

THE PRESENT PERFECT IN ENGLISH AND
IN CATALAN USES AND MEANINGS

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THE PRESENT PERFECT IN ENGLISH AND IN CATALAN.
USES AND MEANINGS

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NOTE: The items whose number appears simply between brackets belong to the corpus of data studied in this dissertation. The numbers make reference to the order number of Appendix A (where the items are listed).

The items whose number appears between brackets preceded by the letter e, e.g. (e1), are examples provided ad hoc by the author of this dissertation to illustrate the explanations given.

O .

INTRODUCTION

0.1. Preliminaries

The idea of this dissertation occurred to me as a result of my experience as a translator. One of the basic problems that translators come across is the translation of the tenses of the verbs. My first idea was to do a contrastive analysis of the tense systems of English and Catalan, but I soon found out that this is too wide an enterprise. I finally decided to reduce it to a comparative analysis of the present perfect in both languages, which involves the study of the whole verbal system, paradigmatically and syntagmatically, and the study of all the elements in the verb phrase. The present perfect was chosen for two main reasons. The first is that it is a problematic area of English grammar, because it is not always easy to establish the difference between the present perfect and the simple past. The second is that the English present perfect is typically used mistakenly by Catalan learners, and vice versa. This seemed to be an indication that the present perfect is used differently in the two languages, and that it might be interesting to study the exact nature of this difference.

Contrastive analyses of two languages, or of

particular aspects of two languages are not new. Stockwell et al. (1965), for example, study the grammatical structures of English and Spanish, and Kufner (1962) does the same with English and German. Other authors have studied specific areas of two languages: Mori (1980) studies the causal infinitive clauses of English and Spanish, and Fente Gómez (1971) compares the verb systems of English and Spanish. Comprehensive analyses of this kind in English and Catalan do not exist. In a contrastive analysis of a given aspect of the grammar of two (or more) languages, the first step is to describe thoroughly the structure under study in each language, and then carry out the actual comparison. This is what is done in this dissertation.

The comparison of different languages can be used, at the theoretical level, to establish the existence of language universals. On the other hand, it has a series of practical applications. In the first place, a good contrastive analysis of two languages (or of certain aspects of two languages) is of invaluable help to the translator, see for example Vinay & Darbelnet (1971) for English and French. Second, contrastive analysis has been widely applied to foreign language teaching (Alatis 1968, Halliday et al. 1964, Lado 1957). In the third place, the comparison of two languages allows the linguist to do a

thorough description of the grammatical structures under study in each language (Stockwell et al. 1965, Mori 1980).

In this dissertation we will do a contrastive analysis of the present perfect in English and in Catalan, hoping that it will be of help to the translator and to the English teacher. We will also try to give a thorough and comprehensive description of the use of the present perfect in English and in Catalan. Occasionally, when it is felt necessary, reference will be made to other languages, such as Spanish, French, German and Italian.

The present perfect is problematic, not only because of its relationship with the simple past, but also because it is not clear whether it is a tense or an aspect. Traditionally it has been considered an aspect because of its formal resemblance with the progressive, which is uncontroversially thought of as an aspect. On the other hand, as Comrie (1976), Lyons (1977) and Quirk et al. (1985) observe, the present perfect is like a tense in that it is deictic (it locates the action of the verb in reference to the moment of speech). For these authors, then, the issue of whether the perfect is a tense or an aspect is very complex. This issue will be taken up in section 2.2.

0.2. Objectives

This work studies contrastively the present perfect in English and in Catalan. The first thing that must be done in order to carry out such a study is to establish the uses of the present perfect independently in each language.

The present perfect is studied within the verbal system of each language, and the relationships and contrasts to other tenses are considered when relevant. The most important contrast, and the one which will be dealt with in detail, is the opposition between the present perfect and the simple past. All the theories presented in Chapter 1, which try to define the meaning of the present perfect, are in fact theories about the preterit/ perfect opposition. This is due to the fact that both tenses indicate actions previous to the moment of speech, and to the fact that the difference between them cannot always be satisfactorily explained. The theories aim at establishing the environments for each of these two forms, and the meanings of each construction in each environment.

