

<https://doi.org/10.17323/jle.2024.16720>

# L1 Influence on the Use of the English Present Perfect: A Corpus Analysis of Russian and Spanish Learners' Essays

Javier Perez-Guerra <sup>1</sup>, Elizaveta Smirnova <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Vigo, Spain

<sup>2</sup> HSE University, Russia

## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Mastering verbal tenses, especially those expressing aspect, in a second language presents a challenge as learners frequently link the semantic nuances of verbal forms in their second language (L2) to the characteristics of the verbal systems in their native languages (L1). This study explores the impact of L1 on the usage of the English Present Perfect (PP) among non-native speakers.

**Purpose:** In an effort to contribute to the ongoing research on the mechanisms governing the acquisition of English tenses, this study focuses on the variations that affect the usage of the PP in the writing of English learners. The investigation is particularly centered on university students whose L1 is Russian and Spanish, seeking to delve into the ways in which their first language influences the utilisation of the PP in their English writing.

**Method:** Analysis of L2 English by Russian and Spanish learners, based on corpora of argumentative essays written by undergraduate Russian and Spanish learners of English, controlled by a corpus of essays produced by native speakers of English; frequency and distribution of the PP in learner writings; examination of semantic contexts; identification of error types.

**Results:** The findings indicate that, despite a higher occurrence of the PP in texts produced by Spanish learners compared to Russian learners, the rate of errors in its application is nearly identical in both learner corpora. These errors are likely attributable to challenges in comprehending the functions of the PP and in distinguishing its semantics from those of other English tenses, particularly the Past Simple.

**Conclusion:** The study suggests that the increased prevalence of PP usage by L2 learners may be attributed to positive transfer from their L1 when it exhibits structures analogous to the English PP. Conversely, patterns indicative of, for example, undergeneralisation of semantic contexts suggesting the relevance of an action, or of overgeneralisation of adverbs compatible with the PP can be interpreted as evidence of negative transfer. The results of this study hold significance for language pedagogy, as they highlight potential challenges in acquiring the PP that learners from diverse L1 backgrounds may encounter.

## KEYWORDS

Present Perfect, Russian, Spanish, L1 transfer, learner corpora

**Citation:** Perez-Guerra J. & Smirnova E., (2024). L1 influence on the use of the English Present Perfect: A corpus analysis of Russian and Spanish learners' essays. *Journal of Language and Education*, 10(1), 101-114. <https://doi.org/10.17323/jle.2024.16720>

## Correspondence:

Elizaveta Smirnova,  
e-mail: cmelizaveta@yandex.ru

**Received:** February 03, 2023

**Accepted:** March 15, 2024

**Published:** March 30, 2024

## INTRODUCTION

The Present Perfect (PP henceforth) is one of most frequently used tenses in English, productive in every register, including academic prose (Biber et al., 1999, p. 463). Even though the PP emerges at quite early stages in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) courses, its fully-fledged system of uses, including the distinction between the PP and the Past

Simple (e.g. *I have been to Paris* vs. *I went to Paris in 2019*), which causes most difficulties for EFL learners, is mastered only at the most advanced levels of language proficiency (Housen, 2002a, p. 163; Davydova, 2011, p. 4). The problems that students face when using the PP forms have been described by a number of researchers in the field of Second Language Acquisition (van der Wurff, 1999; Housen, 2002b; Davydova, 2011, among



others). To give an example, Davydova (2011) conducted a study with learners with different L1 backgrounds (Russian, German, Hindi) and showed that only those speakers who had been studying English for a long period of time (more than 15 years) were able to “demonstrate the use of the PP consistent with descriptions found in traditional grammars of Standard English” (2011, p. 91). According to Davydova, this is explained by the fact that the PP has a complex system of uses determined by its various semantic meanings. To investigate whether L1 transfer can explain L2 divergence at the syntax-pragmatics interface, Antonova-Unlu and Wei (2020, p. 2) suggest studying “at least two groups of participants whose L1s are different in terms of the availability of this interface”.

The similarities and differences between learners’ target and native language are contended to have facilitating or inhibitory effects on the L2 acquisition process (Odlin, 2000). As far as the positive L1 transfer is concerned, according to Cai (2010), in the process of second language acquisition, a learner develops a set of associations with their L1 with fixed strengths, which are activated when a similar L2 pattern is learnt. As a result, L1 can play a positive role in its acquisition, triggering a positive transfer. However, as pointed out by Comrie (1976), L1 transfer tends to complicate the use of the PP in learners of English. Language transfer manifests itself in all subsystems of language including pragmatics, semantics, syntax, morphology, phonetics and orthography. Odlin posits that the phenomenon of transfer, or cross-linguistic influence, is connected with “interlingual identifications, that is, the judgments that something in the native language and something in the target language are similar” (Odlin, 2008, p. 454). More recently, Fuchs et al. (2016) identified three trends which pertain to different aspects of L1 and exert influence on the acquisition of the English PP. First, the use of the PP by L2 speakers of English is likely to be reduced if their native language lacks a formal or functional category corresponding to the PP (see also Bulut, 2011, pp. 225–226). Second, as also pointed out by Bardovi-Harlig (2000), L1 influence on the number of verb forms produced by learners or on the associations they have about the meanings of L2 verb forms is limited. Third, the semantics of particular verbs, for instance, so-called ‘telic achievement’ verbs, i.e. verbs with a defined end point, might cause the “non-target-like use of the Present Perfect” (see Collins, 2002, pp. 85–86 in this respect). However, it was shown in corpus-based studies that when the learners’ native languages are typologically and structurally close to English, they do not always facilitate faster and more accurate production of the PP in L2 English (e.g., Eriksson, 2008; Davydova, 2011; Rogatcheva, 2014). For instance, it was demonstrated by Fuchs et al. (2016), who investigated the acquisition of the PP by L1 German learners, that native-language influence of this nature might support learners only at a later point. These authors suggest that the blockage of L1 influence can be explained by the complexity of the tense form, on the

one hand, and the relatively low frequency of the PP in the input that the learners receive, on the other.

Since comparing the interlanguage of learners with the native and target languages has certain limitations, as mentioned by Odlin (2008), a number of scholars (e.g., Master, 1987; Jarvis & Odlin, 2000; Helms-Park, 2001; Antonova-Unlu, 2017) recommended conducting a comprehensive inquiry into the way in which learners with different native languages use a target-language structure that is present in one native language but absent in the other. Master (1987) employed this method to study the use of articles in L2 English by students of various L1 backgrounds. Helms-Park (2001) examined the acquisition of causatives by speakers of Hindi-Urdu and Vietnamese. Antonova-Unlu (2017) focused on the acquisition of English spatial prepositions by L1 Russian and Turkish learners. However, Jarvis (2000) contended that to get more valid results, it is reasonable to use both methods; in other words, both inter-group heterogeneity and similarity between the interlanguage of the learners and their L1 should be considered.

