I use Squartini and Bertinetto's proposal of an "aoristic drift" (2000: 413) to re-

structure Harris' (1982) model as a linear diagram showing the distribution of the Romance languages in relation to the range of SP and CP function.

In Chapter 4, I describe in detail the corpus used in this study and the categories used to analyze the data collected. Chapter 5 reports the results of the study for both Spanish and French, and Chapter 6 presents a summary of the results of this study.

CHAPTER 2  
TIME, TENSE, DISCOURSE, ASPECT, AND THE MORPHOLOGY OF SP AND CP IN  
SPANISH AND FRENCH

**2 Introduction**

In this chapter I discuss time as a universal and personal concept, and how a person's concept of time acts as the basis for the observation and reporting of events. This discussion of time will serve as the point of departure for defining the terms *tense* and *aspect* and how they are understood and applied in this study. The goal of presenting time, tense, discourse, and aspect is to extend the current dialogue on these concepts to include a pragmatic solution to the relationship between SP and CP in the Romance languages.

There is a consistent degree of semantic overlap between SP and CP in both Spanish and French which historically stems from a contextually-derived psychological distinction of present relevance in CP. In this chapter, I present the need to study SP/CP co-occurrence from the angle of pragmatics, both synchronically in defining time and the tense systems of Modern Spanish and Modern French, and diachronically in the morphology of these languages. I incorporate the speaker's internalization of a situation as an essential part of the discourse context, which decides how an event is verbalized at speech time using the established grammatical forms available in that language. I observe the development of this phenomenon in the morphology of CP as contrasted with the historical use and meaning of the Latin morphemic ancestors to SP. In succeeding chapters, I link the subjectivity of event reporting, the notion of present relevance,

and the co-occurrence of CP and SP to the contextual salience of CP as observed in European Spanish and Standard French sports news.

## **2.1 How we think and talk about time and events**

### **2.1.1 Time**

Defining time is not as intuitive as it seems. While one can metrically measure time on clocks and calendars, that “time” actually is based on people’s observation of the rhythm of cosmic events. The observation of quotidian events also marks our perception of time. For instance, we intuit each of the following sentences as talking about time:

(9) I’m leaving before dinner.

(10) It’s almost noon.

Although *dinner* is not an observable cosmic event like *noon*, it is no less valid as a place-marker in time to both speaker and hearer. Conversely, while *noon* may refer to an observable cosmic event, statement (10) is no more a telling of time than is (9). Both merely report an event internal to the speaker, that of observing an external event (Bull 1971: 7).

In Bull’s (1971: 7) view, the observation of events, and not events themselves, serves as a universal axis of orientation for all people, and as the “prime” axis of orientation for all tense systems of languages that have them. Furthermore, only one event that is internal to a person can be considered a “public axis of orientation...which can actually be observed and used by another person” (Bull 1971: 7). That event is speech. The moment at which a speaker commits speech is the primary axis of orientation for all tense systems.

### 2.1.2 Tense

Time is measured by the observation of events. Bull (1971: 9) observes that “man can deal with events in only three fashions: we can perceive them, recall them, or anticipate them.” Correspondingly, there are only three logical ways in which to report a situation: as being “anterior to, simultaneous with, or posterior to the event used as an axis of orientation” (Bull 1971: 9). The axes of orientation are the points at which we observe events: a “present point” which is the moment of speech, a “recalled point” which is previous to the moment of speech, or an “anticipated point” that follows the moment of speech (Whitley 2002: 111). In addition to this, each axis of orientation is associated with three directional views, or vectors: *anterior*, *simultaneous*, and *posterior* (Whitley 2002: 110). Reporting events as we perceive, recall, and anticipate them in relation to ourselves and to other events is the function of language we refer to as *tense*.

This being the case, it would seem obvious that what informs a speaker’s tense choices is the actual chronology of external events. The truth, however, is more subtle. Speech orients us to external situations, but the deciding factor in how those events are reported is the speaker’s perception of them. Thus, “language presents...the structure of emotional reality and not objective fact” (Bull 1971: 8). The following two sentences use the same grammatical structure, the present progressive tense, but in fact both speaker and hearer will perceive the event reported in (11) as occurring in a different manner than that of (12):

(11) It’s raining.

(12) I’m drinking tea.

Both speaker and hearer understand (11) as referring to a meteorological condition occurring simultaneously with the moment of speech. In example (12), the event is intuitively interpreted as an action being completed in progressive stages, sip by sip. The objective fact is that it would be impossible to drink tea while simultaneously reporting it as an event; but the speaker's report (and our understanding of it) reflects his or her internal experience of an objective reality more than it reflects objective reality itself.

For the purposes of this study, the term *tense* should be considered as referring to the way in which a speaker relates the chronology of events, whether past, present or future, and not the verbal morphemes usually associated with those sequences. Gardes-Tamine (1988: 91) defines tense by first establishing the distinction between “les tiroirs verbaux, c'est-à-dire les morphèmes flexionnels du verbe” and “leur éventuelle valeur temporelle.” In other words, we should consider the verbal morphemes *thought* and *wanted* as distinct from the actual previous occurrence of the actions they represent. This is because a person's use of tense can be more abstract than distinguishing semantic properties or indicating chronology. Consider the following sentences:

(13) Here, I thought you might like to have one of these.

(14) I (just) wanted to tell you that I can't come to dinner. (Fleischman 1983: 185-186)

According to Fleischman (1983: 184), “The basic function of tense...is to *sequence events* in a discourse.” Here, however, the use of the past tense does not establish a sequence; rather, it indicates hedging on the part of the speaker to make the utterance sound more courteous and less threatening to the recipient, and to mitigate potential rejection. The reported events *thought* and



*wanted* are mental rather than physical, and the chronological distance between the moment of speech and the event is figurative and psychological rather than literal and temporal. Do-Hurinville (2006: 57) refers to this as “une certaine ‘proximité psychologique’ ” perceived by the speaker between the situation they are describing and the moment at which they are describing it. Thus, while statements (13) and (14) are grammatically in the “past” tense, when considered within the discourse, it is unlikely that the speaker intends, or that the hearer will infer, a reference to a past action.

### **2.1.3 Discourse**

While *discourse* can refer to any segment of speech longer than a sentence, it alludes to the context within which speech is uttered. As I have just shown in the preceding four examples, tense “is a matter of what speakers wish to say, how they choose to express it, and the point of view they select; it is not equatable with real-world time” (Whitley 2002: 113). Hence the “intellectual predisposition” (Lunn 1985: 51) of the speaker toward a situation can have as much effect on how it is articulated as the actual unfolding of events. Discourse, in this light, must therefore include the speaker’s mental landscape and intended meaning as part of the context in which speech (in this case, tense) is interpreted.

Although subjective, the intellectual predisposition of a speaker is quantifiable to a certain degree. Comrie (1976: 13) points out that we perceive situations as being states, events, or processes. He also goes further to put events and processes into one category, that of dynamic situations, where “events are dynamic situations viewed as a complete whole (perfectively), whereas processes are dynamic situations viewed in progress, from within (imperfectively)” (1976: 13). For instance, the French verb forms below can each be translated by the same verb

form in English, ‘He washed his hands,’ denoting a situation completed at some moment prior to the moment of speech.

(15) Il **se lavait** les mains. [imparfait/IMP]

(16) Il s’est lavé les mains. [passé composé/CP]

(17) Il *se lava* les mains. [passé simple/SP]

While the action in question (the washing of hands) and its timing (in the past) are the same, a different context of use is evoked by the aspectual differences of the verbal morpheme in each example. In (15), the event is viewed as a process from within. The speaker is conscious of the process of hand-washing, and focuses on the time during which that process is completed (‘He was washing his hands’). The use of the imperfect implies a condition existing in the past during which other events can co-occur; as in (18), for example:

(18) Il **se lavait** les mains quand les policiers ont sonné à la porte. He **was washing** his hands when the police *rang* the doorbell. [**imparfait/IMP**, *preterite/SP*]

Examples (16) and (17) view the event from without, as a whole, complete action. Example (16) can function either as a present perfect (‘He has washed his hands’) or, like (17) as a punctual

past event ('He washed his hands'). As a perfect form with perfective value, (16) might be taken as the precondition to a present state, such as:

(19) Il s'est (déjà) lavé les mains, donc il n'y a plus de preuves. He has (already) washed his hands, so the evidence *is* (now) gone. [passé composé/CP, *present*]

The purely perfective meaning, as in (17), most readily lends itself to sequences of events like the following:

(20) Il *se lava* les mains, *ouvrit* la porte, *vit* les policiers, et *fuit*. He *washed* his hands, *opened* the door, *saw* the police, and *ran*. [suite of *passé simple/SP*]

Additionally, the grammatical forms in (16) and (17) are also stylistically contrastive in French. The *passé composé* (CP) is considered inappropriate in many formal written contexts whereas the *passé simple* (SP) is used almost exclusively in formal literature. The chronology of the event is the same—past tense—but how it is reported can vary depending on the context in which the speaker views it.

#### 2.1.4 Aspect

The different ways of expressing the temporal complexity of the same situation (e.g., hand-washing) is known as *aspect*. In Comrie's terms, aspect is "the different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation" (1976: 3). Although examples (15) through (17) are all oriented to the same axis (i.e., share the same tense, past), a recalled moment prior to

the moment of speech, each evokes a distinct context, as demonstrated in examples (18) through (20). “Tense locates the time of a situation relative to the situation of the utterance,” and is thus deictic (Comrie 1976: 2). Aspect, being non-deictic, conveys a “logical” or perceived relationship between an event and the moment of speech and not a “strictly temporal, sequential” one (Fleischman 1983: 184), which is the purported function of tense. Tense, therefore, can provide the context for aspectual contrasts, as the above examples have shown.

Comrie (1976) and others traditionally distinguish two ways of viewing a dynamic situation. A perfective view reduces a situation to a “single object with clearly circumscribed limits” (Comrie 1976: 18). Perfectivity does not exclude, nor does it explicitly reference the internal complexity of a situation. Imperfectivity focuses on the internal complexity of a situation. Whether specified or not, we understand that to wash one’s hands involves a process that occupies a certain amount of time, i.e. turning faucet handles on and off, soaping, lathering, rinsing, and drying, etc. However, it is possible to view and report this as a single event (e.g., ‘He washed his hands’), or as a process (e.g., ‘He was washing his hands’), where the internal temporal complexity of the situation presented by the verbal structure is explicit rather than simply understood.

### **2.1.5 SP/CP co-occurrence**

Aspectual terms like *perfectivity*, *imperfectivity*, and *internal temporal complexity*, however, leave room for contextual ambiguity. In the following opening of a *Los Angeles Times*

article, the death of actor Charlton Heston is expressed twice using the same verb but in a different form each time:

(21) Charlton Heston, the Oscar-winning actor who achieved stardom playing larger-than-life figures including Moses, Michelangelo and Andrew Jackson and went on to become an unapologetic gun advocate and darling of conservative causes, has died [CP]. He was 84. Heston *died* [SP] Saturday at his Beverly Hills home, said family spokesman Bill Powers. (Welkos and King 2008)

Tense can function as the context of an aspectual contrast, but here both tense and aspect (according to Comrie's definition of perfectivity/imperfectivity) are essentially the same. Both the CP "has died" and the SP "died" are past tense forms with a perfective aspect. There is no internal temporal complexity to the event and the situation is viewed as a single point. The distinction lies with the use of CP in addition to SP. The writer could have easily reconfigured the opening paragraph as follows:

(22) Charlton Heston, the Oscar-winning actor who achieved stardom playing larger-than-life figures including Moses, Michelangelo and Andrew Jackson and went on to become an unapologetic gun advocate and darling of conservative causes, *died* [SP] Saturday at his Beverly Hills home, said family spokesman Bill Powers. He was 84.

In Bull's systemic definition using vector formulas, CP expresses retro-directional observation at a present point (PP-V), and SP expresses a stationary (non-directional)

observation at a recalled point (RP0V) (1971: 14). This is helpful in differentiating meaning in isolated sentences such as examples (23) and (24) using the action of washing hands:

(23) Il s'est lavé les mains. [CP]

(24) Il *se lava* les mains. [SP]

We saw earlier that each of these sentences implied a distinct discourse context. But in (21), both the CP form and the SP form are referencing the same action within the same discourse context, i.e. the same article. Although the internal temporal constituency of the situation is the same, how it is seen in relation to the speaker's present differs depending on the form, whether CP or SP.

For example, SP/CP co-occurrence in French journalism usually views the events being reported in two temporal dimensions. In the French article on Heston's death from *Le Nouvel Observateur*, the most recent events are described in CP, and the historical events are narrated in SP:

(25) L'acteur américain Charlton Heston, qui *incarna* [SP] au cinéma les plus grands rôles épiques du cinéma hollywoodien, de Moïse à Michel-Ange, est décédé [CP] samedi 5 avril à l'âge de 84 ans....Il est mort [CP] à son domicile de Beverly Hills avec son épouse Lydia à ses côtés....Dans les années 1960, l'acteur *milita* [SP] en faveur du mouvement des droits civiques et *fut* [SP] président du syndicat des acteurs pendant six mandats. Il *fit* [SP] campagne alors pour les candidats démocrates à la

présidentielle...En 2003, le président George Bush le *décora* [SP] de la médaille présidentielle de la liberté.... (nouvelobs.com 2008)

Even though SP and CP appear in the same discourse context, CP closely links the event of actor's death to the reader's present, while use of SP linguistically locates Heston's major accomplishments, most of which occurred more than two decades ago, in a historical context.