Most of the theories reviewed in Chapter 1 claim that the present perfect has a general meaning (Gesamtbedeutung), which is common to all the uses of this aspect. Some of the meanings proposed are continuative

past, present result, indefinite past and extended now. The various uses of the present perfect are then said to be simply the interplay of this general meaning with contextual variants such as the lexical meaning of the verb, the aspectual character of the verb, or the presence or absence of adverbials.

In our opinion, it is not possible to find a Gesamtbedeutung of the present perfect that gives account of all the uses of this tense, either in English or in Catalan. The only common denominator is that the present perfect expresses 'a past somehow connected with the present'. The nature of this connection, however, is so vague that it does not allow to predict or to justify all the actual instances of the present perfect. We have adopted a functional-semantic approach that divides the present perfect into four types: experiential perfect, perfect of persistent situation, perfect of result and perfect of recent past, and then we have studied each type of perfect on its own in each of the two languages under consideration.

In Chapter 2 we try to account for the use of the present perfect in English and in Catalan, following this functional-semantic model. This approach is loosely based on Comrie (1976), who claims that the four types of perfect mentioned above are universal. We have taken

Comrie's proposal as the basis for our investigation, enlarging it where necessary.

As far as English is concerned, we have had to establish a fifth use of the present perfect not mentioned by Comrie, the non-deictic use:

(e1) When you have read it all, let me know.

(e2) If he hasn't called tomorrow, we will have to inform the police.

Moreover, we have linked each type of perfect to a series of contextual conditions, such as the aspectual character of the verbs and the co-occurrence of adverbials. For example, the perfect of persistent situation typically occurs with atelic verbs and is always accompanied by an adverbial indicating time span.

As regards Catalan, we propose in 2.5. an original description of the use of the present perfect in this language. We have taken as the basis the functional-semantic approach developed for English, complemented by the information about this aspect found in the traditional grammars by Fabra (1956) and Badia Margarit (1962). The description has been further enlarged by our own investigation. In the first place, we have postulated the existence of the experiential perfect in Catalan, not mentioned by either of these authors. In the second place, we have given a stricter definition of the perfect of

recent past (which corresponds to Badia Margarit's 'perfect of unfinished period' and 'perfect used to express an action that has just taken place'). In the third place, we have determined that the Catalan perfect of recent past is a hodiernal past, that is, that it has the day as its default value, and, moreover, that it is the only possible tense to talk about events occurred within the last twenty-four hours. Apart from this, we have established the aspectual character of the verb and occurrence of adverbials for each type of perfect.

The actual comparison of the present perfect in English and in Catalan is directly based on the study of the data. In all the literature on the present perfect available to us (be it in English or in Catalan), a given theory on this tense is proposed and then examples are provided to prove the author's point. We have also invented our own examples in the chapter devoted to the theoretical study of the present perfect, to illustrate the explanations given. But in the chapter in which the study of the data is done we have tried to see if our proposals were valid by checking them against actual instances of the present perfect. A new and comprehensive body of data is presented in this dissertation, a database that can be used for other purposes. The corpus consists

of 665 English verb phrases and their Catalan translations, and has been gathered objectively: we have collected all the cases in which there was a present perfect either in English or in Catalan i) from four film scripts and ii) from certain chapters of four police novels.

The application of a given descriptive model to a corpus of real data has an important consequence: it reveals the possible shortcomings of the theory proposed. Some of these deficiencies can be overcome by enlarging or constraining the theory. In other cases, the model simply cannot give account of the facts. In this dissertation, both phenomena are found. First, after studying the data in detail, we have had to establish new environments for the perfect. For example, the perfect of persistent situation is possible in Catalan if the sentence is negative.

(e3) No he vist en Pere des de fa deu anys.

We have also discovered that some perfect meanings can be expressed with forms which were not mentioned in the theoretical study of the perfect done in Chapter 2. For instance, the perfect of persistent situation can be expressed both in English and in Catalan with the simple past accompanied by the adverbs already/ja and a definite

point in time.

(e4) a. In 1987 we already lived in Matadepera.

b. El 1987 ja vivíem a Matadepera.