In order to investigate the way cross-linguistic conditions affect the use of the PP, in this study we investigated L1 effects on L2 usage of the PP by comparing use of this tense in the L2-English essays of native speakers of Russian (which lacks the PP), native Spanish (which has this form) and the essays of native English speakers. Our choice of a corpus-based methodology in this context does not obscure the necessity of exploring the transfer of verbal paradigms from alternative perspectives. Despite the vast body of psycholinguistic and neurolinguistic literature on transfer, studies specifically addressing the transfer of verb-tense categories are limited. In this regard, our knowledge is restricted to eye-tracking experiments investigating L1 influence on the L2 in predicates’ argument structure (e.g., transitive/intransitive patterns) in Shirai and Andersen (1995). Additionally, the so-called Aspect Hypothesis has been empirically examined in Odlin (2005). As claimed by Spada and Lightbown (1999), increasing learners’ awareness of cross-linguistic differences is likely to eliminate certain difficulties in the target language. Therefore, research into linguistic transfer in the use of the PP might not only have certain theoretical importance, but also be beneficial for language pedagogy.

This study aims to contribute to the ongoing debate about what role, if any, L1 plays in the use of English PP by non-native speakers of English. This investigation is based on the analysis of specific and universal mechanisms underlying the occurrence of the PP forms in Russian and Spanish varieties of English. We compare two corpora of academic essays written by Russian and Spanish undergraduate students, with the initial hypothesis that Russian learners of English will use the PP less frequently and make more errors in its use than Spanish students because Russian lacks a tense straightforwardly equivalent to the English PP, while the Spanish paradigm of verbal tenses hosts a PP correlate.

Although variation in the uses of the PP by native and non-native speakers of English has been approached in a number of works (e.g., Elsness, 1997; Hundt & Smith, 2009; Davydova, 2011, 2012; Yao & Collins, 2012; Seoane & Suárez-Gómez, 2013; Werner, 2013, 2014), the findings are quite contradictory. For example, on the one hand, Davydova (2011), who studied the uses of the PP in a corpus of non-native Russian, German and Indian varieties of English, and compared them with the London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English (LLC), reported that the PP is underrepresented in the studied varieties of English compared to the corpus L1 English, which can be explained by the complexity of this strategy, so that L2 speakers appear to avoid using the PP due to its complexity and opt for the Past Simple instead. On the other hand, Yao and Collins (2012), whose analysis was based on selected components and registers of the International Corpus of English (ICE), concluded that the frequency of the PP in non-native varieties of English is comparable to that of the native varieties, with Indian English employing this form most often and Philippine English least often.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Use of the Present Perfect in L2 learner English

The use of the PP in learner corpora has attracted considerable attention in the academia. For example, Bardovi-Harlig's (1997) longitudinal study analysed Arabic, Japanese, Korean and Spanish learners' oral and written data, and concluded that learners routinely confuse the PP forms with the forms of the Past Simple tense and the Present tense. Bardovi-Harlig claimed that this could be explained by the fact that the learners' semantic knowledge of the PP was not established to the fullest in relation to the other tenses. Fuchs et al. (2016) investigated variation between the PP and the Past Simple in ESL (English as a Second Language) German learners' data in an attempt to determine correlation between learner proficiency, mode (i.e. writing vs. speaking) and the use of the PP in their productions in English. In line with Bardovi-Harlig (1997), Fuchs et al. found that the PP emerged quite late in L2 learner English, namely with those students that achieved an advanced level of proficiency and had an opportunity to use English as often as native speakers did. Another interesting finding in this study was that the PP is more common in writing. Mohammed (2019) investigated the use of the PP by Iraqi learners of English and found that they faced difficulties with using the tense possibly due to insufficient training. Uno (2014) investigated the use of the English PP by Japanese learners of English and paid special attention to the inherent semantic aspectual properties of the verbs. The analysis evinced the lack of strong correlation between the use of the PP and the verbs' lexical aspectual class (telic vs. atelic) in contexts with no temporal adverbials.

In other studies learners' data are contrasted with native speakers' productions. For instance, Rogatcheva (2012) compared the use of the PP in German and Bulgarian learners' argumentative writing with productions by non-professional British and American writers. Her study confirmed the results reported by previous corpus-based investigations as regards the preference for the PP in British English. Besides, significant differences were detected between Bulgarian and German learner writing. Specifically, Bulgarian EFL learners' texts were closer to those by British novice writers as far as the uses of the PP were concerned, while the frequencies of the PP by German EFL learners were similar to those by American novice writers. Rogatcheva claimed that such differences could be explained not only by L1 influence but also by register effects, the latter not being relevant to the present discussion since we are only analysing academic texts.

### Main Uses of the Present Perfect in English, Russian and Spanish

This section briefly describes the PP and its equivalents in Russian and Spanish and outlines the semantic contexts in which the PP is used in standard English. The comparison of the semantic contexts of the PP in L1 and L2 is also carried out in what follows.

#### *The English Present Perfect*

There are four unanimously recognised dominant semantic contexts of the English PP (Fenn, 1987; Winford, 1993; Tagliamonte, 2000; Huddleston & Pullum, 2002; Siemund, 2004; Radden & Dirven, 2007; Davydova, 2011):

- (i) the resultative context, which denotes a past action that results in a change of state at the moment of speaking (sometimes known as 'current relevance'), as in (3),
  - (ii) the so-called 'extended-now' context, with situations that started in the past and continue into the moment of speaking, in (4),
  - (iii) the experiential context, whereby a situation or an event occurred once or several times before the moment of speaking in cases when a definite time reference is not given, illustrated here in (5),
  - (iv) the recent past context, which involves a recent event, again without a reference to the definite time of the action, in (6).
- (3) *I have lost my keys somewhere.*
  - (4) *I have lived/have been living here for 3 years now.*
  - (5) *I have seen it many times.*
  - (6) *I have just taken my final exams.*

### The Russian Present Perfect

The Russian verbal paradigm includes forms of past, present and future, and for an overwhelming majority of verbs two aspects, perfective and imperfective, which allow speakers to convey various meanings. The imperfective aspect is used for either an action in progress or a repeated action, for example, *Ya chitayu knigu* ('I am reading a book'), while the perfective aspect in Russian denotes "a single completed action" (Wade<sup>1</sup>, 2002, p. 119), which, unlike the English PP, often occurs in the sentence with past references as long as it is presented as complete, for instance, *Ya prochital knigu vchera* ('I read the book yesterday'). Researchers have highlighted the aspectual and temporal components of the perfect, and have stressed that the perfective meaning is overwhelmingly a characteristic of the perfective aspect which is seen as one of the meanings of the past tense (e.g., Telin, 1988). Maslov (2004) considers 'perfectness' as an aspectual semantic category which possesses certain temporal duality, a combination of two interconnected temporal plans in a predicate: the antecedent and the subsequent one.