*El País's* Heston article, like the English article, views the same event from both SP and CP. Heston's passing is announced in CP in the subtitle (in bold-faced type), then reiterated in the first sentence in SP with the same verb, *fallecer*:

**(26) Charlton Heston: Polémico y contradictorio, el actor, que ganó un Oscar por su papel en 'Ben Hur', ha fallecido [CP] a los 84 años**

El actor estadounidense Charlton Heston, que interpretó para la inmortalidad papeles históricos, como Moisés, Miguel Ángel y El Cid, *falleció* [SP] hoy en su residencia de Beverley Hills, en Los Ángeles, a los 84 años, según confirmó su familia.

(Agencias 2008)

Tense variation in the French article corresponded to actual chronological distancing, but the observation of the same event can be expressed from two different mental distances in Spanish and English. If we compare Bull's vector expressions (1971: 23) for CP and SP to these cases, we must conclude that the only distinction between the present point from which a CP event is viewed, and the recalled point at which SP is viewed, is the speaker/writer's experience of that event. The tense variation in (21), *has died/died*, and in (26), *ha fallecido/falleció*, serves

to establish a dimension of relevancy rather than sequence. This is the discourse function of hot news. The first time Charlton Heston's death is announced in each of the news articles it is in CP, signaling a sense of proximity to the present in the mind of both writer and reader: the information is both new and important. In Spanish and English, the second reference to the event retreats to SP because it is no longer unknown to the reader. In French, the sense of relevancy has been so thoroughly associated with CP that SP now functions uniquely as the tense of historical and literary narrative, and the salience of CP in contrast to SP has been almost completely nullified.

Aspect is fundamentally a question of a speaker's internal experience of a situation. Both tense and aspect, as features of languages, are the expressions of a speaker's personal perception of time, and, as Bull (1971: 5) asserts, "Personal time derives...from man's attempt to measure duration by using his own emotions as the clock." In the next section I discuss the expression of personal time in the morphology of SP and CP from Latin to Modern Spanish and Modern French, with particular attention on the role of discourse function and psychological association in the development of CP.

## **2.2 Morphology of SP and CP from Latin to Modern Spanish and Modern French**

### **2.2.1 SP and CP in Classical and Spoken Latin**

It is important to remember that Latin originally included a single morpheme that fulfilled the functions of both perfective and perfect meaning (e.g., 'He sang, he has sung'). Table 2.1 shows Klausenburger's (2001: 99) model of the Latin tense system based on Bull's concept of axes of orientation and points of reference:



**Table 2.1 The Latin perfect**

			<i>cantaverit</i>	
			<b>p/a</b>	
Present Axis	<b><i>cantavit</i></b>	<i>cantat</i>		<i>cantabit</i>
	<b>a</b>	<b>s</b>		<b>p</b>
Past Axis	<i>cantaverit</i>	<i>cantabat</i>		( <i>none</i> )
	<b>a</b>	<b><i>cantavit</i></b>	( <i>none</i> )	<b>p</b>
		<b>s</b>	<b>p/a</b>	

**a**=anterior, **s**=simultaneous, **p/a**=posterior to anterior, **a**=posterior  
(Klausenburger 2001: 100)

As Table 2.1 shows, the same morpheme, represented in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural *cantavit*, both recalls an anterior event in the present and expresses a situation simultaneous with a recalled moment of speech in the past. In Modern Spanish and Modern French, the verbal morphemes that derive from these synthetic forms are the modern forms of *pretérito* in Spanish and the *passé simple* in French. The form that once incorporated both perfect and perfective meanings eventually dropped its association with the perfect ('He has sung') and, in its modern incarnation, retains only its perfective meaning ('He sang').

The reason for this is largely attributed to the rise of structures using *habere + past participle* beginning in Classical Latin and progressing in use from the 6<sup>th</sup> century onward

(Price 1971: 226; Bonfante and Bonfante 1999: 70). This had the effect of saturating Latin with compound forms, as Klausenburger (Klausenburger 2001: 100) shows in Table 2.2:

**Table 2.2 The Latin compound forms**

		<i>habere habet cantatum</i>	
		<b>p/a</b>	
Present Axis	<i>habet cantatum</i>	<i>cantat</i>	<i>cantare habet</i>
	<b>a</b>	<b>s</b>	<b>p</b>
Past Axis	<i>habebat cantatum</i>	<i>cantabat</i>	<i>cantare habebat</i>
	<b>a</b>	<i>cantavit</i>	<b>p</b>
		<b>s</b>	<i>habere habebat cantatum</i>
		<b>p/a</b>	

**a**=anterior, **s**=simultaneous, **p/a**=posterior to anterior, **a**=posterior

As Klausenburger (2001: 100) observes, the “striking...predominance” of the compound forms profoundly affected the trajectory of Latin morphology and the subsequent development of the Romance languages. The present p-slot and past p/a-slot were filled with new compound forms. Where Latin had one form (*cantavit*) for two meanings, perfect and perfective, the compound structure could express perfect meaning in isolation. Documented examples of this use of *habere + participle* are rare in Classical Latin, but Densusianu (1901: 180) points out that “cela ne peut nullement prouver qu’il était tout aussi rare dans le langage populaire.” In fact, the historical persistence and modern presence of CP in the Romance languages strongly implies a healthy use of compound structures spoken in Latin contemporaneously with the written Latin of the Classical era.

The Latin verb *habere*, meaning ‘to have, hold,’ originally carried the literal sense of possession and occurred in present tense constructions with transitive verbs only. The verb

*habere* would have a direct object and the participle would agree with the direct object in gender and number. Price (1971: 225) gives the following examples from Cicero and Livy:

(27) *In ea provincia pecunias magnas collocatas habent.* They have huge sums invested in that province. (Cicero)

(28) ...*venenum quod...praeparatum habebat.* ...the poison that he had (was holding, keeping) already prepared. (Livy)

Here, the past participles *collocatas* and *praeparatum* act as adjectives describing the state of the direct object and implying a prior action resulting in that state. Since both participles are adjectival in function, they agree with the gender and number of the noun they are modifying. Thus *praeparatum* has the same masculine singular accusative ending as *venenum*, and the feminine plural accusative *collocatas* agrees with *pecunias magnas*.

Example (27) should be understood as a present tense verb followed by the noun phrase “huge sums invested”; the subject of the verb, “they”, actually possesses the invested sum. Similarly, the poison in (28) should be understood as the direct object of *habebat*: the subject literally had, in the sense of physically holding and maintaining in his possession, the poison. However, the strictly possessive sense of the verb began to erode into a broader association with

pronominal direct objects whose referents were not physical objects. In (29) the direct object of *habere* is psychological:

(29) *Habeo illud auditum*. I have it heard. (Penny 2002: 165)

Once the sense of the possession of a physical direct object weakened, the verbal morpheme and participle became a tighter semantic unit. Price (1971: 225) notes, “Gradually, the idea that the subject of the verb had himself performed the action in question, an idea that at first was merely implicit in the construction, became dominant.” For instance, sentences like (27) and (28) were eventually understood in the following manner:

(30) They have invested huge sums in that province.

(31) ...the poison that he had prepared... (Price 1971: 225)

Penny (Penny 2002: 165-166) adds, “When we find examples of *habeo* + *participle* without an overt direct object (i.e. without anything expressly ‘possessed’)...we can conclude that *habeo* has been grammaticalized as a morpheme expressing perfect aspect and that the notion of possession has been lost.” Bonfante (1999: 71) writes that the form *habeo factum*, which was considered a semantic equal to the simple perfective form *feci*, had reached Spanish as early as the first Roman colonists, and thus was poised to enter the popular language as it evolved from

Latin. For French, Price gives the following example from the writing of 6<sup>th</sup> century bishop Gregory of Tours:

(32) *Promissum habeo...nihil sine eius consilio agere.* I have promised to do nothing without taking his advice. (Price 1971: 226)

The compound form had become a periphrastic unit expressing the past action of making a promise, resulting in a present state of being bound to the promise.

### 2.3.2 CP from Medieval to Modern Spanish and French

Most linguists agree that use of CP in this sense became consistent in the scholarly Latin of the 6<sup>th</sup> century (Price 1971: 226; Densusianu 1901: 180; Company Company 1983: 236). By then, however, the Roman Empire had collapsed and the spoken Latin of the common people, which was slowly evolving into the various Romance languages, was gradually supplanting the use of Classical Latin in all but the most formal political and religious contexts.

By the time Spanish and French (along with the rest of the Romance languages) had begun to take on their own distinct features, CP use with perfect meaning had established itself in all the Latin-based languages, excepting a few dialects in Southern Italy (Bonfante and Bonfante 1999: 70). Texts from the 12<sup>th</sup> century like *Poema del mio Çid* and the *Chanson de Roland* show that CP in both Medieval Spanish and French used forms of *habere* with transitive verbs and early forms of *ser* or *être* (from the Latin *essere*) with intransitive verbs (Klausenburger 2001: 164-165; Company Company 1983: 237-238).

Another important development in the medieval period was the fluctuation of agreement and non-agreement of participles with a direct object. This signals a definite departure from their Latin origins. As I have shown, use of *habere* + *participle* began as a possessive structure with a direct object, with the participle functioning as an adjective, agreeing in gender and number with the object. Even though the possessive sense eventually eroded to a mere resultative notion, a direct object, though no longer obligatory and not having the same possessive meaning, was still possible. Medieval Spanish maintained noticeable participle-object agreement until the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when *La Celestina* was published without a single instance of participle-object agreement (Company Company 1983: 247). Fluctuation in French lasted into the 17<sup>th</sup> century and certain classes of participle-object (with *avoir* when preceded by the object) and participle-subject (with *être* in CP) agreement have become part of Modern French.

The meaning of CP also continued to evolve (and, arguably, still does). Company (1983) documents two basic meanings of the CP structure in Medieval Spanish. The *pretérito abierto* specifically indicated a past action with continuing effect on the present. The *pretérito anterior al presente* presented an action begun and completed in the recent past. This is closer to the perfective meaning of SP. While both meanings surface throughout the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries in Spanish, Company (1983: 240) observes:

En español actual, sin embargo, esta forma parece haber sufrido una especialización temporal, según el área hispánica de que se trate: en el español peninsular es predominante el valor de pretérito anterior al presente, mientras que, en algunos dialectos del español americano, esta forma está restringida fundamentalmente a expresar el valor de pretérito abierto.

Even from Medieval Spanish, CP meaning approximated but did not supplant that of SP. In French, however, CP extended from a recent past limitation of 24 hours in 17<sup>th</sup> century grammar, to a recency of much broader scope in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Klausenburger 2001: 103; Deloffre and Hellegouarc'h 1983: 205-206). For instance, Voltaire could write:

(33) La crainte *fit* [SP] les dieux, l'audace a fait [CP] les rois. (Deloffre and Hellegouarc'h 1983: 206)

Obviously, Voltaire could not be referring to a coronation that took place the day before the time of writing. Instead, he is creating an “aspectual lens” (Lunn 1985: 49) through which the creation of monarchies is seen as more recent than the human quest to understand the forces that run the universe.

### **2.3.3 SP and CP in Modern Spanish and Modern French**

The culmination of all the changes in form and meaning of SP and CP is presented in Tables 2.3 and 2.4, which are patterned after Klausenburger's (2001) perspective-based concept of tense systems. Table 2.3 shows the pattern of Modern French, and Table 2.4 depicts the distribution of Modern Spanish tenses:

**Table 2.3 The tense system of Modern French**

			<i>aura chanté</i>	
			<b>p/a</b>	
Present Axis	<i>a chanté</i>	<i>chante</i>		<i>chantera</i>
	<b>a</b>	<b>s</b>		<b>p</b>
Past Axis	<i>avait chanté</i>	<i>chantait</i>		<i>chanterait</i>
	<b>a</b>	<i>a chanté</i> <i>(chanta)</i>		<b>p</b>
		<b>s</b>	<i>aurait chanté</i>	
			<b>p/a</b>	

**a**=anterior, **s**=simultaneous, **p/a**=posterior to anterior, **a**=posterior

**Table 2.4 The tense system of Modern Spanish**

			<i>habrá cantado</i>	
			<b>p/a</b>	
Present Axis	<i>ha cantado</i>	<i>canta</i>		<i>cantará</i>
	<b>a</b>	<b>s</b>		<b>p</b>
Past Axis	<i>había cantado</i>	<i>cantaba</i>		<i>cantaría</i>
	<b>a</b>	<i>cantó</i> <i>(ha cantado)</i>		<b>p</b>
		<b>s</b>	<i>habría cantado</i>	
			<b>p/a</b>	

**a**=anterior, **s**=simultaneous, **p/a**=posterior to anterior, **a**=posterior

As in the Latin model in Table 2.1 and 2.2, the above tables show the semantic overlap and competition between CP and SP in both Modern French and Modern Spanish. Both French and Spanish have a compound form in the a-slot on the present axis to express perfect meaning. However, the status of CP with respect to perfective meaning, represented by the s-slot on the past axis, differs. It is worth noting again that Latin originally had only one morpheme for both perfect and perfective meanings. It should not be surprising, then, given the trend of CP use since Classical Latin, that a single structure should once again fulfill both semantic roles. This is what has almost fully transpired in French. In Table 2.3, CP holds both the a-slot on the present



axis (perfect meaning) and functions as the main perfective form in the s-slot of the past axis. Price (1971: 227-228) even goes so far as to assert that the lack of opposing forms reflects a lack in opposing meaning: “As long as the opposition existed, the perfect was a ‘marked’ form expressing the relationship of the past event to the present; having taken over the functions of the preterite, it can no longer be considered as *specifically* fulfilling its own earlier function.”