Second, while studying the data, we have come across certain facts that are not fully accounted for neither by our theory nor by any of the other theories presented in Chapter 1. A case in point is the impossibility to use the present perfect in English to express certain very recent actions which have a clear connection with the present moment, such as (e5), (e6), (e7) and (e8).

(e5) What did you say? (to request a repetition)

(e6) I didn't say that (in a conversation, right after having said something.)

(e7) What was that? (right after a big noise has been heard)

(e8) I overslept this morning (uttered at 9 o'clock in the morning.)

A new proposal for the use of the present perfect in English and in Catalan, based on the study of the data, appears in Chapter 4. In this proposal, several aspects are included: i) the relationship between the aspectual character of the verb (telic/atelic) and the type of perfect; ii) the adverbials that co-occur with each kind of perfect; iii) maps of the usage of the present perfect

in English and in Catalan, and of the expression of the present perfect meanings in both languages; iv) a schematic summary of the forms that express each present perfect meaning (persistent situation, experiential, result and recent past); and v) the uses of the perfect not fully explained by our theory.

In summary, this dissertation has two main objectives. The first is to establish the distribution of the present perfect in English and in Catalan. The perfect can be divided into four different types (perfect of persistent situation, experiential perfect, perfect of recent past and perfect of result), which represent the most comprehensive way of accounting for the use of the present perfect in both languages. The second aim is to compare the present perfect in English and in Catalan. This is done by applying the theoretical framework to a set of data consisting of English verb phrases and their Catalan translations. The nature of the data allows us to do two things: first, to check the validity of the theory proposed for each language; second, to see if the meanings established in principle for the present perfect can be expressed with other forms in English and in Catalan and, when more than one alternative is possible, the difference(s) in meaning between them.

0.3. The data

The data consist of 665 pairs of English and Catalan verb phrases. In all the cases the English one is the original and the Catalan one the translation. James (1981) and Halliday (1973) claim that translations are a good basis for contextual analysis because they provide the same environment for the two structures (the English one and the Catalan one) that are to be compared.

The aim of this dissertation is to study the meaning of the present perfect in English and in Catalan. This meaning is usually expressed with the present perfect in both languages, but it can also be expressed with other forms, such as the simple past and the present tense. In English and in Catalan, the present perfect always expresses 'present perfect meanings'¹, and, logically, the non-perfect equivalent in the other language will also express these meanings. By taking all present perfect forms into account (whether translated by a present perfect or by another construction), then, we make sure that we consider all the forms that can express the meanings that have in principle been established for the present perfect (perfect of persistent situation, experiential perfect, perfect of result and perfect of recent past). For example, we see that the perfect of

result can be expressed, both in English and in Catalan, with the present perfect (e9), with the present tense of a stative verb and an adjective (e10), and with the simple past (e11).

(e9) a. She has bought a house.

b. S'ha comprat una casa.

(e10) a. The door is closed.

b. La porta està tancada.

(e11) a. My car was stolen and now I have to walk to work.

b. Em van robar el cotxe i ara he d'anar a la feina caminant.

The data have been divided into three groups: i) the items in which there is a perfect in both languages; ii) the items in which the English perfect has been translated into some other form in Catalan; and iii) the items in which the Catalan perfect corresponds to some other form in English. Another possible classification would be according to the type of perfect in English (i.e. perfect of persistent situation, experiential perfect, perfect of result and perfect of recent past), which would allow us to see how the different kinds of English perfects are translated into Catalan. We have chosen the first classification because it allows the comparison in both directions: how the English perfect is related to the

Catalan verb system and vice versa.

The corpus has been listed in two appendices. Appendix A contains a list of the items, numbered (1) to (665), and divided into the three groups just mentioned. Each verb phrase is labelled according to the type of perfect, if it is a present perfect, and according to the tense if it is not. Each item is preceded by a letter and a number that refers it to Appendix B. In this second appendix, the verb phrases are presented within the smallest context necessary to their correct interpretation. The context is important for the interpretation of any utterance, but especially so for the present perfect: the use of the present perfect is often conditioned, not only by syntactic rules, but by pragmatic factors.