Of all the forms in the Russian verbal paradigm, there is only one in which the occurrence of the past participle makes the construction comparable to the English PP tense: auxiliary verb *be* + past passive participle, e.g. *Dom byl postroen dva goda nazad* ('The house was built two years ago'). Auxiliary *be* is subject to obligatory omission in the Present tense and is sometimes omitted in the Past tense. It is this construction that Comrie (1976, p. 58) categorised as corresponding to English perfectivity, despite the challenge of attesting the English PP in expressions conveying past tense and the regular occurrence of the corresponding Russian form with adverbials of time. As regards the semantic contexts the English PP is used in, namely, resultative, experiential and recent past, in the Russian language preterit is more frequently employed; for example, *On napisal pis'mo* ('He has written a letter') or *Ona videla etot film ran'she* ('She has seen this film before'). By contrast, in the extended-now context, the Present tense is predominant, for instance, *Oni rabotayut v etoi kompanii neskol'ko let* ('They have worked for this company for several years'). Therefore, since in Russian there is no special verb form that would discriminate the PP contexts, Russian speakers of English face difficulties when using this tense (Davydova, 2011).

### The Spanish Present Perfect

Spanish has a PP form similar to the English one both with respect to form (present indicative of the auxiliary verb *haber* plus past participle of the main verb) and use. The specific features of the Spanish PP have been the focus of academic investigation by, among others, Comrie (1976), Lehmann (1982), Dahl (1985), Klein (1992), Bybee et al. (1994), Schwenter (1994), Dahl and Hedin (2000), Lindstedt (2000), Squartini and Bertinetto (2000) and Copple (2009). In a nutshell, in the comprehensive *Nueva gramática de la lengua española*<sup>2</sup> the Spanish PP tense is classified as an 'absolute' tense since it is anchored to the present. It conveys two main interpretations: (i) anteriority (or, in Cartagena's 1999: §45.1.2 words, "perfection") with respect to a point in the present in contexts in which the event is assessed with reference to the present (i.e. experience or relevance perfect), as in *Ha sufrido mucho en la vida* ('S/he has suffered a lot in her/his life'), and (ii) immediate past, in, for example, *Arturo ha estado tres veces en Santiago en el último año* ('Arturo has been in Santiago on three occasions this year'), possibility still reaching the present. The *Nueva gramática* recognises that these prototypical values are subject to major dialectal variation, the PP being frequently replaced in Spanish with the Past Simple tense.

As pointed out by, for example, Gorbova (2015), the Spanish PP is increasingly used with specific temporal references in narrated chains of events, which suggests that this form is in a process of grammaticalisation known as 'aoristic drift', according to which it adopts semantic values bridging between the past and the present (see also Michaelis, 1998, p. 10). Nevertheless, as the temporal interval indicated by the locative extends further from the present, the acceptability of constructing a Perfect utterance in Spanish diminishes. Expressions such as *hace una hora* ('an hour ago') or *hace un momento* ('a moment ago') are routinely combined with the Perfect, whereas a time locative such as *la semana pasada* ('last week') accompanies the Perfect less often, and *hace 10 años* ('ten years ago') is very unlikely to appear with it. The interrogative locative *cuándo* ('when') is very commonly used with the Perfect (*¿Cuándo has llegado?* 'When did you arrive?'), probably because its interrogative nature is perceived by Spanish speakers as strongly connected with the concept of 'novelty'<sup>3</sup> worth communicating'. Consequently, Spanish PP and preterite tenses have been claimed to share

<sup>1</sup> Wade, T. (2002). *The Oxford Russian grammar and verbs*. Oxford University Press.

<sup>2</sup> Real Academia Española. (2009). *Nueva gramática de la lengua española*. Espasa.

<sup>3</sup> The sense of 'recentness' that is part of the 'past of present' tense is rather variable, as it is measured differently depending on the characteristics of the process. For instance, a process such as *llamar a la puerta* ('knock on the door, ring the doorbell') can be regarded as a recent development in Spanish perhaps only hours after it has taken place. In fact, it would be very difficult to find a situation in which a Spanish speaker would select the 'past of present' tense a day after the event has taken place. In contrast, a process such as *publicar un libro* ('publish a book, the coming out of a book') is normally treated as a recent development.

the same cognitive meaning (i.e. reference to the past) and can for this reason be treated as realisations of a “commonly underlying form” in the PP contexts (Davydova, 2011, p. 50). In this vein, added to its reference to the past, authors like Harris (1982, p. 55) emphasise that the Spanish PP preserves the pragmatically subjective meaning of “current relevance”.

## Present-Perfect Uses in Native and Learner English

This section describes points of convergence and divergence between the contexts in which the PP is used in L1 and L2 English. Firstly, as pointed out above, in resultative contexts like (7) the perfective aspect of the Past tense is used in Russian, which “indicates completion of an action in the past (‘he made, has made, had made a call’)” and implies a result (Wade<sup>4</sup>, 2002, p. 111). In the same way, the Spanish PP may also express result (González & Quintana Hernández, 2018, p. 615), as illustrated in (8).

(7) *Ona slomala ruku.*

She break-Past-PERF arm

‘She has broken / broke her arm.’

(8) *He comido hoy.*

have eaten today

‘I have eaten today.’

Secondly, extended-now contexts pose difficulties for Russian learners of English because Russian conveys this meaning via imperfective-aspect Present tense, as in (9):

(9) *Ya zhivu v Moskve s 2000 goda.*

I live-Present-IMPERF in Moscow since 2000 year

‘I have been living/have lived in Moscow since 2000.’

Such interference from L1 Russian explains frequent erroneous utterances produced by Russian learners like *\*I’m studying French for five years* (Davydova, 2011, p. 28). By contrast, in Spanish, as in English, the PP is used to denote an action taking place in a period of time including the present, that is, in so-called ‘past in the present’ time (Lavid et al., 2010, p. 401), and can co-occur with compatible temporal adverbials (e.g. *ahora* ‘now’, *hoy* ‘today’, *estos días* ‘these days’), as in (10):

(10) *No he dormido en toda la semana.*

‘I haven’t slept for a week now.’

Thirdly, in Russian, imperfective aspect in the Past tense is used in experiential contexts, as in (11). That is why, as mentioned by Davydova (2011), when talking about experience in English, Russian speakers frequently use Past Simple rather than the PP. In Spanish, the experiential context, like the extended-now one, is one of ‘present relevance’ and requires the PP, as exemplified by (12).

(11) *Ya smotrel etot fil’m dvazhdy.*

I see-Past-IMPERF this film twice

‘I have seen this film twice.’

(12) *El autor de este drama no ha estado nunca en esta ciudad.*

‘The author of this play has never been to this town.’  
(from Lavid et al., 2010, p. 403)

Finally, as regards recent-past contexts, despite “the subjective character of the notions of ‘relevance’ and ‘recentness’” (Lavid et al., 2010, p. 426), speakers of English and Spanish tend to agree to a large extent on what can be considered “a relevant piece of news” and thus use the PP to denote these actions quite similarly. Russian, by contrast, makes no differences between events that happened recently and those from some time ago. In both cases imperfective aspect in the Past tense is used in Russian, as in (13) and (14).

(13) *Ya nedavno videl druga.*

I recently see-Past-IMPERF a friend.

‘I have seen a friend recently.’

(14) *Ya videl druga mesyats nazad.*

I see-Past-IMPERF a friend a month ago.

‘I saw a friend a month ago.’

Lacking such a formal distinction between recent events and completed past events in their L1, Russian learners frequently use the PP in English when they describe events with definite time reference, as in (14). Also, erroneous uses of the PP with indications of time in the past are attested even more often in Russian learner writing, as in (15).