The situation of SP/CP function is not as extreme in Spanish. In Spanish, SP is the more widely-used perfective morpheme, while CP use with perfective meaning is limited to mostly European Spanish and a few specific aspectual uses in American Spanish.

## 2.4 Conclusion

*Tense* locates an event in discourse. Some tense morphemes can also serve a pragmatic role to negotiate speech acts according to different discourse requirements. *Aspect* reveals the manner in which the action takes place. Both concepts are prescribed not by grammatical forms but by the speaker’s personal perception of the situation. Tense is of necessity directly associated with a moment of speech; aspect relates events to each other within the discourse (context) established by the tense.

The morphological relationship of SP and CP exemplifies the effect of pragmatics on tense and aspect. In Classical Latin and Spoken Latin, CP as a periphrastic structure linked a present tense verb with a past participle. The collision of two tenses (present + past) combined with the original meaning of possession from the verb *habere* created a new sense of past action “belonging” to the subject. This led to the eventual erosion of the physical concept of possession and the rise of the psychological association of a recent and currently relevant past event. Since

perfect meaning was previously expressed by the same morpheme used for the past perfective, CP provided a ready alternative to isolate the perfect meaning.

The persistence of possessive meaning attached to the verbs derived from *habere*, Spanish *haber* and French *avoir*, points to the origin of CP as a description of a past event, the effects of which speakers still feel to be relevant at the moment in which they describe it. This is why Fleischman (1983: 204) argues, and I agree, that the diachronic evolution of aspect markers to tense marker is “source-pragmatic rather than target-pragmatic.” By this she means that grammaticalization occurs as a result of the contextual reinterpretation of a linguistic element based on the perspective of the speaker. The evolution of CP from aspectual indicator to past tense marker is altogether based on the psychological linking of a past situation to the moment of the speaker’s present discourse. Since the synthetic morphemes that also expressed the perfective sense did not have the immediacy of physical relevance that the periphrasis *habere + direct object + past participle* originally had, it is easy to understand why expressing perfect situations became the exclusive function of CP rather than SP.

In the next chapter I discuss how the notion of psychological proximity is embedded in the morphology of the compound tenses of Modern Spanish and Modern French, and how this influences the use of these forms in daily discourse.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE TREATMENT OF SP/CP CO-OCCURRENCE IN TRADITIONAL GRAMMAR AND CURRENT RESEARCH

#### **3 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the definitions and comparisons of SP and CP functions in traditional Spanish and French grammars and in current research. This review of the literature on SP and CP aims to show the need for and development of a pragmatic approach to analyzing these tenses. As we have seen from the previous chapter, CP evolved from a mere aspect marker to a full tense marker in modern Romance based on a reinterpretation of the present tense structure *habere + participle*. Therefore, neither a synchronic perspective nor a grammatical analysis fully accounts for how CP's wide range of functions evolved and why they tend to overlap with the functions of SP in Romance languages. This chapter shows the need for such a pragmatic analysis evaluating the contextual salience of CP when juxtaposed with SP within the same discourse.

#### **3.1 Treatment of SP and CP in traditional Spanish and French grammar texts**

In this section I present and discuss traditional definitions and functions attributed to SP and CP, first in Spanish and then in French. This will establish the grammatical basis of the study and serve as an introduction to current avenues of research on the role of SP and CP in Modern Spanish and Modern French.

### 3.1.1 Spanish

#### 3.1.1.1 Definition of SP and CP

The Real Academia Española (RAE) makes a basic distinction between SP and CP: the “perfecto compuesto” (CP) denotes “una acción o un estado de cosas anteriores al momento en que se habla, vinculado con el presente” whereas the “perfecto simple” (SP) denotes the same, but “sin vinculación con el presente” (Real Academia Española 2001, 04/05/2008). This definition touches on the aspectual contrast between SP and CP. Both tenses are perfective in nature, denoting events in past time without internal temporal complexity, but what distinguishes one from the other is their relationship to the moment at which they are uttered.

#### 3.1.1.2 SP and CP in Spanish grammar

Early grammar discussions of CP focused on the role of *haber*. *Haber* had three main functions in the Spanish literature of the late Middle Ages, according to Alemany Bolufo (1902: 124-125): as a transitive verb indicating possession (left over from Latin), as an impersonal verb with the form *hay*, and as an auxiliary verb. *Haber*'s auxiliary function was two-fold: first, as the main auxiliary verb in the formation of the compound tense, and secondly as the auxiliary verb in periphrastic structures indicating obligation.

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Spanish grammar texts note the loss of the possessive sense of *haber* (Ramsey 1956: 400). Brunot (1899: 466) observes the same phenomenon in French. In order for CP to replace SP “il faut nécessairement qu’il perde quelque chose de sa valeur propre.” Clearly grammarians of both languages in this period are conscious of this auxiliary verb’s semantically mobile morphology, but do not directly address the linguistic causes or effects of its evolution (cf. Gili Gaya 1966: 93).

The loss of possessive meaning corresponded to the progress of CP toward tense-like temporal value. Ramsey (1956: 321) compares the tense functions of SP and CP briefly and concludes that SP refers to “a specified time wholly past” whereas an event that takes place in “a specified time connected with the present requires the perfect.” As a third criterion of tense choice, Ramsey (1956: 322) notes, “An unspecified time is, necessarily, not connected with either past or present, except in the mind of the speaker. If he has only the past in view, he uses the preterite tense; if the present be in his mind, he makes use of the perfect tense.”

If we say *mi padre **perdió** [SP] \$1.000 en esa especulación*, we consider the occurrence as entirely past and gone; but if we say *mi padre ha perdido [CP] \$1.000 en esta especulación*, we speak of a comparatively recent occurrence, the effects of which are still felt, thus connecting it with the present time. Note, also, the change of demonstrative adjectives. (Ramsey 1956: 322, footnote 1)

Without specifically discussing the concepts of aspect versus tense, Ramsey calls attention to the implicit psychological distancing of events associated with the contrastive use of SP compared with that of CP. The use of SP calls for a deictic form that encodes a relative distance from the position of the speaker. This distance could be temporal, indicating that the event and its effects have already ceased to be relevant at the present moment. It could also imply that the financial venture being referred to was from a previous conversation or from an earlier part of the same conversation. Once the speaker uses CP, however, the sense is that the speaker regards the speculation as a topic of the present discourse, and possibly closer in chronological terms as well.

Later grammar explanations in Spanish continued to separate “tense” from “temporal perspective,” with emphasis on the influence of the physical and mental position of the speaker (Alarcos Llorach 1994: 157). Alarcos Llorach (1994: 165) describes a speaker’s concept of CP in relation to speech time as being before the present, but conscious of the present:

(34) El día 2 *se iniciaron* las hostilidades. [SP]

(35) Este mes se han iniciado las hostilidades. [CP] (Alarcos Llorach 1994: 166)

In the first sentence *el día 2* marks a circumspect point in time previous to the moment of speech. How far in the past (34) occurs is inferable (the current month is implied), but the time referred to is remote from the moment of speech. In (35), the speaker delineates a temporal space that includes the moment of speech (*este mes*). These examples clarify the temporal range of SP and CP function. SP can be used with specific remote time references, whereas use of CP is explicitly linked to the present moment.

Alarcos Llorach (1994: 166) pinpoints the importance of considering speaker perspective as a factor in tense choice. Bull’s (1971: 7-9) theory of systemic meaning goes farther to define the whole concept of tense systems in language in terms of speaker perspective. Whitley (2002: 110) explains, “Bull first noted that the tense one chooses for portraying a situation depends on his/her orientation or perspective. The difference of perspective is crucial in Bull’s theory: linguistic tenses are not all located on the same line as points in real time must be.”

As shown in Table 2.4 of the previous chapter, this system places CP anterior to the moment of speech on the present axis and locates SP simultaneous to the moment of speech on the past axis. Perhaps this is why Whitley does not contrast SP and CP, but rather devotes the

dialogue of aspect and tense to SP versus the imperfect (IMP), which both occur in simultaneity to the moment of speech on the past axis. In fact, in the systemic arrangement, SP and IMP are the only two tenses that can co-occur in reference to the same speaker viewpoint (Whitley 2002: 113). However, Whitley offers no solution (either systemic or otherwise) to the phenomenon of SP/CP co-occurrence in some of the same contexts.

The development of linguistic thought in canonical Spanish grammar texts regarding tense as a morphological system and as a linguistic concept has moved increasingly toward a speaker-oriented, perspective-based interpretation. This shift is significant for the present study, since it recognizes the speaker's perception of events as the source of change in language.

### **3.1.2 French**

#### **3.1.2.1 Definition of SP and CP**

The definition of the Académie Française highlights the personal concept of the temporal/aspectual distinction between SP and CP in French: “Passé simple ... permet d'envisager dans sa totalité une action entièrement achevée au moment de l'énonciation”; the *passé composé*, however, “souligne le lien entre l'action et le moment de l'énonciation” (Académie Française 1992, 09/08/2008). While the official definitions of both Spanish and French explain the aspectual differences of SP and CP, the perspective of the French definition is fundamentally pragmatic, since it specifies the speaker's internalization of the action as the source of the verbal expression.

### 3.1.2.2 SP and CP in French grammar

It is not surprising, then, that early French grammars define the French tense system “par rapport au moment où l’on parle” (Brunot 1899: 463). The 24-hour rule of CP use was first formalized in 17<sup>th</sup> century grammar writings (Deloffre and Hellegouarc’h 1983: 205), clearly delineating a temporal space in which the present could be included. After 24 hours, an event was considered no longer relevant to the present, and was consequently expressed in SP (Klausenburger 2001: 103). Speakers gradually began extending the period of time referred to by CP in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Brunot (1899: 465) defines the relationship between SP and CP: “...le prétérit défini [SP] marque qu’une action est passée, mais qu’elle n’a aucun rapport avec le présent,” whereas “le prétérit indéfini [CP] marque le plus souvent...que le fait passé se rattache par ses résultats, ses conséquences, la période de temps où il a eu lieu, au moment où l’on parle”:

(3) Il *vint* me voir il y a un an. [SP] Il est venu me voir cette semaine. [CP] (Brunot 1899: 465)

According to these definitions, events further back in time will appear in SP, and events relatively closer to the moment of speech or that include the state of affairs at speech time, will appear in CP. These same rules still apply in Modern European Spanish.

Benveniste (1966: 237) attempts to expand Brunot’s description of the past tenses by proposing a system of complementary tense distribution that distinguishes between historical narrative (*histoire*) and discourse narrative (*discours*). Actually, the only grammatical feature that seems to differentiate these two types of text is the dominance of SP in historical narrative



rather than CP, and the use of CP rather than SP in discourse (spoken) narrative. All other tense forms can appear in both kinds of narrative. Pragmatically, discourse narrative is intuitively closer and more relevant than historical narrative to both speaker and hearer, but even certain types of literature that use a familiar style tend to use CP instead of SP (Deloffre and Hellegouarc'h 1983: 206). This is because the events of historical narratives are perceptually anchored to the moment of the event, and the psychology of the perfect is historically anchored to the moment of discourse (Benveniste 1966: 244).

Discourse narrative is defined as “toute énonciation supposant un locuteur et un auditeur, et chez le premier l'intention d'influencer l'autre en quelque manière” (Benveniste 1966: 242). This definition brings a key concept to the discussion. In Chapter 2 I established that speech should be interpreted as a representation of the speaker's internal experience of a situation and not as an axiomatic description of objective reality. To this Benveniste adds the idea of *intention to influence*. Language cannot be unbiased; once uttered, speech unavoidably discloses the speaker's unique, personal experience of reality. Discourse, involving at least two interlocutors, is fundamentally an exchange of personal realities, making unilateral (if not mutual) influence almost inevitable.

Historical narrative, on the other hand, is characterized by “la présentation des faits survenus à un certain moment du temps, sans aucune intervention du locuteur dans le récit” (Benveniste 1966: 239). Although at this stage in French grammar SP is no longer used in spoken French, Benveniste (1966: 243) adamantly asserts the vitality of its function in historical narrative.

Benveniste attempts to address the concept of tense based on whole texts. However, this leads to other difficulties stemming from the characteristics Benveniste ascribes to his two types

of narrative. Register—whether written or oral—and the use of SP are the only two points on which historical and discourse narrative differ decisively. CP can appear in both but is sparse in the historical while dominating discourse narrative. What happens, though, when the tense unique to historical narrative appears in a text where CP is the main past tense, as is sometimes the case in French journalistic writing? Benveniste (1966: 244) admits that this kind of tense-blending is possible, resulting in a third type of narrative “où le discours est rapporté en termes d’événement et transposé sur le plan historique; c’est ce qui est communément appelé ‘discours indirect.’” He does not, however, discuss the implications of such a blending, focusing instead on the complementary distribution of tense between narratives.