0.4. Plan of the work

In Chapter 1 various theories about the preterit/perfect opposition are reviewed, and an assessment of their strengths and weaknesses is given. They are all by twentieth-century linguists, because it is in this century that the difference between the present perfect and the simple past has been more thoroughly studied.

The body of the work is composed of Chapters 2, 3 and 4. In Chapter 2 a theoretical account of the present perfect in English and in Catalan from a functional-semantic point of view is presented. This model is then applied to a corpus of items in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 provides a new model for the use of the present perfect in both languages based both on the theoretical account and on the study of the data.

Chapter 5, the conclusion, discusses the issues dealt with in the previous chapters. It also mentions points related to the present perfect which have not been studied in this work, but which could deserve further investigation.

Finally, two appendices list the items studied. The reader can refer to them if the quotes of the data given in the text are not sufficient.

1 .

THEORIES ABOUT THE PERFECT/ PRETERIT OPPOSITION

1.1. Introduction

All the theories about the present perfect concentrate almost exclusively on the perfect/preterit opposition. The reason is that 'the perfect is to some extent limited by the fact that it shares the same past "territory" as the simple past' (Quirk et al. 1985:190). The contrast of the present perfect with other tenses such as the simple present or the past perfect is also important in establishing its use, but the nature of these contrasts presents no problems, so they do not deserve much comment.

Both the present perfect and the simple past are tenses that are used to talk about past situations. The exact environments in which each of these tenses is used are not always totally clear. There even are occasions in which both forms are possible. According to Quirk et al. (1980:192), in such cases the two tenses are not felt to be interchangeable. They give the following examples:

- (e1) a. Where did you put my purse?
- b. Where have you put my purse?

These two sentences have the same purpose: to find the



purse. In (e1a), however, the speaker seems to want the addressee to remember a past action, whereas in (e1b) what matters is where the purse is now.

In sentences with always, ever and never, on the other hand, some authors (Leech 1987 and Jespersen 1909-1949) agree that the two forms are freely interchangeable - although Jespersen claims that the simple past is more idiomatic than the present perfect.

(e2) a. I have always wanted to be a policeman.

b. I always wanted to be a policeman.

(e3) a. I have never met a person like you before.

b. I never met a person like you before.

There are contexts, then, in which there seems to be no difference between the perfect and the past.

Several theories have been proposed to account for the problematic distinction between the present perfect and the simple past in English. All the theories agree in one major point: the present perfect expresses a past which is somehow related to the moment of speech, whereas the simple past expresses a past disconnected from the moment of speech. Huddleston (1984) writes that the present perfect denotes an inclusive past (of the present), and the simple past denotes an exclusive past. Other authors (Quirk et al.

1985, Leech 1987, Comrie 1976) claim that the defining characteristic of the present perfect is that it expresses 'current/ present relevance'.

On the other hand, Twaddell (1968:8-9) points out that the fact that a given verb phrase is non-perfect (i.e. in the simple past) does not mean that the situation expressed by the verb does not have current relevance. The perfect 'explicitly links an earlier event or state with the current situation. It signals a significant persistence of results, a continued truth-value, a valid present relevance of the effects of earlier events, the continued reliability of conclusions based on earlier behaviour'. The simple past 'neither affirms nor denies that the earlier event or state is linked with the current situation'. We could reformulate this by saying that the present perfect is [+ current relevance], whereas the simple past is [± current relevance]. Therefore, sometimes only one form is possible, sometimes both can be used (with or without a difference in meaning).

The difference between the present perfect and the simple past is an issue which is dealt with in many works on English grammar: in works dealing specifically with the verb (Baker 1989, Diver 1964, Joos 1968, Leech 1987, Palmer 1965 & 1974, Rot 1988, Twaddell 1968), in English grammars

(Huddleston 1984, Jespersen 1909-49, Quirk et al. 1985, Swan 1980), in works dealing with aspect and/or tense (Comrie 1976, Hornstein 1977, Smith 1981), in works dealing with other areas in linguistics, such as semantics, logic or pragmatics (Lyons 1977, Reichenbach 1947, Sperber and Wilson 1986). Apart from these works, there are others which study specifically the present perfect and which also take into consideration this opposition (Li & Thompson 1982, McCoard 1978, Vanneck 1958).