(15) *I don’t think that Europe has done the right thing when they united in one.* (from Davydova, 2011, p. 28)

It should be noted, however, that a similar error is also attested in L2 English by Spanish learners. As Lavid et al. (2010, p. 426) point out, the presence of a time adverbial in the clause such as *ayer* (‘yesterday’) or *la semana pasada* (‘last week’) “does not prevent Spanish speakers from using the Perfect if they regard the process as charged with current relevance”, whilst Past Simple is mandatory with a specific temporal location in English.

<sup>4</sup> Wade, T. (2002). *The Oxford Russian grammar and verbs*. Oxford University Press.

## A Corpus-Based Analysis of L2 English by Russian and Spanish Learners

The studies mentioned in the previous sections pave the way for the investigation of the uses of the PP in L2 learner writing. Specifically, this paper undertakes the analysis of PP usage in academic essays in L2 English written by Russian and Spanish undergraduate learners, under the hypothesis that Russian students, who lack the PP category in their native language, will use the PP less frequently, will make more errors and will use temporal adverbials more frequently when using the PP in comparison with Spanish students, since the PP is available in the Spanish verbal paradigm. Three research questions (RQ) are addressed in this paper:

- RQ1: Which students use PP forms more frequently in their writing, Russian or Spanish learners?
- RQ2: What semantic contexts prevail with the PP in Russian and Spanish L2 productions?
- RQ3: Which students make more errors in their uses of the PP? Which errors can be described as independent of the learners' L1, and which can be explained by L1 transfer?

## METHOD

### Data

The analysis of the use of the PP was conducted on two corpora of argumentative essays written by undergraduate Russian and Spanish learners of English. A third corpus of essays produced by native speakers (NS) of English was used for control purposes. WriCLE (Written Corpus of Learner English; Rollinson & Mendikoetxea, 2010) was collected at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid and contains L1 Spanish students' essays written for the academic-writing module of their English Language course in the first and third year of the degree in English Studies. Their level of language proficiency was determined with the help of the Oxford Quick Placement Test, which the learners took at a time close to the writing of the essays. The test scores range

from 57 to 90 with the mean score being 72. According to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), these results can be interpreted as proficiency levels ranging from B1 to C1. REALEC (Russian Error-Annotated Learner English Corpus; Vinogradova, 2019) is a collection of essays written by L1 Russian undergraduate students from the Higher School of Economics (HSE University) as part of their English examination at the end of the university course of English. This examination is conducted in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) format and its results show that the learners' proficiency in English ranges from B1 to C1. Therefore, in terms of proficiency levels of the students, the L2 corpora are comparable and can serve the purposes of the current study. The third corpus, LOCNESS (the Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays), was compiled at the Centre for English Corpus Linguistics (CECL), Université Catholique de Louvain, and comprises three types of texts: British pupils' A level essays, British university students' essays and American university students' essays. Table 1 provides more information about the corpora.

## Method and Procedure

The first stage of the analysis involved the identification of all the instances of the PP in the corpora. The texts were annotated with part-of-speech tags through TreeTagger (Schmit, 1994, 1995). A basic Python code was used to retrieve combinations of *has/s* or *have/ve* plus past participle within a two-token distance, so that forms like *has already begun* and *have at last received* could be considered. The following uses of the tokens *has/s* and *have/ve* with the past participle had to be removed:

- *has/have to be done (It has to be done now)*
- *has/have got/gotten to do something (You have got to know it)*
- perfect forms of the modals (*It must have been*)
- causative uses *has/have something done*.

The frequencies and the distribution per corpus of PP expressions in the three corpora are displayed in Table 2.

As regards the method, usage of the PP has been investigated by reporting statistically significant differences be-

**Table 1**  
*Sizes and Contents of the Corpora Used in the Study*

	Spanish corpus	Russian corpus	Corpus of English native speakers
Name	WriCLE	REALEC	LOCNESS (the Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays)
Type of texts	Argumentative essays ranging from 500 words up to 2,000 words	Argumentative essays of approximately 250 words	Argumentative essays of approximately 500 words
Size (words)	801,000	833,000	324,000
Size (texts)	716	2,973	710



**Table 2**

Raw and Normalised Frequencies (in brackets) per 100,000 Words of all Verbs and the PP Forms in the Corpora

	Number of verb tokens	PP instances	PP/number of verb tokens ratio
Russian corpus	134,375 (16,131.45)	959 (115.13)	0.007
Spanish corpus	117,352 (14,650.69)	3,792 (423.41)	0.032
NS corpus	54,699 (16,882.41)	1,044 (322.22)	0.019

tween the corpora. In our more qualitative analysis, 500 PP examples were selected randomly in each corpus with two objectives in mind: the analysis of the uses of the PP across the four semantic contexts described above, and the identification of erroneous uses. Finally, temporal adverbials categorised by Davydova (2011) as conveying current relevance (*never, ever, always, just (now), today, in my life, lately, often, before (now), at present, up till now, so far, (as) yet, already, during these # years past, here with, since, for, in/over {the} recent*) were searched via AntConc (Anthony, 2014)<sup>5</sup> with the objective of detecting cases where other tense forms were used instead of the PP.

## RESULTS

### On Frequency Significance

Differences between the Russian and Spanish corpora were tested for statistical significance. The significance of the differences in frequencies was calculated with chi-squared tests and  $p$ -values. For values  $\leq 5$ , the Fisher exact test was used for calculating  $p$ -values. Statistical significance was conventionalised as follows: 0.1% level when  $p \leq .001$ , 1% level when  $p \leq .01$  and 5% level when the significance of the variation is reported by a  $p$ -value  $\leq .05$ . Firstly, the frequency of the PP is significantly higher in the Spanish corpus ( $\chi^2$  ranges from 1796.20, when compared to the Russian corpus, to 121.86 with respect to the NS corpus;  $p \leq .01$ ,  $df=1$ ). Secondly, the ratios of the PP per verbal form demonstrate that the Russian corpus contains the lowest number of PP forms per total number of verbs.

### Semantic Contexts of the PP

As already mentioned, the qualitative analysis of the data involved the random selection of 500 sentences with PP forms from each of the three corpora. In particular, for each corpus, randomised lists of examples were generated by Microsoft Excel, out of which we selected the first 500 instances from

each corpus. The examples were manually classified into five groups according to the semantic contexts identified above: resultative, experiential, recent past, extended-now and other. The last category ('other') comprises the instances of erroneous use of the PP that cannot be categorised among the other semantic contexts, as in example (16):

- (16) *Independent on the amount of money humans have had, they always try to make the world around them pretty* (Rus).

To ensure methodological reliability, the categorisation of the examples was carried out by native (Russian or Spanish) linguists and confirmed by native non-linguist speakers.<sup>6</sup> The former made the final decision in a few instances of disagreement. The results are given in Tables 3 and 4.