Maingueneau (2000) proposes a dual narrative schema much like Benveniste’s earlier concept, but one that purports to interpret verbal morphemes in relation to each other within a given context rather than prescribing the context within which the verb can then be interpreted. As a result, texts rich with tense-layering pose no problem for Maingueneau. In fact, Maingueneau (2000: 101) asserts, “Il est rare qu’un texte se développe sur un seul plan d’embrayage.” This shows the progress toward a pragmatic analysis of tense and aspect.

The basic unit of Maingueneau’s system is the utterance rather than the whole narrative. This allows the verb tense of each utterance to be interpreted contrastively with the surrounding tenses within the same narrative. Maingueneau (2000: 93, 94) proposes a *plan embrayé* for tenses linked to the moment of speech, of which CP is one, and a *plan non-embrayé* for tenses, such as SP, that portray events that are “coupé de la situation d’énonciation.” The resulting schema (“plans d’énonciation”) has two complementary layers in which the action being narrated can be *embedded* (“embrayé”) or *detached* (“non-embrayé”). In Maingueneau’s system SP is part of the “plan non-embrayé” and CP part of the “plan embrayé” (2000: 93, 94).

Maingueneau also posits a possible motivation and effect of tense-mixing within the same narrative context. In describing SP/CP co-occurrence in a sports article recounting a soccer game, Maingueneau (2000: 102) says, “Le journaliste prend à sa charge l’évaluation, au début et à la fin, puis s’efface quand il s’agit de raconter le match”. The sportswriter, according to Maingueneau (2000), is consciously shifting the focus of the narrative in order to create a dimensionalized portrait of the action in the mind of the reader.

As we will see in the following sections, tense is varied intentionally in contexts such as news articles to influence the reader’s perception of events. In the next two sections, we will see how this pragmatic approach to tense variation explains the development and current status of CP function as a perfective tense in Romance.

### **3.2 Current perspectives**

Thus far we have examined the traditional casting of SP and CP in the grammar of Spanish and French. In this section, I discuss briefly Harris’ (1982) proposal of a four-stage diachronic development of CP in the Romance languages. I also present a restructured model of Harris’ theory based on Squartini and Bertinetto’s concept of an “aoristic drift” (2000: 413). As we will see, Harris’ system is well attested synchronically over the range of all the Romance languages, but Squartini and Bertinetto (2000) have pointed out that not all four stages are found in the history of each Latin-based language, while others’ findings (Do-Hurinville 2006; Facques 2002; Waugh and Monville-Burston 1986) do not fully coincide with Harris’ view of current SP/CP roles in discourse in certain of the languages he classifies. Later in this section I present the current state of CP and SP in Spanish and French, focusing on the role of salience in SP/CP co-occurrence in each language.

### 3.2.1 Four stages of CP in Romance and the aoristic drift

This section will focus on the latter two stages of Harris' scheme which include Modern European Spanish and Modern Standard French, with preliminary remarks on Stages I and II and American Spanish. The goal is to evaluate the diachronic perspective Harris (1982) provides on SP/CP function and see the synchronic distribution of SP and CP in the modern Romance languages. This view will allow us to observe several items: first, the pattern of the grammaticalization of CP in stages II to IV that developed through the salience of CP based on the associated meaning of relevance; second, the close semantic relationship between SP and CP in European Spanish and French, leading to the possibility of parallel behavior in similar discourse environments; and third, the need for a pragmatically motivated analysis of these tenses in both languages.

Harris (1982) attempts to trace the development of CP and the consequent effects on the role of SP beginning with the competing structures *feci* and *habeo factum* in Spoken Latin (SL). His results demonstrate what he considers four successive stages of change in the periphrastic perfect structure. Table 3.1 below shows Fleischman's (1983: 195) summary of Harris' system contrasting the functions SP and CP in a four-stage progression across all the Romance languages.

**Table 3.1 Four-stage diachronic model of SP and CP function in the Romance languages**

Stage	SP	CP	Currently attested in:
I	All past functions	Only present states resulting from past situations	Sicilian, Calabrian
II	Most past situations (including recent past or a time period still in progress)	Beginnings of perfect function but limited to situation of a particular aspectual profile	Galician, Portuguese, American Spanish
III	Preterite	Perfect (i.e. past actions with P[resent] R[elevance])	Castilian Spanish, vars. of Oc, Oïl, Catalan
IV	Restricted to formal registers, eventually eliminated	All past situations (preterit and perfect functions)	Std. French, N. Italian, std. Romanian, Catalan

Note that the progressive expansion of CP *function* corresponds to a progressive limitation in SP *use*. Here the terms *function* and *use* must be distinguished. *Function* indicates the semantic or pragmatic role in the language, while *use* denotes the range of contexts in which those functions are utilized by speakers. SP has not lost its semantic function as a perfective past tense (beginning from SL, SP was no longer used in contexts requiring the perfect). Rather, as speakers begin to use CP in a wider range of contexts, it eventually supplants (but does not eliminate) SP functions in those contexts where CP is generalized.

Squartini and Bertinetto (2000: 413) use the term “aoristic drift” to describe the intricate *pas de deux* of SP and CP in the Romance languages. The following diagram, Table 3.2, is based on their concept of a gradual linear “drift” in the Romance languages toward progressively more aoristic functions of CP. The diagram also combines Squartini and Bertinetto’s proposal of a linear depiction of CP function in Romance (2000: 420), and Harris’ four-stage model. Stages I through IV are arranged in columns on a continuum, with the languages of the Romance grouped according to language family on the same tier.

**Table 3.2 Linear aoristic drift model of SP and CP function in the Romance languages**

→			
<b>Stage I</b> Calabrian, Sicilian	<b>Stage II</b> Portuguese, Galician American Spanish	<b>Stage III</b> Italian European Spanish, Catalan	<b>Stage IV</b> Northern Italian French Romanian

**Stage I:** SP used in all past functions; CP only used to describe present states resulting from past situations.

**Stage II:** SP still used for most past situations (including recent past or a time period still in progress); CP has beginnings of perfect function but limited to situations of a particular aspectual profile. American Spanish example: *Todavía no ha llegado.* (Squartini and Bertinetto 2000: 411)

**Stage III:** SP used only for preterite (perfective) meaning; CP used for perfect (past actions with present relevance). American Spanish example: *He ido al mercado esta mañana.* European Spanish example: *¡Ha llegado el rey! Hoy me he despertado a las cuatro de la madrugada.* (Squartini and Bertinetto 2000: 414)

**Stage IV:** SP is restricted to formal registers, eventually eliminated; CP used for all past situations (preterit and perfect functions). French example: *Il est mort l'année dernière. J'ai (déjà) fait mes devoirs.*

This linear re-structuring of Harris' original model visually clarifies the gradual increase of languages spoken in relation to the scope of CP function. Only a small number of localized Italian dialects are still in Stage I, using SP in all past contexts except those with a present result. In contrast, Stages II and III comprise three languages and various dialects, and Stage IV attests

two languages as well as the Northern Italian dialect. Conceptually, the linear model allows for a more flexible placement of languages and dialects in relation to Harris' definitions of SP and CP function in each stage and shows how languages can share characteristics of two stages. The best example is American Spanish. CP in American Spanish is used primarily to indicate iterative or durative past situations relating to the present, but certain ranges of present relevance (a Stage III characteristic) are possible. While American Spanish does not use specific time adverbials like European Spanish, a more general reference to "esta mañana" with CP is possible. Thus American Spanish is located on the aoristic scale between Stage II and Stage III.

Another distinct advantage of the model in Table 3.2 is being able to see related languages and dialects in the same tier, showing the distribution of CP function across a single language group. Italian best demonstrates this, since some of the Southern dialects maintain Stage I status, while their northern neighbors have reached Stage IV. While Italian as a whole ranges across all four stages, the aoristic linear scale makes obvious the completion of the grammaticalization process of CP in Standard French and Romanian. A more detailed study, using testable grammatical criteria, could complete a thorough survey of the state of SP and CP function in a wider range of regional variants of the Romance languages. It might also be possible to expand the same linear model to include specific stages of grammaticalization in each of the Romance languages, starting from Latin. Some such stages could include possessive meaning, presence of direct object, object-participle agreement, and interposition of other elements between the auxiliary verb and the participle.

Stage I represents the state of SP/CP function closest to SL, where SP is the preferred form for all past-time situations and the function of CP is limited to present states resulting from

past events. In the next two sections, I will outline more fully the changes that Modern Spanish (both American and European) and Modern Standard French have undergone.

### 3.2.2 Spanish

In Stage II, SP is characterized by use in most past situations, while CP can be used to indicate durative or iterative past actions “starting in the past and continuing up to the Speech Time” (Squartini and Bertinetto 2000: 408). In American Spanish CP is bound by aspectual and syntactic factors (such as negative structures), and, interestingly, “performs the aorist function...only in exclamations, and makes the action more vivid” (Westmoreland 1988: 381). Schwenter (1994) sees this type of CP characterization as a strategic step along the path of grammaticalization of CP. CP in languages of this stage is not interpreted as anterior to the present in the same way as SP. Westmoreland (1988: 381) explains that in Mexico sentences such as:

(36) Dijo que ha estado enfermo y que por eso no había venido.

are interpreted as referring to a state “ongoing in the present.” Furthermore, several studies note a synchronic discrepancy of register and region in SP/CP use. Whereas Squartini and Bertinetto (2000) and Fleischman (1983) associate CP with informal style in general, Squartini and Bertinetto (2000) acknowledge Westmoreland’s observation that SP seems to be prevalent in “popular rather than educated speech” in American Spanish (1988: 381).

In Stage III we arrive at the current state of European Spanish. SP in Stage III functions uniquely as a preterite while CP can now take on the role of purely perfective use (Vincent,



Harris, and Cremona 1982; Squartini and Bertinetto 2000). Thus, the association of the previous stage of a past action with continuing relevance at the moment of speech has broadened to a “subjective notion, expressing some kind of psychological feeling of the speaker for what is currently relevant” (Squartini and Bertinetto 2000: 413). Therefore, while examples like (37) and (38) would occur only in very specific contexts in American Spanish and are somewhat unusual, they are typical of European Spanish:

(37) ¿Has estado en Australia?

(38) ¡Ha llegado el rey! (Squartini and Bertinetto 2000: 414)

Example (37) is an example of an experiential CP, where the speaker is asking about a possible past situation that would have persisting experiential relevance in the present. Example (38) shows that the relevance of CP lends itself to use in salient contexts such as exclamatory utterances, as in the case of hot news CP. At this stage, CP in European Spanish can co-occur with specific time adverbials, which is not the case in languages and dialects in the preceding two stages.

### 3.2.3 French

It is universally recognized that CP has supplanted SP in nearly all past-time contexts in Standard French, making it (along with Northern Italian, and Romanian) a classic example of Stage IV on the aoristic drift scale. Stage IV is characterized by the neutralization of the semantic distinction between SP and CP, allowing CP to assume all functions of SP. SP is

consequently restricted to use only within formal registers “and may ultimately be lost entirely,” according to Harris (1982: 50).

However regularly SP crops up in written discourse beside canonical literature and historical texts, it is never the dominant past tense form. MacNamara (2005: 55) accords it “a marginal presence” in his analysis of tense and discourse topic in political newspaper articles.

A number of other studies and grammar texts disagree on the tenuous nature of SP’s resulting status in the French tense system. Hollerbach (1994), Taras (1983), and Maingueneau (2000) present SP as the dominant tense of historical and literary texts, and Maingueneau (2000: 98) observes that a higher rate of SP occurrence still persists in sports journalism. While CP has nearly replaced SP in all contexts, Facques (2002) maintains that the substitution is not a truly semantically equal one. Most contrastive past tense studies focus on the contrast between SP and IMP, and CP and IMP, rather than SP and CP. Facques (2002), however, argues that even when individually paired with another tense (IMP), SP and IMP form a more cohesive discursive unit than CP and IMP. This is because the SP/IMP pairing maintains the traditional sense of narrative sequence, while actions narrated in CP are viewed in isolation and served to indicate “un changement de plan énonciatif” (2002: 111, 114). This synchronic study fails, however, to address direct SP/CP co-occurrence, and does not explain *why* CP licenses a different temporal, aspectual, and narrative interpretation than SP used in similar contexts.

Waugh and Monville-Burston (1986) propose that SP is undergoing its own evolutionary process in response to the semantic encroachment of CP. Rather than disappearing, Waugh and Monville-Burston (1986: 874; cf. Facques 2002) assert that SP is acquiring new discourse functions in light of its diminishing role, contributing to “semantic density” and the cohesion of the discourse. This proposal of new discourse functions for SP provides the basis for other

studies which present the necessity of SP in order to create certain “aspectual, temporal, and stylistic” contrasts within a narrative, particularly in journalism, and particularly in sports writing (Do-Hurinville 2006; cf. Engel and Labeau 2005; Maingueneau 2000; Facques 2002; Engel 1990: 23).