This chapter will be devoted to surveying briefly the major theories that try to characterize the present perfect and keep it distinct from the other closely related tenses, mainly the past tense. All the theories presented throw some light on the use of the present perfect, but none of them seem to account fully for all the facts.

1.2. Continuative past theory

The defenders of this theory, such as Leech (1987) and Baker (1989), claim that the present perfect [with the appropriate adverbials and with atelic verbs] is the only possible form to express an action that started in the past and continues up to the moment of speech. Conversely, only the simple past is possible if the period of time is over. This is true as a general rule, as the following examples show:

- (e4) a. Mary **has worked** as a teacher since 1978.
b. *Mary **worked** as a teacher since 1978.
- (e5) a. Mary **worked** as a teacher from 1978 to 1981.
b. *Mary **has worked** as a teacher from 1978 to 1981.

However, the present perfect can also express actions which occurred in the past, but which do not continue up to the moment of speech:

- (e6) a. Peter **has read** Ulysses three times.
b. Peter **has just finished** his homework.
c. Peter **has left**.

This theory, then, cannot account for all the instances of present perfect that are found in English.

As for Catalan, since the use of the present perfect to express actions that started in the past and still continue in the present is very marginal, this theory is not very appropriate to explain the difference between the simple past and the present perfect. In Catalan, the perfect with the meaning of continuative past is only possible if the sentence is negative, (e7), or if there is a sempre-like adverbial in the sentence, (e8).

(e7) No he vist en Pere des de fa dos anys.

(e8) Sempre li han agradat els dolços.

1.3. Present result theory

Most authors that have studied the present perfect agree that this tense is used, among other things, to express a past situation with present results (Joos 1968, Bauer 1970, Comrie 1976, Huddleston 1984, Quirk et al. 1985, Leech 1987). This meaning is clearest with verbs that denote a change of state, (e9) and (e10).

(e9) Peter **has become** a professor. (He is now a professor.)

(e10) The plane **has landed**. (It is now on the ground.)

(43) 'God, the old ducks **have sent** me half a chemist shop.' (Now I have half a chemist shop.)

(48) 'We **have been given** a blank cheque as far as the resources of the organization are concerned.'
(We now have a blank cheque.)

The present perfect, in fact, indicates that the results still hold, but the use of the simple past does not necessarily indicate the opposite. In the following examples the two forms are interchangeable, provided that the result of the action still holds. If the result is not operative, only the simple past is correct.

(562) 'They **passed/have passed** the ball to me.' (Now I am in charge of the case.)

(562') 'They **passed/*have passed** the ball to me' (... but I refused to take the case).

(556) 'No! no no I **changed/have changed** my mind.'
(Now I have a different opinion.)

(556') 'No! no no I **changed**/***have changed** my mind'
(... but then I realized that my first decision
was better.)

Moreover, the use of the past is compulsory if there is an adverbial denoting the moment/period of time in which the action took place:

(e11) Peter **became**/***has become** a professor in 1987 (he is now a professor).

(e12) The plane **landed**/***has landed** two hours ago (it is now on the ground).

(561) 'Eddy. **When'd** they **pull**/***have** they pulled you out off a beat?'

So far the rules appear to be clear: both the present perfect and the simple past can be used to express the meaning of result, provided that there is not a time-when adverbial in the sentence, and there seems to be no difference in meaning between the two forms.

Notwithstanding, there are cases in the data in which the meaning of result is clear, but only the simple past is possible.

(557) 'Four years he **went** to law school and all he

(558) **learned** how to say is Cool it?'

(563) 'Now, where **did** that locomotive **get** to?'

Native speakers consulted felt that the actions denoted by the verbs were too distant in time for the use of the present perfect, in spite of the obvious present results of

the past actions.

On the other hand, there are also cases in which only the present perfect is possible:

(e13) A: What was that?

B: Peter has arrived.

Summing up, present result is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the use of the present perfect in English. Another important factor in determining the choice between this tense and the simple past seems to be temporal remoteness.

The problems that the present result theory left unsolved in English are also left unsolved in Catalan. In the Romance language the present perfect is also [+result], (e14a) and the simple past [\pm result], (e14a) and (e14b); some degree of recency is needed in order to be able to use the present perfect; and the perfect is incompatible with time-when adverbials specifying the moment of occurrence of the event expressed by the verb, (e15).