Overall, it was found that there is a significant variation in the use of the PP in all semantic contexts across the three languages except the experience one. As shown in Table 3, in the three corpora the PP is most frequently used in the resultative context. However, in the Russian students' texts this context is attested less often than in the Spanish students' and native speakers' texts ( $p < .001$ ). The PP is more frequently used in recent past, extended-now and experience contexts in the Russian learners' essays than in the other corpora. The differences were found to be statistically significant for recent past (both when compared to the Spanish students' and the native speakers' texts) and extended-now (only with the Spanish learners' essays), but not for experience. The differences in the uses of the semantic contexts of the PP between the Spanish students' and the NS texts were found not to be statistically significant.

### Erroneous Contexts with the PP

At the next stage of the analysis, we investigated the erroneous contexts with the PP in the Russian and Spanish corpora. As reflected in Table 5, it was found that the number of erroneous uses of the PP among the 500 randomly selected

<sup>5</sup> Anthony, L. (2014). *AntConc* (Version 3.4.4) [Computer Software]. Tokyo: Waseda University.

<sup>6</sup> Regarding diatopic variation, two key points are noteworthy. First, the reliability of inter-coder assessments remains unaffected by the coder's British/American variety of English. This is ensured by the double-checking of the categorisation of the semantic contexts carried out by native English and American informants. Second, despite the reported distinctions between the two varieties of English concerning the use of the PP in the resultative context, our overall results remain unbiased. This impartiality is guaranteed by the random selection of data and the balanced representation of British and American essays in the corpus (British pupils' A level essays: 60,209 words, British university students' essays: 95,695 words, American university students' essays: 168,400 words).

**Table 3**

*Raw Frequencies and Percentages of the Mains Uses of the PP*

	Recent past	Extended-now	Experience	Result	Other
Russian corpus	50 (10%)	86 (17%)	61 (12%)	290 (58%)	13 (3%)
Spanish corpus	23 (5%)	52 (10%)	47 (9%)	368 (74%)	10 (2%)
NS corpus	11 (2%)	68 (14%)	44 (9%)	377 (76%)	0

**Table 4**

*Significance Tests of the Variations in Table 3*

Semantic contexts	Overall			Russian vs. Spanish			Russian vs. NS			Spanish vs. NS		
	chi-square	p-value	df	chi-square	p-value	df	chi-square	p-value	df	chi-square	p-value	df
Recent past	30.19	<.001	2	9.99	.002	1	25.21	<.001	1	3.68	.055	1
Extended-now	9.77	.008	2	9.15	.003	1	2.22	.136	1	2.13	.144	1
Experience	3.62	.164	2	1.23	.268	1	2.06	.151	1	0.05	.826	1
Result	42.81	<.001	2	26.35	<.001	1	33.30	<.001	1	0.34	.562	1
Other	-	-	2	0.18	.6731	1	-	-	1	-	-	1

**Table 5**

*Proportions and Raw Frequencies of Tenses Replacing the PP in Spanish and Russian Learners' Essays*

	Past Simple	Present Simple	Past Perfect	Would + perfect infinitive
Spanish corpus	29 (82%)	5 (18%)	-	-
Russian corpus	15 (52%)	11 (38%)	2 (7%)	1 (3%)

examples in the two corpora is almost the same (29 cases in the Russian corpus vs. 34 cases in the Spanish corpus).

First, both Spanish and Russian learners tend to use the PP extensively instead of the Past Simple, especially with definite past expressions (see examples (17) and (18)). Second, the following most common type of error is the use of the PP instead of the Simple Present (18% i.e. 5 cases in the Spanish corpus, and 38% i.e. 11 examples in the Russian corpus) – see examples (19) and (20). Third, there is a larger variety of tense forms that would be appropriate instead of the PP in the Russian students' texts than in the Spanish corpus. Apart from Past Simple and Present Simple, there are examples where Past Perfect or *would+perfect infinitive* should have been used (see examples (21) and (22)).

(17) *... but in last years another terrorist group, called Al Qaeda, has murdered a lot of people in the famous attempt in Madrid in 2004 (Span).*

(18) *For example, last year in the social network "Vkontakte" public page "Just do it" has become really popular (Rus).*

(19) *That is, they enjoy to hangout with friends on a Friday or Saturday night, going to clubs and discos, and so on, until the sun rises and a new day have come (Span).*

(20) *Unfortunately, original disk with music or film have cost about 15-20 dollars per disk (Rus).*

(21) *I've worked for an year in HP company and it helped me to fulfill need of my current professors and to avoid misunderstanding with them (Rus).*

(22) *[Firstly, food import gives the opportunity for the population of the country to taste the foreign products that can't grow in their country because of the different reasons, such as climate or the lack of resources.] For instance, people in Russia have never had a chance to taste bananas, oranges and another exotic fruits without the import of products from Africa as an example (Rus).*

Subsequently, we analysed the examples with the temporal expressions listed in the Data and method section in order to detect sentences where other tense forms were used instead of the PP. In the Russian corpus 68 sentences were identified, which amount to 23% of all contexts with specific temporal adverbials. The Spanish corpus contains 19 instances of this sort, which make only 4% of the contexts with temporal adverbials. Table 6 displays the raw frequencies and the proportions of tenses that were used by the learners instead of the PP in the two corpora.



**Table 6***Proportions and Raw Frequencies of Tenses Replacing the PP with Temporal Adverbials*

	Past Simple	Present Simple	Past Continuous	Present Continuous
Spanish corpus	14 (74%)	3 (16%)	-	2 (10%)
Russian corpus	42 (61%)	24 (36%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)

Not surprisingly, the most common tense that is used where the PP would be appropriate by both Russian and Spanish learners is Past Simple (see examples (23) and (24)). The striking observation here is that Russian learners underuse the PP in its prototypical contexts much more often than Spanish learners, the frequency of present tenses being similar to that of the past tenses. The second most popular tense used instead of the PP is Present Simple, illustrated in (25) and (26):

- (23) *Historically, women were always better at house-keeping or cooking* (Rus).
- (24) *Cannabis, which was known at the same time in both China and Antique Greece for 15.000 years,...* (Span).
- (25) *There are lots of crashes in recent years* (Rus).
- (26) *To sum up, there are many arguments concerning the safety of the world since the war against terrorism began* (Span).

In the next stage of the investigation we focused on the substitutes for the PP which demonstrated a higher percentage of errors in sentences with temporal adverbials in the two learner corpora. The results are given in Table 7.

The results evince different patterns. While the most common semantic context requiring the PP in the Russian corpus is talking about recent past, in the Spanish corpus this context accounts for the smallest number of errors ( $p < .001$ ), while the extended-now context was the most problematic for Spanish learners ( $p = .0121$  when compared to the Russian students' texts).

The choice of tenses used instead of the PP by Russian and Spanish students also seems to be quite different, as reflected in Table 8, where we have also tested the statistical significance for all the variations.

In the resultative context, the most popular choice in the Russian learner texts was the Present Simple tense ( $p = .0013$  when compared to the Spanish), illustrated in (27). By contrast, in the Spanish corpus, Past Simple is more frequently used in this case, as in (28). However, this difference was not found to be statistically significant.