### **3.3 Salience and ‘hot news’ in Spanish and French journalism**

Diachronically, CP communicates a present condition as a direct result of a past action. As we saw in the previous chapter and in the previous sections of this chapter, the speaker’s association of the present situation with a past action is progressively tighter when using CP. Schwenter (1994) sees the hot news function as the last step in this path of psychological linking of past and present through use of CP. According to Schwenter (1994: 997), it is distinguished from other perfect functions by marking “a past situation as salient due to its surprise value.”

The relevance of CP in this role is exclusively pragmatic. The speaker identifies a past situation as containing some surprise value for the listener, and chooses to use CP in order to grammatically encode surprise value of previously unknown information. This is possible with CP because of its historical association linking a past event to the present. The original possessive structure of CP linked the result of a past action to the present, and eventually that link evolved to become a psychological inference of current relevance. In McCawley’s early definition, hot news CP “describe immediate or recent past situations that speakers consider to be significant at speech time, and that they are presumably relating to their interlocutors for the first

time” (Schwenter 1994: 997). In fact, the surprise value of the information is the only real link between past and present. Schwenter (1994: 1002) expands on McCawley’s definition,

[The “hot news” function of CP] does not imply any relation between the past event and a present state, but, because of its recency and significance, simply marks the event as relevant at utterance time...Hot news cannot be broken down into the components “past situation” + “resulting present state”...Indeed the only element of meaning that seems to keep hot news from functioning in the same manner as a general perfective or past is the immediacy and significance of the situation being described by the perfect form or construction.

In Chapter 2, we noted this phenomenon in English with the example:

(39) Charlton Heston, the Oscar-winning actor who achieved stardom playing larger-than-life figures including Moses, Michelangelo and Andrew Jackson and went on to become an unapologetic gun advocate and darling of conservative causes, has died [CP]. (Welkos and King 2008)

The implicature of “Charlton Heston...has died” is that he died. There is no resulting condition or state of affairs implied; rather, what is implied is the fact of the reported event itself.

We also saw this in the Spanish article:

(40) Charlton Heston: Polémico y contradictorio, el actor, que ganó un Oscar por su papel en 'Ben Hur', ha fallecido [CP] a los 84 años. (Agencias 2008)

In both of the preceding examples, CP functions semantically as SP. This is strongly supported by the fact that the same event, using the same verb, is reiterated in SP immediately after it is announced in CP. The periphrastic past form is chosen based on the writer's desire to make salient something extra-linguistic, the element of surprise, in the context of the discourse.

While others have observed this function of CP in informal speech (Squartini and Bertinetto 2000, 403-439; Schwenter 1994; Westmoreland 1988), this peculiar salience of perfects makes them particularly suited to journalistic use. If we recall Benveniste's (1966: 242) definition of discourse narrative, "toute énonciation supposant un locuteur et un auditeur, et chez le premier l'intention d'influencer l'autre en quelque manière," the correlation of the salience of CP (in particular, hot news CP) to journalism, and specifically to sports writing, should be evident. Journalism is a communicative medium predicated on the existence of an audience (the interlocutor), and the reporting style is deliberately designed to arrest the attention and influence the emotion of the reader by producing a reaction to or interest in the story being reported. The goal of sports writing is to re-create the action and excitement of a past event for the reader. These common characteristics of news writing allow us to isolate the effect of SP/CP co-occurrence as a discourse technique and to evaluate its affect on the grammaticalization of CP.

Take, for example, the first sentence of a Spanish sports article reporting the results of a basketball game:

(41) Kobe Bryant ha dado [CP] esta madrugada (hora española) una nueva exhibición de juego al sumar 52 puntos que han aupado [CP] a su equipo a la victoria ante unos rocosos Dallas Mavericks. ("Bryant," Efe 2008b)

No resulting present state is implied by the use of CP, other than that directly communicated by the verbs *ha dado* and *ha aupado*. The sentence is also pragmatically marked: the expressions *esta madrugada*, *nueva exhibición de juego*, *sumar 52 puntos*, and *a la victoria* invoke a sensational element. The writer is deliberately emphasizing the excitement and recency of the game and its outcome in order to make a psychological impression on the reader.

As in examples (39) and (40), this story opens with two CP in the first sentence and then switches to SP, as example (42) shows later on. A major part of this study will be to quantify SP/CP mixing in sports news and qualify the pragmatic effect of such tense mixing. In Chapter 1 I pointed out the inadequacy of chronological quantification of relevance of CP in speech such as is found in (39) and (40). According to traditional grammar based on the morphology of CP, the periphrasis *has died* and *ha fallecido* should either 1) be the event in the story that is most recent to the time of writing, or 2) encode an implicature to a resulting present state. In fact, in both examples the co-occurrence of CP and SP makes no temporal distinction at all: both are reporting the same event using the same verb. What is the purpose of this morphemic and chronological (or lack thereof) juxtaposition?

The current literature and the present study consider SP/CP tense mixing as a discourse device that heightens the salience of CP in journalistic contexts. Consider again example (41) quoted below in (42) within its discourse context, including title, second sentence, and final sentence:

(42) **Bryant vuelve a volar**

Kobe Bryant ha dado [CP] esta madrugada (hora española) una nueva exhibición de juego al sumar 52 puntos que han aupado [CP] a su equipo a la victoria ante unos rocosos Dallas Mavericks. Pau Gasol *colaboró* [SP] en el triunfo del conjunto californiano con 17 puntos y 14 rebotes...

Bryant *cerró* [SP] el asunto.... ("Bryant," Efe 2008b)

The summary of the game, details on key players, and the conclusion, are all given in SP. The only instance of CP in this article is found in the first sentence. The fact that the main news item, that is, Kobe Bryant's stellar performance in the Los Angeles Lakers' win over the Dallas Mavericks, is reiterated in the final sentence in SP demonstrates the intention to highlight the excitement of the win and its protagonists as reported in the opening sentence. Indeed, Engel and Labeau (2005: 204) compare sports news writing to the writing of an epic, both of which, in their view, comprehend "des héros, de la sensation, du risqué, et finalement, une résolution".

In the face of CP, SP takes on a new role to provide contrastive depth within a narrative. As a perfective tense, events narrated in SP are foregrounded within the frame of discourse from the rest of the narrative and denote bounded actions completed at the moment of writing. Aspectually, SP is detached from the moment of writing and thus can also serve to defocalize

events contrasted with those narrated in CP. The reverse is true of CP, the use of which effects a psychological impact on the reader when it co-occurs with SP (Do-Hurinville 2006: 61). It is not surprising that SP, which serves to detach figures in discourse (Waugh and Monville-Burston 1986), is slowly succumbing to the more colorful emphasis associated with CP.

This does not always have to happen at the beginning of an article. The juxtaposition presented below appears in the third paragraph of the story, the main theme of which is the promising performance of a rising soccer star.

(43) Débarqué d'Independiente à l'été 2006, le jeune argentin de 19 ans, après une première saison encourageante, au cours de laquelle il *inscrivit* [SP] 6 buts en 38 rencontres, est pour beaucoup dans les bons résultats des Colchoneros... Plus jeune joueur à avoir disputé un match professionnel en première division argentine, avec Independiente face à San Lorenzo en 2003, à seulement 15 ans, dépassant ainsi la légende Diego Maradona, Agüero a inscrit [CP] 22 buts en 52 matches sous les couleurs de son club formateur. (Chauvet 2007)

The informational structure of the two sentences is parallel in that both are summarizing Agüero's past record during a specified time period. However, the SP appears in a subordinate clause, and is reporting the results of the season most recent to the time of writing; the CP appears in a main clause and relates Agüero's accomplishments during the three seasons *prior* to the most recent one. Therefore, the CP is not linking a present situation to a past event. Not only is the CP in the most salient position in the sentence, but also all the clauses preceding the main clause contain information of interest to the reader: "plus jeune joueur... à 15 ans,"



“dépassant la légende.” The context makes it clear that the tense form choice is being motivated by the writer’s estimation of the newsworthiness of the information being conveyed.

This has long been noted and studied in French, where use of SP in journalism, especially when contrasted with CP, is more remarkable given its limited usage in daily discourse. Both tenses are admissible in all registers of the Spanish language, however, so journalism as a particular genre has not borne much specific study. The distribution of SP and CP in news media is not remarkably different from that of other registers. Newspapers are one of the contexts in which CP and SP can regularly co-occur in both Spanish and French. Waugh and Monville-Burston (1986: 848) justify the study of SP/CP co-occurrence in the French press by pointing out that “nowhere is this type of usage more evident—and nowhere is it more accessible to the general public—than in newspaper writing.” Though the occurrence of SP is relatively rare (Waugh and Monville-Burston 1986: 848; MacNamara 2005: 55), according to Maingueneau (2000: 98) it still appears regularly in sports writing. Engel and Labeau (2005) conclude that sports narrative as a genre seems to be shifting away from SP use. As my study confirms, use of SP in national French papers occurs so rarely that a definitive analysis of CP salience could not be made.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter I have presented traditional diachronic and synchronic perspectives on the functions of SP and CP in Spanish and French grammar. These perspectives, while detailed in their description, inadequately account for the versatility of CP in particular. In addition, earlier grammarians do not thoroughly compare SP and CP, nor do they analyze them in the same type of discourse. The current research that has been done, including the present study, shows a more

pragmatic approach that is based on speaker perspective and more clearly defines the roles of tense and aspect in the verbal systems of Spanish and French. Harris' (1982) diachronic analysis provides a particularly useful framework within which to consider the role that tense and aspect play in the development of CP as a past-tense marker, rather than a mere aspectual nuance to a present situation. However, it is not until we recognize the salience of CP based on its ability to bring the past to the present as a possible cause of grammaticalization that we can explain the pragmatic motivation behind CP's development toward a perfective function in stage III and SP's subsequent weakening in stage IV.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGY

#### **4 Introduction**

The goal of this study is to identify and compare the salience of CP in Modern European Spanish and Modern Standard French, and to demonstrate how the pragmatic notion of relevancy informs the use of CP in Spanish and French journalism. The hypothesis is that CP found in co-occurrence with SP in the same news articles will have a higher tendency to appear in the most salient locations within an article, to introduce direct speech, and to convey the main information of the story rather than secondary detail. Higher rates of CP in these categories will indicate that the writer associates a higher level of informativity (i.e., relevancy) with the situation being conveyed, while relatively lower rates of SP will prove an association of experiential distance between the writer (and thus also reader) and the information being conveyed. This is based on the findings of Do-Hurinville (2006) and others mentioned in the previous chapter who have analyzed the co-occurrence of SP and CP in the French press.

#### **4.1 Methodology**

##### **4.1.1 Corpus**

The body of data for this study was gathered from live web feeds from the websites of three national newspapers, one Spanish newspaper and two French. The Spanish paper was *El País* (elpaís.com), and the two French papers were *Le Monde* (lemonde.fr), and *Le Nouvel Observateur* (<http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com>). Only articles under the sports rubric were

considered, based on the French literature (Engel and Labeau 2005; Maingueneau 2000: 100), which suggested potentially higher rates of punctual past events in sports stories. Articles were gathered through web-based referencing software that downloaded live web feeds from the sports sections of all three newspapers, and were catalogued according to whether or not there was SP/CP co-occurrence. If an article contained both SP and CP it was saved for further analysis. If an article contained no variation (either SP or CP but not both) it was saved separately for the purposes of comparison. Altogether 42 French articles and 38 Spanish articles were examined for variation, totaling 80 articles. Articles used in the corpus are dated between October 2007 and May 2008.

The articles with variation used in this study were classed in three groups according to dominant past tense. This was done in order to account for possible stylistic differences of writer and newspaper. If the tendency of the writer or the style of the newspaper favored a particular past tense form, only occurrences of the other morpheme would be considered significant. Therefore, in articles where mainly SP is used (hereafter referred to as “majority-SP” articles), only CP examples were counted as part of the corpus; in articles where the predominant past tense was CP (hereafter referred to as “majority-CP” articles), only SP examples were counted. It should be noted that when “majority-SP articles” are referred to, it is CP that is being examined, and vice versa for “majority-CP articles.” Additionally, all French articles used in this study were necessarily majority-CP, since CP is the dominant perfective past tense in all but the most formal historical and literary registers of French.

The third group consists of articles where use of SP and CP is approximately equal (hereafter referred to as “even” articles). Since the rate of occurrence between SP and CP differed by no more than 3:4 in even articles, it must be assumed that selection and placement of

each instance is deliberate and significant. All occurrences of both SP and CP in these articles were counted as part of the corpus.

#### **4.1.2 Results**

Variation was much more prevalent in Spanish than in French. Five of the 42 French articles gathered from two newspapers contained variation, while 29 of 38 Spanish articles from *El País* contained variation. Of the nine Spanish articles with no variation, four were narrated in CP and five in SP. Altogether, a total of 34 articles in both languages had SP/CP variation. Furthermore, the five French articles presented a total of only six instances of SP occurrence, four of which were *fut*, the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular form of *être*. The other two forms were *faillit* and *entendit*. Since only six tokens of SP were found, the remaining 25 occurrences of CP in those articles were included as part of the French corpus for the purposes of demonstrating the contrastive functions of CP. The 29 Spanish articles containing variation yielded 157 tokens of SP and CP, making a total of 188 tokens in the corpus.