(e14) (if the event has taken place before today)

a. He perdut/vaig perdre el carnet de conduir i
encara no me n'he fet un altre.

b. *He perdut/vaig perdre el carnet de conduir,
però ja en tinc un de nou.

(e15) a. Ahir vaig perdre/*he perdut el carnet de
conduir, i encara no me n'he fet un altre.

All these conditions are overruled by the fact that in Catalan the present perfect must be used if the event has taken place within the last twenty-four hours, regardless of whether or not the results of the action still hold. We see, then, that this theory is less appropriate to explain the differences between the present perfect and the simple past in Catalan than in English.

1.4. Indefinite past theory

The difference between the present perfect and the simple past has sometimes been explained in terms of indefiniteness versus definiteness (Diver 1964, Quirk et al.1985, Leech 1987). Indefiniteness can refer to different areas, such as determiners, pro-forms, subjects. Various accounts of indefiniteness have been provided, relating the use of the tenses (perfect and past) to other aspects, such as the articles, the co-occurrence with adverbials or the subjects.

Leech (1987) claims that the contrast between the perfect and the past is exactly parallel to the contrast between the indefinite article a/an and the definite article the. The and the simple past are used when the speaker is making reference to a definite being/thing or a definite time. Definiteness can be achieved through previous mention (e16) or uniqueness of reference (e17).

- (e16) a. All of a sudden he saw two boys and one girl.
The girl had long blond hair.
- b. Oh yes, I have read Ulysses. I liked it very much.
- (e17) a. Did you take the car to the body shop?
(Speaker and addressee have a specific car in mind.)
- b. America was discovered by Columbus. (There is only one America.)

Leech's theory explains the use of the present perfect in

the examples he gives, but it cannot account for sentences such as the following:

(e18) Oh, yes, I have been to Ireland. In fact, I've **been** there three times. (previous mention, definite reference)

(e19) Shakespeare **has written** impressive dramas. (uniqueness of reference, definite reference)

According to Leech, in the following examples only the simple past is possible, even if the actions are recent, because there is 'implicit definition'.

(e20) What **were** you given on your birthday? (I know that it was your birthday and that you got presents.)

(e21) Did you **have** a good time? (... when you went to that party.)

In our opinion, the concept of 'implicit definition' is simply an attempt to explain examples that otherwise would be unaccounted for.

Swan (1980) accounts for examples such as (e20) and (e21) saying that the present perfect is not used because the action is completed.

Other theories that use the concept of indefiniteness relate it to the adverbials with which each tense can co-occur. According to these theories, the present perfect cannot be used with time-when adverbials because they

indicate a specific point/period of time.

(e22) Mary went/*has gone to the cinema yesterday/a couple of hours ago.

(e23) a. Mary has seen Gone With The Wind three times.

b. Mary saw/*has seen Gone With The Wind yesterday, last Monday and a couple of weeks ago.

Nonetheless, the present perfect does co-occur with adverbials that express a definite time, such as since this morning, from 1980, today. The difference between these adverbials and adverbials such as from 1976 to 1981 (also expressing a time span) is that the former extend to the moment of speech and the latter do not. We see, then, that the present perfect can occur with definite time adverbials. On the other hand, the simple past can appear with indefinite time adverbials such as always, ever and never:

(e24) a. She always hoped she would become a pianist.

b. They were never willing to help.

Indefiniteness, then, is not a useful criterion to distinguish the two tenses.

When the present perfect is used to refer to actions that have taken place in the immediate past it is said to express 'recent indefinite past'.

- (e25) a. Mary **has just finished** her homework.
b. Mary **finished** her homework **just now**.

According to the theory, (e25a) with just would express recent indefinite past and (e25b) with just now recent definite past. Both sentences refer to the same action and, if there is a difference in meaning between them, it is clearly not a matter of definiteness. The difference between (e25a) and (e25b) is rather a matter of focus: in (e25a) the focus is on her homework and in (e25b) it is on just now.