- (27) *But the influence on human consuming such produce and animal meat is not studied yet.*

- (28) *However, it seems to me that this does not have to be directly related with the wearing of the veil, as I already observed above.*

A significant difference was revealed for the experience context, where Past Simple was more frequently used by the Russian students (in (29)).

- (29) *Unfortunately, only few people felt themselves really happy* (Rus).

Another noticeable difference is related to the recent-past context, where Russian students sometimes use Past Simple or Present Continuous, but the most common choice for both groups of learners is Present Simple:

- (30) *In recent years there are a wide range of crashes of planes* (Rus).
- (31) *Secondly, lately the world lives terrified by the fear of a war in which nuclear weapons could be used* (Span).

## DISCUSSION

This study has focused on the usage of the PP by Russian and Spanish learners of ESL through the quantitative and qualitative analysis of comparable University essays. The selection of L1 Russian and L1 Spanish students meets justification in this investigation in light of the systematic differences between the two languages: whereas Russian lacks a tense paradigmatically equivalent to the English PP, the Spanish paradigm contains a PP tense structurally identical to the corresponding English verbal tense. In consequence, this study involving L2 English produced by Russian and Spanish students constitutes a perfect context to check transfer issues as well as L1 influence on L2.

As regards the first research question 'Which students use the PP more frequently in their writing, Russian or Spanish learners?', the data have revealed, first, that the PP is more common in the Spanish learners' texts than in the Russian corpus, therefore confirming our hypothesis that Russian students, who lack the PP tense in their native language, use this tense form less frequently. In this respect, we agree with Fuchs and Werner (2018) that transfer from native languages that lack a structure similar to the PP in the L2s might be responsible for lower PP frequencies in the latter varieties. By comparison, transfer from L1 languages that have a structure similar to the English PP might explain why in some L2 varieties the PP is more frequent (see Fuchs et

**Table 7**

*Percentages and Raw Frequencies of Semantic Contexts where the PP is Replaced with Another Verbal Alternative in Spanish and Russian Essays*

	Russian	Spanish	p-value
Result	14 (21%)	3 (16%)	.0006
Experience	12 (18%)	4 (21%)	.0040
Extended-now	18 (26%)	11 (58%)	.0121
Recent past	24 (35%)	1 (5%)	<.0001

**Table 8**

*Raw Frequencies and Significance-Test (df=1) Results of Tenses Replacing the PP in Spanish and Russian Essays per Semantic Context*

		Russian	Spanish	Chi-square	p-value
Result	Past Simple	5	2	-	.1152
	Present Simple	9	1	-	.0013
	Present Continuous	0	0	-	-
	Past Continuous	0	0	-	-
Experience	Past Simple	12	4	-	.0040
	Present Simple	0	0	-	-
	Present Continuous	0	0	-	-
	Past Continuous	0	0	-	-
Extended-now	Past Simple	13	8	3.81	.0508
	Present Simple	4	1	-	.0764
	Present Continuous	1	2	-	1
	Past Continuous	0	0	-	-
Recent past	Past Simple	8	0	-	-
	Present Simple	15	1	-	<.0001
	Present Continuous	0	0	-	-
	Past Continuous	1	0	-	-

al., 2016, pp. 248–249). This thesis gains support from the evidence that our study has evinced a much lower ratio of PP forms in REALEC than in the corpus of native speakers of English, and even a much higher ratio of PP forms in the Spanish corpus in comparison with native uses, which prompts a need for additional investigation into the frequency of the PP in Spanish L1. It should be mentioned that cross-linguistic influence also manifests itself in terms of the identified errors connected with the use of other tenses instead of the PP in the Russian students’ essays which can be explained by limited associations that the learners have about the form that is absent in their L1 (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig, 2000).

Second, as far the semantic contexts in which the PP forms are attested are concerned (second research question: ‘What semantic contexts with the PP prevail in the two cor-

pora?’), the data demonstrate that, although the resultative context prevails in the three corpora, in the essays by the Russian students the distribution of the PP instances is more even across the four semantic contexts than in the texts written by the Spanish and the native students. Extending the interpretation derived from the overall frequencies of the PP outlined in the preceding paragraph, the uniform distribution of the PP in the Russian dataset finds rationale in the absence of a native PP in Russian. This absence does not constrain the utilisation of this verbal tense within particular semantic contexts, thereby facilitating its unmarked usage by Russian learners.

With respect to the third research question ‘Which students make more errors in their use of the PP? Which errors can be described as independent of the learners’ L1, and which can be explained by L1 transfer?’, the proportion of er-

rors favouring the PP over other tenses is alike in the two learner corpora, while the number of examples that use verbal forms other than the PP in contexts in which the latter would be more appropriate is higher in the texts by the Russian students. There are two ways to explain this finding. Firstly, early research into PP uses in learner English revealed two types of errors: (i) overgeneralisation of the PP in Simple-Past contexts where the temporal adverbials should co-occur with the Past Simple, and (ii) undergeneralisation, when the Past Simple is used in the PP contexts where the temporal adverbials highlight the relevance of the action, which calls for the use of the PP. Thus, what makes the PP additionally difficult is that learners do not have to struggle only with its formal and functional properties, but also its “semantically close neighbors”, among which the Past Simple is a formidable adversary (Bardovi-Harlig, 1997, p. 376). Errors caused by this twofold operability of the PP can also be justified by the fact that the functional distinction between the PP and the Past Simple is commonly delayed in L2 teaching, as pointed out by, for example, Klein (1995, p. 47), Housen (2002a, p. 163) and Odlin and Alonso Vázquez (2006, p. 54). Secondly, drawing from our experience as EFL professionals, we suggest that most of the incorrect uses of PP in Russian learner writing can be explained by L1 negative transfer, particularly, by the conventions of Russian academic discourse, which regularly give support to the use of the Present tense in describing past events. It was also found that, despite the fact that in the Russian and Spanish learners’ texts the most common tense the PP is confused with is the Past Simple, the Russian students tend to display a larger variety of errors connected with the use of other tenses instead of the PP. It is assumed that this can also be explained by L1 influence, namely, limited associations that the Russian learners have about the PP which is absent in their L1.

Our data also revealed that even though the Spanish language possesses the form of the PP, the number of errors the L1 Spanish learners make when using the English PP is comparable to that made by the L1 Russian learners, which might suggest that the positive transfer from their L1 does not take place in this case. This finding is in line with Antonova-Unlu and Wei’s (2020) conclusion, who studied the use of the accusative case in Turkish by L1 Russian and L1 English learners. The authors hypothesised that, provided that context-dependent definiteness exists in English, the L1 English users of L2 Turkish would have an advantage over the L1 Russian participants and make fewer errors with the use of the accusative case. However, it was found that the L1 English learners were not able to transfer their L1 knowledge to their L2 at the interface domain. In a similar vein, in the multifactorial analysis of the PP as opposed to the Past Simple, Werner et al. (2021) demonstrated that the Chinese and German learners’ native linguistic backgrounds do not influence their uses of the PP and the Past Simple in English. Their study concluded that universal linguistic factors are more essential in the acquisition of the two tenses under

consideration than L1-specific ones, despite the typological differences between the two languages.