The dearth of significant variation between SP and CP in French was surprising given the amount of research encountered on the subject in the course of writing this study. Even though recent studies by Do-Hurinville and others (2006; Engel and Labeau 2005; Engel 1990) seem to find sufficient evidence of developments in contemporary use of SP in contact with CP in French, my findings support those of MacNamara (2005) that this kind of variation is diminishing to the point of non-existence.

The original objective of gathering data from both Spanish and French newspapers was to be able to compare trends of variation in the two languages. However, the results obtained in French were not sufficient to bear analysis comparable to the results in Spanish. In the next

chapter I first present the French results, followed by a longer discussion of the Spanish portion of the corpus. The conclusions presented in the final chapter of this study are based mainly on the results from Spanish, with consideration of the French examples.

In the next section I explain the contextual properties used in this study to analyze SP and CP. These categories isolate the psychological relevance of CP by identifying contexts where information in the article is grammatically or stylistically salient.

### **4.1.3 Categories**

In principle, the salience of CP indicates the psychological proximity of a situation felt by the speaker and intended for the recipient in the context of the discourse. The verbs analyzed in this study were categorized according to four contextual properties: 1) Quotative/Non-quotative, 2) Title/Body Distribution, 3) Main/Subordinate Clause, and 4) Main Theme/Supplementary Detail. These categories constitute discursive contexts where information is clearly foregrounded or backgrounded.

As seen above, each of the categories tested in this study has two options. The primary options—Quotative, Title, Main Clause, and Main Theme—are the most salient to both writer and reader; however, both options of each category were counted and compared individually. The secondary option of Body Distribution was further divided into sub-categories corresponding to possible significant locations within an article: First Verb, First Paragraph, Body, and Final Paragraph. My hypothesis is that CP will have a higher rate overall in the primary options.

*Quotative/Non-quotative*

The Quotative/Non-Quotative category refers to tokens that introduce direct speech, as in the following:

- (44) “Mis sentidos volvieron cuando llegué al hospital”, ha recordado [CP] el jugador.(Ep 2008)

Not all instances of words in quotation marks constitute direct speech, for example:

- (45) ...la Ligue de la jeunesse communiste a été chargée de mobiliser des milliers de spectateurs chinois sur place dans le cadre d'une « activité patriotique ». (Pedroletti 2008)

In the case above, no quotative verb is used to introduce the expression in quotation marks, and the words in quotation marks are not credited to an individual speaker. Some instances of direct speech are indirectly reported, but still count as quoted speech, as below:

- (46) Schumacher no ha sufrido ninguna herida y ha decidido participar en las pruebas porque “subirse de vez en cuando a un bólido es divertido”, *explicó* [SP] el propio piloto en su página de internet. ("Schumacher," Efe 2008e)

This category was included because it was noted in the course of gathering data for this study that a number of CP consistently introduced direct speech. This raised the curiosity to

determine whether the function of introducing quoted speech was dominated by a particular tense, CP or SP. Since quotes in a news article are usually commentary on the current state of the situation being reported, they are therefore psychologically “closer” (i.e., more relevant) to the reader. A tendency to use CP over SP for this function within the same discourse context would be an indicator of CP’s salience.

It should also be noted that any past tense verb forms that appeared within a quote were not counted as a part of this study. Anything reported in quotation marks must be considered verbatim from the interviewed person, and the language therein must be attributed to that person’s personal dialect rather than a part of the discursive frame of the article.

#### *Title/Body Distribution*

Information in news stories is presented according to level of informativity: the most important information in a news article always appears in the title, and usually also the first sentence of the article. Information found in the rest of the first paragraph and main body of the article usually contains details relating to the main news item. The final paragraph can also present the result or summary of the situation being reported, making the end of the article another potentially salient reporting environment. Hence, a preponderance of one past tense form over the other in particular locations within an article can imply that the speaker associates a certain degree of relevancy with that form.



All 188 tokens were classified according to where they appeared in the article:

Title/Subtitle, First Verb, First Paragraph, Body, and Final Paragraph. Only one token occurred in part of a title:

(47) El Barça ya no tiene vuelta atrás: Laporta asume que ha llegado [CP] al fin de un ciclo y que debe renovar el banquillo y la plantilla (Martín 2008)

Verbs that appeared as the first active verb (i.e. conjugated, not infinitives, participles, etc.) in the opening sentence were counted under the sub-category of First Verb. Both tenses occurred in this position, for example:

(48) La victoria del Liverpool ayer en Anfield ha desatado [CP] auténtica euforia en la prensa anglosajona. ("La prensa inglesa," Efe 2008d)

(49) Rafael Nadal, que hoy *debutó* [SP] en el Abierto del Barcelona con una victoria ante el italiano Potito Starace (6-4 y 6-2), arremetió después del partido contra los dirigentes de la ATP.... ("Nadal," Efe 2008c)

As example (49) shows, the first verb of the story is not necessarily in the main part of the opening sentence. Although the main thought of the opening sentence pertains to the verb *arremetió*, *debutó* is counted as the first verb since the writer chose to insert a subordinate clause before announcing the main news item. This is further explained under the category Main Theme/Supplementary Detail.

The sub-category of First Paragraph does not include any tokens that are counted as First Verbs. Thus, there is no overlap between these two sub-categories, and results of the two can be combined for further comparison. Any verb appearing in any part of an article excluding the first and final paragraphs was classified under the sub-category Body, and any verb appearing in the final paragraph was classified as such.

### *Main/Subordinate Clause*

This category was a main feature of Do-Hurinville's (2006) French study on *passé simple/passé composé* variation in French journalism. With examples like (50) below, Do-Hurinville pointed out that Benveniste's (1966) classic textual distinction of *histoire* versus *discours* could not explain SP/CP variation within the same sentence.

- (50) On a reconnu [CP] la touche du FC Barcelone, qui ne doit pas grand-chose à la Catalogne dont on *entendit* [SP] chanter l'hymne mercredi, ni même à l'Espagne.  
(Bégaudeau 2008)

According to Do-Hurinville's study, contrasting syntactic order is linked to contrasting levels of informativity: SP used in subordinate clauses presented secondary, yet necessary, details, while CP in main clauses were used to summarize the current situation (Do-Hurinville 2006: 70). The present study separates Theme and Clause as two distinct categories in order to identify more clearly the salience of CP in variation with SP. The Main Clause is considered the primary option of this category, since information in the main clause is syntactically foregrounded and psychologically closer to the reader.

### *Main Theme/Supplementary Detail*

The category of Main Theme/Supplementary Detail provides a precise way of quantifying the relevance associated with CP. News writing lends itself particularly well to isolating the emotional value of information, since the whole concept of news media is to communicate information that is previously unknown, and to do so in such a way that captures the attention of an audience. The most newsworthy information is always presented in the title and opening paragraph, and usually as soon as the first sentence. To determine whether a past tense token conveyed the main theme or a supplementary detail, each past tense form was compared to the news item in the title. Data that stated or reiterated the main news item without adding information were counted as Main Theme examples. Any tokens that provided information relating to the main theme, but not presenting the topic itself, were classified under Supplementary Detail. Example (47) repeated below is an instance of a Main Theme CP, because (as part of the article title) it announces the main news item:

(47) El Barça ya no tiene vuelta atrás: Laporta asume que ha llegado [CP] al fin de un ciclo y que debe renovar el banquillo y la plantilla (Martín 2008)

The Quotative SP in example (51) is categorized as Main Theme based on the title of the story, “De Biasi deja al Levante y se va al Torino.” The quote simply repeats the main news item from the title in the form of direct speech.

(51) “Siento abandonar el Levante pero Turín es una etapa demasiado importante en mi vida profesional”, *dijo* [SP] De Biasi. (“De Biasi,” Efe 2008a)

Revisiting example (49), the main theme of this article is identified in the title, given in (52):

(52) Nadal: “La ATP está destruyendo el circuito europeo”: El mallorquín se queja de la dureza del calendario ("Nadal," Efe 2008c)

Example (49), again, is the first sentence of the article:

(49) Rafael Nadal, que hoy *debutó* [SP] en el Abierto del Barcelona con una victoria ante el italiano Potito Starace (6-4 y 6-2), *arremetió* [SP] después del partido contra los dirigentes de la ATP... ("Nadal," Efe 2008c)

Although the SP *debutó* is counted as the first verb, the main theme is communicated by the second: “Rafael Nadal...*arremetió* después del partido contra los dirigentes de la ATP...” (“Nadal,” Efe 2008c). However, notice that without the preceding subordinate clause, “que hoy *debutó* en el Abierto de Barcelona,” the noun phrase “después del partido” now no longer has a logical referent. As Do-Hurinville (2006, 54-73: 64) observes, SP details in subordinate clauses, although “moins importantes,” are nonetheless “non-négligeables.” While the SP relates merely a supplementary detail, it supplies the reader with information necessary to be able to appreciate the main news item.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS

#### **5 Introduction**

In this chapter I present the results of my study on SP/CP variation in Spanish and French sports journalism. I first present the results from the French articles, followed by a longer discussion of the results from the Spanish articles, which constitutes the main portion of this study. Since the French articles presenting variation are all majority-CP, occurrences of SP in the articles are presented by category of analysis. SP and CP tokens in Spanish were taken from all three article types. For the Spanish portion of the corpus, I first present general statistics in each category of analysis; then, I give a comparison of the results for SP and CP behavior in each category according to article type.

#### **5.1 French**

In this section I present the results from the French portion of the corpus, followed by a brief discussion of the implications of these results to this study and the current dialogue on the path of grammaticalization of CP in Romance.

### 5.1.1 Results for French

Table 5.1 compares the percentage of Quotative versus Non-Quotative SP and CP tokens from the French corpus. These are SP and CP that are used to introduce direct speech, i.e. a quotation from a person interviewed in the article.

**Table 5.1 Quotative/Non-Quotative**

Tense	Quotative	Non-Quotative
SP	0/6 (0%)	6/6 (100%)
CP	0/25 (0%)	25/25 (100%)

None of the French tokens, either SP or CP, were used to introduce direct speech. The French results for this category gave a 100% rate of Non-Quotative function. This is perhaps due to the fact that very few direct quotations were present in the pool of articles analyzed.

Table 5.2 shows the rate of SP/CP occurrence in main and subordinate clauses.

**Table 5.2 Main/Subordinate Clause**

Tense	Main Clause	Subordinate Clause
SP	5/6 (83%)	1/6 (17%)
CP	21/25 (84%)	4/25 (16%)

Both SP and CP occur at essentially the same rate in both main clauses and subordinate clauses. SP appears in a main clause 83% of the time and 17% of the time in a subordinate clause. CP shows comparable occurrence rates of 84% in main clauses and 16% in subordinate

clauses. Both SP and CP therefore seem to share the same degree of syntactic salience in French journalism.

The following two categories yielded more informative results. Table 5.3 gives the comparison of French tokens presenting the main theme of the article versus tokens presenting supplementary information.

**Table 5.3 Main Theme/Supplementary Information**

Tense	Main Theme	Supplementary Information
SP	0/6 (0%)	6/6 (100%)
CP	5/25 (20%)	20/25 (80%)

While no examples of SP presented the main theme of any of the French articles, 20% of CP did. This outcome is not surprising, since SP in French mainly appears in formal historical or literary writing and not in Modern Spoken French, whereas CP is the perfective past tense used in all other discourse contexts, written or spoken. Information communicated using SP seems therefore to be perceived at a relative distance from the reader. Such a perception, if true, would make the use of SP to introduce a main news topic contextually inappropriate.

Table 5.4 shows the distribution of SP/CP occurrence across the body of the article. Since the main news item of an article is usually conveyed in the beginning of an article, particularly in the title and opening sentence of the article, a preponderance of CP at the beginning will indicate an association of salience. In contrast, a preponderance of SP elsewhere

in an article will indicate that backgrounding is a significant function of SP, especially when contrasted with CP.

**Table 5.4 Body Distribution**

Tense	First Verb	First Paragraph	Body	End
SP	0/6 (0%)	0/6 (0%)	5/6 (83%)	1/6 (17%)
CP	3/25 (12%)	3/25 (12%)	16/25 (64%)	3/25 (12%)

The results in this category were the most interesting in the French portion of the corpus. Twenty-four percent of CP appeared in the first paragraph of an article, half of which were the first verb of the story. SP does not appear at all in either first category, occurring mainly in the body of articles (where most supplementary detail is found), with one occurrence of SP in the final paragraph. Clearly, SP in contact with CP is seen as a background element used to give supporting information to main story items given in CP.

### 5.1.2 Conclusion of French results

The results of SP/CP variation in French were not surprising, given the advanced state of grammaticalization of French CP. Harris (1982) places Standard French in Stage IV of his four-stage diachronic model of CP function, as I have shown in Table 3.1. This is also the case on the linear diagram of the aoristic drift of CP in Romance proposed in Table 3.2 of the present study. The linear aoristic drift diagram reinterprets the state of CP in Standard French as being one of the languages furthest along on the aoristic drift, rather than in a static category with proscribed grammatical boundaries. This means that CP has supplanted SP as the dominant perfective past



tense for all contexts except the most formal registers. Since the residual use of SP in sports journalism consistently takes a background function in this limited corpus, there seems to be almost no contrast of perfective meaning preserved in French.