Diver (1964) goes even further and says that the present perfect signals indefinite past time, and that there are no exceptions. Expressions that might seem definite are turned into indefinite by the present perfect. The examples he gives are:

- (e26) He **has played** golf on **Tuesday**. (It does not make reference to a specific Tuesday.)
(e27) I **have gone** skating on **Christmas day**. (It means on a Christmas day.)

In (e26) and (e27) it is actually the case that the present perfect does not make reference to a specific Tuesday/Christmas day, whereas the simple past does. However, if we apply this theory strictly to examples such

as (e28a) and (e28b), we would have to conclude that this morning is definite in (e28a) and indefinite in (e28b). This is clearly not true. The difference between these two sentences is not a matter of definiteness versus indefiniteness.

(e28) a. I saw him this morning.

b. I have seen him this morning.

In Catalan time-when adverbials can occur with the present perfect if they are included within the last twenty-four hours (e28) or if they include the moment of speech (e30).

(e29) La Maria ha arribat aquest matí (uttered in the morning, afternoon or evening of the same day).

(e30) Aquesta setmana ha plogut molt.

The present perfect is used in Catalan to talk about past events indefinite in time, as we see in (e31) and (e32), but it is also used to talk about events definite in time, as we saw in (e29) and (e30). Indefiniteness is not, then, the major distinguishing feature between the perfect and the past in Catalan.

(e31) La Maria ha estat casada tres cops.

(e32) En Pere ha tingut quatre accidents de cotxe.

1.5. Extended now theory

McCoard (1978) states that the present perfect is used to refer to prior events included in the extended now, whereas the simple past expresses prior events occurred in a past already concluded and separated from the present. According to him, the meanings traditionally established (result, recentness, persistent situation, indefiniteness) are simply different interpretations of the preterit/perfect opposition. These interpretations are determined by factors such as whether a verb is telic or not, whether the meaning of the verb makes it clear that a well defined result will follow or not, and so on.

McCoard (1978:130,135) establishes three groups of adverbials which are supposed to help 'in establishing the semantic nature of the corresponding tenses': those that occur only with the simple past [+THEN], those that occur only with the present perfect [-THEN], and those that are compatible with both tenses [±THEN]. Long ago, yesterday, the other day, last night, after the war are examples of [+THEN] adverbials. At present, up till now, as yet, lately, since the war belong to the [-THEN]-adverbial class. Long since, in the past, today, in my life, for three years, recently, often, always, never, before are some [±THEN] adverbials. There is one curious case: lately can only appear with the present perfect, whereas recently

can occur also with the simple past, although these two adverbs are considered semantically synonymous. This is an indication that the meaning of the adverbs is not a totally defining criterion for the establishment of the meaning of the tenses.

All the [+THEN] adverbials denote periods of time separated from the present moment, so only the simple past is possible with them. Conversely, the [-THEN] adverbials all express periods of time inclusive of the present moment, hence the present perfect must be used with them.

The issue is more complex with [±THEN] adverbials. With some adverbials of this kind, the sentence with the perfect and the sentence with the simple past have different meanings, i.e. they cannot be used to refer to the same state/event or to the same time:

- (e33) a. I have studied German for three years. (I still study German.)
b. I studied German for three years. (I do not study German any more.)

With other adverbials, McCoard claims that there is no difference in meaning:

- (e34) a. Has this house ever been painted?
b. Was this house ever painted?

In our opinion, however, there is a difference in meaning

between these two sentences: (e34a) implies that the house has been painted in more than one occasion, and (e34b) implies that the house has been painted only once.

Other adverbials have different meanings depending on whether they occur with the perfect or with the past:

(e35) a. I've already seen that film.

b. I was already very tired.

In (e35a) already means 'as early as now', and in (e35b) it 'must have a meaning involving a past point of orientation ('as early as then')' (Leech 1987:47).

The most interesting examples are those in which both tenses can be used to refer to the same situation and the meaning changes. In such cases, 'the choice of tense depends on whether the event is thought of as falling sometime within the period coming up to the present, or else the relevant period is thought of as separated from the present, as part of the closed past...' (Koziol 1958:503, quoted by McCoard 1978(129,130). Some examples are:

(e36) a. I have talked to Peter today.

b. I talked to Peter today.