## CONCLUSION

This study has delved into the utilisation of the Present Perfect (PP) by Russian and Spanish learners of English, scrutinising transfer patterns between their respective native linguistic frameworks (given that Russian lacks the PP, while Spanish possesses a PP correlate) and the English verb paradigm. In summary, our findings indicate that, while positive transfer explains the overall availability and actual use of the PP by learners, other factors aligned with negative transfer may elucidate the disparities between native usage and the learners’ realisations. Positive transfer is substantiated by the heightened deployment of the PP by L1 Spanish learners, whose native language incorporates this form. Notably, the PP is more prevalent in the Spanish essays than in the native writings. Conversely, the similar frequency of errors across the two L2 corpora suggests that positive transfer alone cannot comprehensively account for the learners’ use of this verbal tense. Indeed, our data have revealed tendencies toward both overgeneralisation (e.g., of adverbs compatible with the PP) and undergeneralisation (e.g., of the identification of semantic contexts conveying the relevance of action), providing grounds for considering the applicability of negative transfer hypotheses.

The previous findings lead us to the conclusion that this study has contributed to a linguistic domain that involves the intersection of syntactic and pragmatic domains that potentially pose challenges for learners. The novelty of this investigation is justified by its research goals, methodology and the potential application of the results. Firstly, to our knowledge, this is the first contrastive examination addressing the materialisation of the PP in sentences produced by Russian and Spanish learners of English, whose linguistic structuring of the verbal paradigms differs markedly. Secondly, in terms of methodology, we have undertaken a comprehensive comparison of both native and non-native linguistic productions, rather than focusing solely on one type of text. Finally, concerning the potential utilisation of the findings in a teaching environment, ESL teaching can leverage the reported results. The difficulties identified in the use of the PP by learners with diverse L1 backgrounds can serve as a foundation for developing learning materials tailored to their specific needs.

As far as the limitations of this research are concerned, we compared the use of the PP only in two varieties of L2 English. Our immediate goal is to provide a fuller picture of the use of the PP in learner English by widening this study’s empirical linguistic evidence with data from other L1 varieties that demonstrate diverse structuring of their verbal paradigms.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Olga Vinogradova for her valuable help with the data collection and the anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments on the earlier drafts.

## DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

None declared.

## REFERENCES

- Antonova Unlu, E. (2019). Pinpointing the role of the native language in L2 learning: Acquisition of spatial prepositions in English by Russian and Turkish native speakers. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 10(2), 241-258. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2016-1009>
- Antonova-Unlu, E., & Wei, L. (2020). Examining possible sources of L2 divergence at the pragmatics interface: Turkish accusative in the end-state grammar of L1 Russian and L1 English users of L2 Turkish. *Lingua*, 244, 102868. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2020.102868>
- Bardovi-Harlig, K. (1997). Another piece of puzzle: The emergence of Present Perfect. *Language Learning*, 47(3), 375-422. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.2001.tb00018.x>
- Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2000). The emergency of verbal morphology. *Language Learning*, 50(1s), 93-190. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0023-8333.50.s1.5>
- Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., & Finegan, E. (1999). *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*. Longman.
- Bulut, T. (2011). The licensing of the English Present Perfect tense by Turkish adults. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1(15), 221-227.
- Bybee, J. L., Perkins, R., & Pagliuca, W. (1994). *The evolution of grammar: Tense, aspect and modality in the languages of the world*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Cai, J. (2010). The Influence of Chinese aspect marker *le* on the simple past marking in English interlanguage: An empirical study of university students in China. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics (Foreign Language Teaching & Research Press)*, 33, 35-47.
- Cartagena, N. (1999). Los tiempos compuestos [The compound times]. In I. Bosque & V. Demonte (Eds.), *Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española. Vol. 2. Las construcciones sintácticas fundamentales. Relaciones temporales, aspectuales y modales* (pp. 2935-2975). Espasa.
- Collins, L. (2002). The roles of L1 influence and lexical aspect in the acquisition of temporal morphology. *Language Learning*, 52(1), 43-94. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9922.00177>
- Comrie, B. (1976). *Aspect: An introduction to the study of verbal aspect and related problems*. Cambridge University Press.
- Copple, M. T. (2009). *A diachronic study of the Spanish perfect(ive): Tracking the constraints on a grammaticalizing construction*. The University of New Mexico.
- Dahl, Ö. (1985). *Tense and aspect systems*. Blackwell.
- Dahl, Ö., & Hedin, E. (2000). Current relevance and event reference. In Ö. Dahl (Ed.) *Tense and aspect in the languages of Europe: Empirical approaches to language typology* (pp. 20-26). Mouton de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110197099>
- Davydova, J. (2011). *The Present Perfect in non-native Englishes. A corpus-based study of variation*. Mouton de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110255027>
- Davydova, J. (2012). Englishes in the outer and expanding circles: A comparative study. *World Englishes*, 31(3), 366-385. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.2012.01763.x>
- Elsness, J. (1997). *The perfect and the preterite in contemporary and earlier English*. Mouton de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110810264>
- Eriksson, A. (2008). *Tense and aspect in advanced Swedish learners' written English*. University of Göteborg.
- Fenn, P. (1987). *A semantic and pragmatic examination of the English Perfect*. Gunter Narr Verlag.