Overall, the use of SP was minimal, occurring closer to the end of articles and mainly in the impersonal form *fut* (3<sup>rd</sup> person singular of *être*). When in the same discourse as CP, SP can occur in the main clause at a similar rate, but appears in the least salient part of the article and supplies only supporting details to the story rather than the main theme of the article. This suggests, in light of CP morphology, a former contextual salience of CP that perhaps has contributed to the present state of dominant perfective use in Modern French.

## **5.2 Spanish**

The results in all the following sections are for Spanish, and constitute the main discussion for this study. First, I present a general analysis of the Spanish results as a whole, followed by a more detailed comparison of SP/CP behavior according to article type (majority-SP, majority-CP, or even).

### **5.2.1 General results for Spanish**

The Spanish corpus included 157 tokens of both tense, 59 SP (38% of the corpus) and 98 CP (62% of the corpus). As mentioned in Chapter 4, every category of analysis has a salient and non-salient option. The primary options are those options in each category that are contextually salient. Table 5.5 below shows how many examples from both tenses were identified in each of

the primary options—Quotative, Title/Subtitle, Main Clause, Main Theme—in all the Spanish articles, showing how many tokens from the corpus applied in each category.

**Table 5.5 Total SP and CP in primary options**

Category	Total SP and CP in Category / Total Examples
Quotative	29 / 157 (18%)
Title/Body	157 / 157 (100%)
Clause: Main	90 / 157 (57%)
Theme: Main	42 / 157 (27%)

The next two tables show SP versus CP occurrence in the primary options, comparing the behavior of each tense in the most salient contexts analyzed in this study. Table 5.6 divides the total number of tokens identified in each category from Table 5.5 into SP or CP. Since every token was necessarily counted in the category Title/Body, Table 5.6 shows only the results for the primary option Title, of which there was only one instance in the corpus. Table 5.7 later on shows Body Distribution of the remaining 156 tokens in the corpus.

**Table 5.6 SP versus CP occurrence in primary options**

Tense	Quotative	Title	Main Clause	Main Theme
SP	9 / 29 (31%)	0 / 1 (0%)	26 / 90 (29%)	5 / 42 (12%)
CP	20 / 29 (69%)	1 / 1 (100%)	64 / 90 (71%)	37 / 42 (88%)

The data in Table 5.6 demonstrate a clear preference for CP in all contexts of salience, whether pragmatic, stylistic, syntactic or thematic. CP is always used at least 69% percent of the

time or more in introducing direct speech, in a title, in main clauses, and in presenting the main theme. Most notably, the category of Main Theme shows the greatest percentage difference in use between SP and CP. Of all Main Theme tokens identified in the Spanish corpus, only 12% are SP and 88% are CP. Thus, in all cases of perfective past tense use in contexts associated with higher informativity or relevancy, the tense most often used is CP.

CP is also the unique past tense to occur in the Title category in this corpus. No past tense appears in any of the main titles, but one example of CP appeared in a subtitle in an even article where the occurrence of SP versus CP was approximately 60% SP to 40% CP. This suggests that CP is considered a more salient form when used in conjunction with SP. While both SP and CP can fulfill the same function in similar contexts, use of CP licenses a higher degree of relevancy, informativity, and stylistic excitement, especially when juxtaposed with SP within the same article.

Table 5.7 shows the comparison of SP/CP distribution within an article for all article types in the Spanish corpus.

**Table 5.7 Body Distribution of SP versus CP**

Tense	First Verb	First Paragraph	Body	Final Paragraph
SP	3 / 12 (25%)	13 / 26 (50%)	37 / 95 (39%)	7 / 23 (30%)
CP	9 / 12 (75%)	13 / 26 (50%)	58 / 95 (61%)	16 / 23 (70%)

The results in Table 5.7 show that CP has a stronger presence in almost every part of the story except the category of First Paragraph. CP appears three times more in the position of First Verb than SP, and one of the instances of a First Verb SP occurs in a subordinate clause followed

by a CP as the verb in the main clause. Both tenses occur at the same rate in the first paragraph. The distribution of CP within the main body of the article was higher than that of SP (61% to 39%), showing that both past tense forms are acceptable for narrating events. The category of Final Paragraph manifested just over twice as many CP forms as SP, which corroborates the results of Do-Hurinville's (2006: 70) French study where the *passé composé* at the end of an article was used to sum up the present situation as a result of the event being reported (“...les PC...ont une valeur de bilan”). The resultative connotation based on the morphology of CP makes it a natural choice for the summary of an article.

### **5.3 Comparison of results in individual categories according to article type**

In this section, results for majority-SP articles (CP tokens only) and majority-CP articles (SP tokens only) are compared with SP/CP variation in even articles (SP and CP tokens) according to individual categories.

#### **5.3.1 Quotative versus non-quotative**

Eighteen percent of the Spanish corpus was counted as Quotatives, instances where direct speech is introduced. Table 5.8 compares data in the three article types for the category of Quotative and Non-Quotative. The hypothesis is that more CP will be used in the quotative

capacity than SP because CP will be perceived as more relevant, that is, psychologically closer to the reader.

**Table 5.8 Quotative/Non-Quotative by article type**

Article Type	Quotative	Non-Quotative
Majority CP (SP examples)	3/18 (17%)	15/18 (83%)
Majority SP (CP examples)	8/57 (14%)	49/57 (86%)
Even		
SP	6/42 (14%)	36/42 (86%)
CP	12/40 (30%)	28/40 (70%)

In this study the overall majority of quotative forms were CP (69%, see table 5.6). As Table 5.8 shows, in majority SP and CP articles the rates of quotative versus non-quotative examples followed the trend of the general results. SP examples used as quotatives in majority-CP articles constituted 17% of all SP examples that appeared in majority-CP articles, and quotative CP examples in majority-SP articles constituted 14% of all CP examples in majority-SP articles. Thus when one perfective past tense is predominantly used, the opposite perfective form is not necessarily used in the role of introducing direct speech in the article. Quotes from persons interviewed are perhaps perceived as part of the narrative, within the same narrative plane as the rest of the discourse. However, in even articles the percentage of SP quotatives is about the same as in majority-CP articles (14%), while the rate of CP quotatives increases to 30%, showing a slight increase of CP in the quotative function. Therefore, the equal use of SP and CP in the same article coincides with a 16% higher rate of CP quotatives, suggesting a definite tendency toward using SP as a background against which more relevant information (i.e., direct speech from real persons related to the reported situation) is presented in CP.

### 5.3.2 Main clause versus subordinate clause

The total number of tokens in the Main Clause option of this category constituted 57% of the corpus. The hypothesis for this category is that more CP will be found in a main clause because it will be perceived as more relevant, and therefore psychologically closer, to the reader.

Table 5.9 shows the syntactic variation of SP and CP by article type.

**Table 5.9 Main/Subordinate Clause by article type**

Article Type	Main Clause	Subordinate Clause
Majority CP (SP examples)	5/18 (28%)	13/18 (72%)
Majority SP (CP examples)	40/57 (70%)	17/57 (30%)
Even		
SP	21/42 (50%)	21/42 (50%)
CP	24/40 (60%)	16/40 (40%)

The general results of this study (shown in Table 5.6) demonstrated a more than two-thirds higher rate of CP in main clauses compared to SP, and these results were corroborated in the majority articles. SP examples in majority-CP articles appeared in a subordinate clause 72% of the time and only 28% appeared in a main clause, while CP examples in majority-SP articles were used 70% of the time in main clauses and 30% in subordinate clauses. Thus, even when the majority tense was SP, CP surfaced mainly in the most salient position of the sentence, whereas SP in majority-CP articles were overwhelmingly relegated to a status of secondary informativity.

The results for even articles did not show as decided a contrast. SP appeared in both main and subordinate clauses 50% of the time, while CP had a slightly higher percentage of occurrences in main clauses (60% compared to 40% in subordinate clauses). This suggests that the two forms are not competing as much for the same *syntactic* space, but are instead

dimensionalized according to the other categories. Thus, both past tense forms hold a relatively similar status of syntactic salience, but it must still be determined if the information they convey is of equal importance in the discourse.

### 5.3.3 Main theme versus supplementary information

The total number of tokens carrying the Main Theme formed 27% of the corpus. The primary option of Main Theme refers to the main informational item being reported by the article. This is usually the event or situation reported in the title and first sentence of a news story, since the nature of journalism is to front-load a report with the most newsworthy item in order to arrest the attention of the reader. The secondary option of Supplementary Information refers to all other details given concerning, leading to, or resulting from the event or situation being reported on. The hypothesis for this category is that the majority of news articles will present the main news item in CP, while a preponderance of supplementary information will be given in SP.

**Table 5.10 Main Theme/Supplementary Information by article type**

Article Type	Main Theme	Supplementary Information
Majority CP (SP examples)	0/18 (0%)	18/18 (100%)
Majority SP (CP examples)	26/57 (46%)	31/57 (54%)
Even		
SP	5/42 (12%)	37/42 (88%)
CP	11/40 (28%)	29/40 (72%)

My predictions in this case were strongly supported by the data. In majority-CP articles SP was limited to conveying only supplementary information. On the other hand, nearly half the

CP examples in majority-SP articles carried the main theme of the discourse. In the even articles, of the total number of main theme past tense forms identified (16), more than half were CP; additionally, 28% of CP in even articles fulfilled the role of a main theme verb, whereas SP only fulfilled this role 12% of the time. This left 88% of all SP occurrence in even articles in the role of conveying supplementary information, compared to a slightly lower 72% for CP. This shows a clear leaning toward CP to communicate the most important information in the discourse.

#### **5.3.4 Tense distribution in articles**

All 157 tokens in the corpus were included in the analysis of tense distribution. The location of the data within the article can be indicative of the psychological relevancy status of the information in the awareness of both writer and reader. The main news item is usually reported in the title and first sentence, and the succeeding sentences in the first paragraph and in the main body of the story present supporting detail and development. The current situation of the reported event is often synopsisized in the final paragraph. Thus, examples in the First Verb and Final Paragraph categories are inherently foregrounded in relation to the rest of the narrative. The hypothesis for this category was that more CP would be found in the First Verb position and in the First and Final Paragraphs than SP, and that SP would be used predominantly in the body of the article as part of the background narrative.



Table 5.11 compares SP/CP variation in majority-SP and majority-CP articles to SP/CP variation in even articles according to distribution throughout the body of the article.

**Table 5.11 Body Distribution by article type**

Article Type	Title	First Verb	First Paragraph	Body	Final Paragraph
Majority-CP (SP examples)	0/18 (0%)	1/18 (5%)	3/18 (17%)	11/18 (61%)	3/18 (17%)
Majority-SP (CP examples)	0/57 (0%)	7/57 (12%)	9/57 (15%)	33/57 (59%)	8/57 (14%)
Even					
SP	0/42 (0%)	2/42 (4.8%)	10/42 (23.8%)	26/42 (61.9%)	4/42 (9.5%)
CP	1/40 (2.5%)	2/40 (5%)	4/40 (10%)	25/40 (62.5%)	8/40 (20%)

As Table 5.11 shows, the results did not completely corroborate the hypothesis, but were consistent with my hypothesis in some respects. In majority-CP articles only one SP was used as a first verb (5% of SP examples in majority-CP articles), whereas CP occurred in the position of first verb at more than twice that rate (12%) in majority-SP articles. In fact, of 18 majority-SP articles identified in the study, seven present a CP as the first verb of the story—nearly half the possible first verbs in this article group.

In the first paragraph, body, and final paragraph of majority articles, variation is not appreciably different. In the first verb and main body of even articles, variation was also similar: both forms appear as the first verb approximately 5% of the time and in the main body of the article about 62% of the time. And while the percentage of occurrence for both forms in the final paragraph of even articles followed predictions, the first paragraph percentages did not. The first paragraph showed 23.8% SP and only 10% CP, whereas CP occurred 20% in the final paragraph and SP only 9.5%.

## *Discussion*

Only one of six majority-CP articles uses SP in the first verb position. It must be noted that this case of first verb SP appears in a subordinate clause giving supplementary information and is preceded by a CP in the subtitle just before it and a CP in the main clause immediately following.

**(53) El ex piloto, probador esporádico de Ferrari, argumenta que Renault ha combinado [CP] mejoras que no servirán la próxima temporada**

El campeón alemán Michael Schumacher, que aprobó [SP] ayer el monoplaza de la escudería Ferrari en el circuito de Cataluña, ha señalado [CP] que él no ha visto [CP] que Renault haya experimentado las mejoras que sí evidencian los tiempos que ha conseguido [CP] el equipo francés en Montmeló. ("Schumacher," Efe 2008e)

The use of SP in this example serves as a dimensionalizing factor to foreground the main news item. The subordinate clause containing the SP in question is supplying chronological and contextual information necessary to the reader in order for the story to make sense. Without knowing who Michael Schumacher is or what he did “yesterday,” the article is informationally inaccessible and emotionally irrelevant to the reader; however, the fact that he is a former racing champion who *yesterday* test-drove a Ferrari race car makes his disgruntled report *today* a surprising and newsworthy one. Thus the informative SP prepares the reader to respond appropriately to the contextually salient CP that follows.

Further investigation of individual articles revealed that in at least three articles the presence of CP at the end of the article was counterpointed by use of SP in the First Verb/First

Paragraph position or in the Body. This explains the juxtaposition of percentages in the first and final paragraphs and implies a progression of narrative leading up to the current situation.

(54) El zapatazo de Scholes en Old Trafford *destrozó* [SP] las esperanzas del Barcelona de jugar la final de la Liga de Campeones y algo más: *aniquiló* [SP] el círculo virtuoso que *impulsó* [SP] hace cinco años un fax fechado precisamente en Manchester y en el que se daba por hecho que el United le vendería a Beckham si Joan Laporta ganaba las elecciones presidenciales....

Conscientes de que el delantero ha perdido [CP] chispa, se da por hecho que las lesiones le han pasado [CP] factura y por eso se apuesta por darle otra oportunidad. Pero no se sabe si el jugador, con excelentes ofertas de la *Premier League*, está por la labor de continuar. (Martín 2008)

In example (54), as in example (55) below, the article is opened with SP and concluded with CP. Hence, while the main theme of each story is given in SP, the nature of the supplementary information presented in CP in the final paragraph leaves the reader with a sense of suspense or interest in further development of the story. In example (54) the main theme of the article is the uncertain future of a soccer club. The first sentence gives the latest developments of the situation, followed by an abbreviated history to explain why the club's future is uncertain. The two CP in the final paragraph reiterate the lamentable condition of one of the players, with predictions related to the upcoming season. As in example (53), SP is used to provide information that potentiates a higher emotional reaction to the information supplied by CP, only this time the writer of this article cultivates the salience of CP across the length of the article.

The use of CP to foreground certain details (a player's injuries) of the current situation implies an inherent link in the mind of the writer between the state of the club and the situation of reading.

(55) Rafael Nadal, que hoy *debutó* [SP] en el Abierto del Barcelona con una victoria ante el italiano Potito Starace (6-4 y 6-2), *arremetió* [SP] después del partido contra los dirigentes de la ATP, a quienes *acusó* [SP] de “estar destruyendo Europa, que ha sido el soporte del tenis durante muchos años”....

Por último, Rafael Nadal ha dado [CP] un consejo a los organizadores de los torneos. “Cuando falle algún jugador, en Roma, Barcelona o Hamburgo, que no nos echen la culpa a nosotros. Que llamen a la ATP y les den las gracias”. (“Nadal,” Efe 2008c)

In example (55) the main theme and supporting details are introduced in the first paragraph in SP, but the final verb of the article is a CP reporting a statement given at the same time as the quote in the opening paragraph. The tone of the closing statement, however, is one of sarcasm and challenge. Use of CP in this case creates a psychological proximity of interest in a reaction from the challenged party. Rather than a chronological progression of events, the emphatic function of CP brings the reader through a psychological progression of emotional intensity regarding the situation.

#### **5.4 Conclusion for Spanish results**

In the Spanish results as a whole, CP use was significantly higher in each of the primary options (Quotative, Title, Main Clause, Main Theme), clearly demonstrating an overall tendency

to use CP in the most salient position, particularly with regard to the informational value of the sentence containing it. Sentences containing CP almost always carried the main theme (88%). This closely corresponds to the high rate of first verb and final paragraph CP (75% and 70%, respectively), where the main news item and resulting situation are usually reported within the story, and confirms the tendency to associate the use of CP with information that will be new and/or relevant to the reader at the moment of reading.

In the article-specific analysis, SP/CP variation generally followed the predicted trends with few exceptions. Quotative versus non-quotative values of SP and CP in majority articles were essentially the same, but the even articles showed a noticeable difference in rate of use, 14% SP to 30% CP. The difference in main clause and subordinate clause use in the majority articles was significant: SP in majority-CP articles only appeared in main clauses 28% percent of the time while 70% of CP in majority-SP articles appeared in main clauses. However, SP and CP in even articles occurred at closer to the same rate.

Since both past tense forms maintain a similar syntactic status in equal co-occurrence, I also analyzed the salience of the information conveyed by the verbs. These results revealed that CP is consistently used twice as often as SP to communicate the main news item in the article. In contexts where SP was the majority tense, CP presented the main theme of the article 46% of the time, while in majority-CP texts SP was never used for the main theme. In even articles CP maintained a more than 50% higher rate of main theme use, 28% compared to 12% main theme SP in the same article type.

The distribution of SP and CP across whole articles manifested two significant trends. The comparison of SP/CP function in majority articles showed a definite tendency to use CP as the first verb with relatively balanced use of each through the subsequent sections of the article.

In even articles, a higher percentage of SP in the first paragraph (23.8%) was juxtaposed with a corresponding rate of CP in the final paragraph (20%). The resulting dimensionalization is psychological rather than chronological, since the information reported in both first and final paragraphs can be on the same chronological plane, as I have shown. Thus, the salience of the CP in the final paragraph is to attract reader interest in further development of the story.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

#### 6 Introduction

This chapter presents an outline of the hypotheses analyzed and the conclusions drawn based on the results of the present study. I review the purpose of this study and evaluate how the results support the salience of CP as a factor of grammaticalization in Spanish and French.

#### 6.1 Purpose of study

The theoretical framework for this study takes the view that tense serves as an emotional clock that communicates a speaker's internal experience of events within time. This is true to such an extent that, as we have seen in our review of the morphology of CP, a speaker's mental attitude towards an event and the form he or she chooses to express that psychological landscape can transform the fundamental value of a verbal structure. The original possessive meaning of the Latin verb *habere* licensed an eventual perception of the present relevance of a past action when paired with a past participle. The perceived psychological proximity became the primary meaning of this structure's later incarnations in the modern Romance languages, solidifying CP as a viable past tense structure.

As I have shown in Chapter 2 of this study, the reinterpretation of *habere + past participle* from Latin to be a past tense structure in the modern Romance languages was pragmatically motivated. Specifically, CP as a past tense structure evolved based on the notion of a perceived link between a past situation and the moment of speaking, culminating in the

modern discourse function of indicating relevancy. This being the case, treatment of the morphology of CP and analysis of its modern incarnation should include a pragmatic dimension that evaluates how far the notion of relevancy has progressed in the scope of CP use in the perfective past tense capacity. Such an analysis must also evaluate the complementary status of SP, since use of SP in the same context as CP demarcates the functional range of CP.

Perfectivity and relevancy are especially emphasized by CP in co-occurrence with SP. Contextually salient CP forms introduce or foreground a past situation as being previously unknown and therefore interesting to the reader. In the hot news function, as one kind of contextually salient CP, the emphasis of relevance in CP has been isolated to communicate a sense of surprise attached to a perfective situation. The only effect or result of a hot news situation in the present is its potential to evoke an emotional response in the reader.

The goal of this study has been to identify the extent of CP salience in current Spanish and French sports news articles in order to evaluate the notion of relevancy as a factor in the grammaticalization potential of CP. Studying SP/CP variation in Spanish and French sports news stories permitted the isolation of the values of perfectivity and relevancy. The characteristics of news writing allowed us to identify the level of saliency (i.e. relevancy) of a verb form within the context of a single article. The data for this study were analyzed according to four categories: Quotative/Non-Quotative, Main/Subordinate Clause, Title/Body, and Main Theme/Supplementary Information. Verb forms that introduced direct speech (Quotative), appeared in certain locations (Main Clause, Title, First Verb, Final Paragraph), and/or reported the topic of the story (Main Theme) were considered the most salient forms because of their psychological proximity to the reader.



## 6.2 Results

The contextual salience of CP identified in the Spanish corpus of the present study provided strong evidence that the notion of relevancy associated with CP could be a principle factor in its evolving path toward perfective value. Co-occurrence with SP heightens the emphatic potential of CP, making the information communicated using CP emotionally relevant to the reader.

CP use has been generalized to all past contexts in Modern French, both perfect and perfective. For this reason, studying CP in conjunction with SP in French was necessary to evaluate CP's informationally salient status. The results of this study showed that SP was never used for the main theme of an article, while Main Theme CP totaled one-fifth of all CP use (20%). SP appeared only in the main body of the article and in the final paragraph, whereas 12% of CP appeared in both positions of First Verb and First Paragraph, putting 24% of all CP in two of the most salient positions in the article. Although it can be argued that CP is foregrounded in relation to SP, that "foregrounding" is the result of the near-total grammaticalization of CP as the dominant perfective past tense in Modern French. Therefore, the most significant result of the French corpus was to demonstrate the diminishing functional contrast between CP and SP.

It is not, however, inconsequential that the dominant presence of CP in Modern French is paralleled by a residual salience suggested by the continued (though minimal) presence of SP. Based on the trajectory of CP morphology in the Romance languages, and given the prior presence of a (simple) perfect morpheme in Latin, this study supports Fleischman's (1983: 204) assertion that grammaticalization is "source pragmatic rather than target pragmatic." SP consistently takes a background function throughout the limited French corpus, following the semantic pattern of its morphology. The resulting contextual dimensionalization serves to

heighten the contrasting salience associated with CP throughout its morphology. Even though CP functions as the only perfective past tense in all spoken and informal discourse, the results of this study support the claim that this current status occurs at least to some degree because the information given in CP is felt to be the most relevant to the reader.

In the Spanish corpus, CP use was significantly higher in each of the primary options (Quotative, Title, Main Clause, Main Theme), which clearly demonstrated the high degree of saliency that has its source in the sense of relevance associated with CP, in comparison to the purely perfective SP.

The most significant results in the Spanish corpus were found in the categories of Main Theme/Supplementary Information and Title/Body Distribution. In the corpus as a whole, CP almost always carried the main theme (88%). In articles where SP was the dominant tense, CP examples presented the main theme of the article 46% of the time, while in majority-CP texts SP never carried the main theme. In even articles CP still carried the main theme of the article more than twice as often as SP.

The high rate of Main Theme CP corresponded to a high rate of First Verb CP (75%), a position where the main theme of an article is usually introduced. Logically, this is the information that is most relevant to the reader. The First and Final Paragraph sub-categories in the even articles revealed an interesting trend: roughly twice as many SP as CP were found in the first paragraph, while roughly twice as many CP as SP appeared in the final paragraph. In analyzing specific examples in Chapter 5, I showed that use of CP in the final paragraph showed the writer's intention to create suspense and interest in the current state of events.

### 6.3 Conclusion of study

The overall results of the present study clearly demonstrate that SP/CP co-occurrence serves to foreground information in Spanish sports news. In French, CP perfectivity has progressed to the point of losing nearly all functional distinction from SP, as the limited results of this study showed. The observed frequency of CP use in Spanish in pragmatically salient contexts, in tandem with less salient SP use, manifests an intentional dimensionalization based on relevancy in SP/CP tense mixing. The saliency of CP in Spanish is due to the prototypical use of CP to bring a past situation into the present. The hot news function of CP serves as a manifestation of this prototypical function, and highlights the morphologically embedded sense of relevance in the periphrastic past tense form that licenses its contextual salience.

Historically, the value that distinguishes CP from SP is the notion of relevancy. The association of CP with the present relevance of a past situation arose from an increasingly tighter experiential link in the mind of the speaker between a past event and the speaker's present. Such experiences were originally expressed with a form of the Latin verb *habere* and the past participle of a transitive verb, usually accompanied by a direct object. In the modern languages that derive from Latin, the pastness of the participle, and the presentness of the verb have fused and become a single verbal unit communicating both past and present time values. The result in the Romance languages is a number of possible functions that vary across geographic and linguistic boundaries. At the most basic level, CP marks a past situation merely for current relevance. At the extreme end of the spectrum, CP replaces SP as a perfective past tense in almost all contexts. However, the value that sets the perfective use of CP apart from the perfective use of SP is relevancy. While both forms can express perfective meaning in some

languages, CP is the only past tense form in any of the Romance languages that can bring a past situation into the present.

The results of the present study differed significantly according to language. SP/CP co-occurrence was much more prevalent in Spanish than in French. This discrepancy was directly related to the frequency of SP use. Whereas the French corpus consisted of five articles presenting a total of six SP tokens, 18 of 29 Spanish articles were narrated mainly in SP. Four of those majority-SP articles presented only a single token of CP. However, even in majority-SP articles, CP consistently appeared in the most salient contexts. Thus, while the present study corroborates the widely different status of CP function in Spanish and French according to Harris' four-stage diachronic model (cf. Table 3.1), the data also give clear evidence of the tendency toward pragmatically-driven perfective use of CP in both languages, as depicted by the linear aoristic drift diagram in Table 3.2. The consistent use of contextually salient CP in Stage III (European Spanish) of the aoristic drift, and the subsequent limitation and eventual elimination of SP in Stage IV (Standard French) follows the morphological trend traced in Chapter 2 in reviewing the history of CP use from Latin to the modern Romance languages.

Thus, CP can be used in a purely pragmatic way. Perfective SP is often seen as the narrative tense *par excellence* because of its ability to sequence events in a discourse. In contrast, this study has shown that contextually salient CP forms bring the reader through an emotional sequence of relevancy regarding a perfective past situation, rather than a merely chronological progression of events. This emphatic characteristic of CP strongly suggest the value of relevancy as a principle factor in the grammaticalization of CP in the Romance languages, and perhaps will continue to move languages in earlier stages of CP grammaticalization further down the aoristic drift.

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