- Fuchs, R., & Werner V. (2018). Tense and aspect in second language acquisition and learner corpus research. *International Journal of Learner Corpus Research*, 4(2), 143–163. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ijlcr.00004.int>
- Fuchs, R., Götz, S., & Werner, V. (2016). The Present Perfect in learner Englishes: A corpus-based case study on L1 German intermediate and advanced speech and writing. In V. Werner, E. Seoane, & C. Suárez-Gómez (Eds.), *Re-assessing the Present Perfect* (pp. 297–338). Walter de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110443530>
- Gorbova, E. (2015). Problems of the Spanish Perfect. *Acta Linguistica Petropolitana*, V(XI, 1), 125–164.
- González, P., & Hernández, L. Q. (2018). Inherent aspect and L1 transfer in the L2 acquisition of Spanish grammatical aspect. *The Modern Language Journal*, 102, 611–625. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12502>
- Harris, M. (1982). The 'past simple' and the 'present perfect' in Romance. In M. Harris, & N. Vincent (Eds.), *Studies in the Romance Verb* (pp. 42–70). Croom Helm.
- Helms-Park, R. (2001). Evidence of lexical transfer in learner syntax. The acquisition of English causatives by speakers of Hindi-Urdu and Vietnamese. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 23(1), 71–102. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263101001036>
- Housen, A. (2002a). The development of tense-aspect in English as Second Language and the variable influence of inherent aspect. In R. Salaberry, & Y. Shirai (Eds.), *The L2 Acquisition of Tense-Aspect Morphology* (pp. 155–197). John Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/lald.27.09hou>
- Housen A. (2002b). A corpus-based study of the L2-acquisition of the English verb system. In S. Granger, J. Hung, & S. Petch-Tyson (Eds.), *Computer learner corpora, second language acquisition and foreign language teaching* (pp. 76–116). John Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/llt.6.08hou>
- Huddleston, R., & Pullum, G. K. (2002). *The Cambridge grammar of the English language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hundt, M., & Smith, N. (2009). The Present Perfect in British and American English: Has there been a change, recently? *ICAME Journal*, 33, 45–63.
- Jarvis, S. (2000). Methodological rigor in the study of transfer: Identifying L1 influence in the interlanguage lexicon. *Language Learning*, 50, 245–309. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0023-8333.00118>
- Jarvis, S., & Odlin, T. (2000). Morphological type, spatial reference, and language transfer. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 22, 535–556. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263100004034>
- Klein, W. (1992). The Present Perfect puzzle. *Language*, 68(3), 525–552.
- Klein, W. (1995). The acquisition of English. In C. Noyau, W. Klein, & R. Dietrich (Eds.), *The acquisition of temporality in a second language* (pp. 31–70). John Benjamins.
- Lavid, J., Arús J., & Zamorano-Mansilla, J. R. (2010). *Systemic functional grammar of Spanish: A contrastive study with English*. Bloomsbury.
- Lehmann, C. (1982). *Thoughts on grammaticalization: A programmatic sketch*. Institut für Sprachwissenschaft Universität.
- Lindstedt, J. (2000). The perfect – aspectual, temporal and evidential. In Ö. Dahl (Ed.), *Tense and aspect in the languages of Europe* (pp. 365–383). Mouton de Gruyter.
- Maslov Y. S. (2004). *Izbrannye Trudy: Aspektologiya. Obschee yazykoznanie* [Selected works: Aspectology. General linguistics]. Yazyki Slavyanskoi Kul'tury.
- Master, P. A. (1987). *A cross-linguistic interlanguage analysis of the acquisition of the English article system* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of California
- Michaelis, L. (1998). *Aspectual grammar and past-time reference*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203029985>
- Mohammed, W. M. (2019). Iraqi EFL university students' recognition and production of Present Perfect tense. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, 9(2), 95–110.
- Odlin, T. (2000). *Language transfer: Cross-linguistic influence in language learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Odlin, T. (2005). Cross-linguistic influence and conceptual transfer: What are the concepts? *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 25, 3–25.
- Odlin, T. (2008). Cross-Linguistic Influence. In C. J. Doughty & M. H. Long (Eds.), *The Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 436–487). Blackwell Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470756492.ch15>
- Odlin, T., & Alonso-Vazquez, C. (2006). Meanings in search of the perfect form: A look at interlanguage verb phrases. *Rivista di Psicolinguistica Applicata*, 6, 53–63. <http://dx.medra.org/10.1400/68093>
- Radden, G., & Dirven, R. (2007). *Cognitive English grammar*. John Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/clip.2>

- Rogatcheva, S. (2012). Perfect problems: A corpus-based comparison of the perfect in Bulgarian and German EFL writing. *Language & Computers*, 74(1), 149–163. [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789401207478\\_011](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789401207478_011)
- Rogatcheva, S. (2014). *Aspect in learner writing: A corpus-based comparison of advanced Bulgarian and German learners' written English*. University of Giessen dissertation.
- Rollinson, P., & Mendikoetxea, A. (2010). Learner corpora and Second Language Acquisition: Introducing WriCLE (pp. 1–12). In J. L. Bueno Alonso, D. González-Álvarez, Ú. Kirsten-Torrado, A. E. Martínez-Insua, J. Pérez-Guerra, E. Rama-Martínez, & R. Rodríguez-Vázquez (Eds.), *Analizar datos > Describir variación / Analysing data > Describing variation*. Universidade de Vigo.
- Seoane, E., & Suárez-Gómez, C. (2013). The expression of the perfect in East and South-East Asian Englishes. *English World-Wide*, 34(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1075/eww.34.1.01seo>
- Shirai, Y., & Andersen, R. W. (1995). The acquisition of tense-aspect morphology: A prototype account. *Language*, 71(4), 743–762.
- Siemund, P. (2004). Substrate, superstate and universal Perfect constructions in Irish English. In B. Kortmann (Ed.) *Dialectology meets typology: Dialect grammar from a cross-linguistic perspective* (pp. 401–434). Mouton de Gruyter.
- Schmid, H. (1994). Probabilistic Part-of-Speech tagging using decision trees. *Proceedings of International Conference on New Methods in Language Processing*. Manchester.
- Schmid, H. (1995). Improvements in Part-of-Speech tagging with an application to German. *Proceedings of the ACL SIGDAT-Workshop*. Dublin.
- Schwenter, S. A. (1994). The grammaticalization of an anterior in progress: Evidence from a Peninsular Spanish dialect. *Studies in Language*, 18(1), 71–111.
- Spada, N. & Lightbown, P. (1999) Instruction, first language influence, and developmental readiness in second language acquisition. *Modern Language Journal*, 83, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0026-7902.00002>
- Squartini, M., & Bertinetto, P. M. (2000). The Simple and Compound Past in Romance languages. In Ö. Dahl (Ed.), *Tense and aspect in the languages of Europe: Empirical approaches to language typology* (pp. 20–62). Mouton de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110197099.3.403>
- Tagliamonte, S. (2000). The grammaticalization of the Present Perfect in English. In O. Fischer, A. Rosenbach, & D. Stein (Eds.), *Pathways of change. Grammaticalization in English* (pp. 329–354). John Benjamins. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/slcs.53.16tag>
- Telin N. B. (1988). On the systemic status of the perfective meaning in functional grammar O sistemnom statuse perfektnogo znacheniya v funkcional'noi grammatike]. In Yu. N. Karaulov (Ed.), *Language: System and functioning* (pp. 236–249). Nauka.
- Uno, M. (2014). Lexical aspect in the use of the Present Perfect by Japanese EFL learners. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 52(1), 31–57. <https://doi.org/10.1515/iral-2014-0002>
- van der Wurff, W. (1999). Some observations on the Present Perfect puzzle in pedagogical grammars of English. In G. A. J. Tops, B. Devriendt, & S. Geukens (Eds.), *Thinking English grammar* (pp. 471–484). Peeters.
- Vinogradova, O. (2019). To automated generation of test questions on the basis of error annotations in EFL essays: A time-saving tool? In S. Götz, & J. Mukherjee (Eds.), *Learner corpora and language teaching* (pp. 29–48). John Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/scl.92>
- Werner, V. (2013). Temporal adverbials and the Present Perfect/past tense alternation. *English World-Wide*, 34(2), 202–240. <https://doi.org/10.1075/eww.34.2.04wer>
- Werner, V. (2014). *The Present Perfect in World Englishes: Charting unity and diversity*. University of Bamberg Press.
- Werner V., Fuchs R., Götz S. (2021). L1 influence vs. universal learning mechanisms: An SLA-driven corpus study on temporal expression. In B. Le Bruyn & M. Paquot (Eds.), *Second language acquisition and learner corpora* (pp. 39–66). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108674577>
- Winford, D. (1993). Variability in the use of perfect *have* in Trinidadian English: A problem of categorical and semantic mismatch. *Language Variation and Change*, 5, 141–188. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S09543394500001459>
- Yao, X., & Collins, P. (2012). The Present Perfect in World Englishes. *World Englishes*, 31(3), 386–403. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.2012.01756.x>