(e37) a. I've had two awful classes this morning.

b. I had two awful classes this morning.

In uttering (e36b), the speaker is indicating that he/she considers that the part of the day in which he/she talked to Peter is finished, separated from the moment of speech. As for the other pair, (e37a) can only be uttered in the morning, whereas (e37b) can be uttered in the morning, afternoon or evening of the same day. If the speaker utters (e37b) in the morning it is to convey that he/she views the part of the morning during which he/she had the two awful classes as over. In the a-sentences the action is considered to have taken place in a past inclusive of the present and in the b-sentences in a past separated from the present, already concluded. It is important to bear in mind, though, as McCoard (1978:130) writes that, 'it may not always be terribly important to the message to make these distinctions, in which case the choice may be arbitrary, or perhaps one form will be utilized because it is the unmarked alternative, thus de-emphasizing the semantic contrast'. This is what happens in example (508) from the data.

(508) 'A: We only have one recorder.

B: No problem. I brought one of my own.'

(508') B: No problem. I've brought one of my own.

Both the sentence with the simple past and that with the present perfect are equally correct. There does not seem to

be any difference in meaning between the two, nor any particular reason to choose one instead of the other.

When there are no adverbials present in a sentence with the present perfect, the period of time is understood as extending into the present. This 'extension' can be real and objectively verifiable, (e38), or rather of a psychological nature, (e39) and (e40).

(e38) Peter has been married three times.

(e39) Peter has bought a new house.

(e40) President Bush has accused Cuba of provoking a tense situation.

In (e38) the period of time referred to is 'all Peter's life', unless it is otherwise specified in the context. In any case, it is clear that it ends at the moment of speech, and hence that Peter is alive, whereas with the simple past it would mean that Peter is dead. (e39) and (e40) could have also been expressed with the simple past. The speaker has chosen to use the present perfect precisely to include the events in the extended now, regardless of whether the actions have taken place today, yesterday or the day before, because he/she considers them relevant. This shows that in some occasions the choice between the simple past and the present perfect depends on 'the speaker's subjective conceptualization of time periods' McCoard (1978:50). The issue of relevance will be dealt with in

more detail in section 1.8.

The extended now theory, then, accounts for the examples in the data in which both the present perfect and the simple past are possible. In some of the cases, it is not clear from the context whether the actions have taken place today or not, for instance (44) and (52). In others it is evident that they have taken place recently, e.g. (136) and (137).

(44) 'He's not talking much these days. The cops have put the fear of God in him.'

(52) 'I've explained it all to Bert, and we're finishing the article together.'

(136) 'Has it been a success or hasn't it?'

(137) 'Our marker flags have been seen in the Turkish trenches.'

All these verb phrases are in the present perfect in the data, and they show that the exact moment of occurrence of the events does not necessarily determine the choice between the perfect and the past. What is at play in examples of this kind is the speaker's subjectivity.

The extended now theory, however, does not explain why the simple past is the only correct tense in examples such as:

(e41) What did you say? (right after a sentence has been said, to request a repetition)

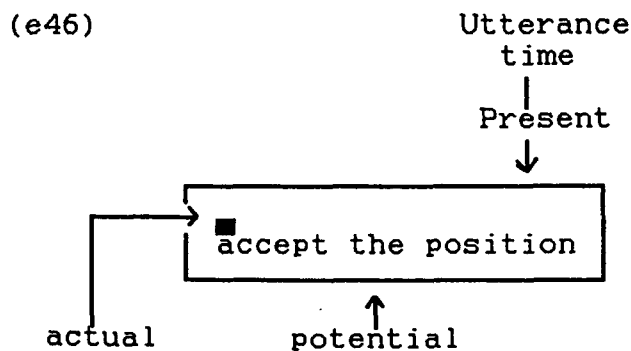
(e42) What was that? (right after a big noise has been heard)

Following McCoard's (1978) formulation of the extended now theory, the events in these examples are not considered by the speaker to be included in the extended now; they are seen as prior events which have taken place in a past already concluded and separated from the present. But the speaker has no choice here; his/her subjective measurements of time play no role. The past tense is the only alternative. The theory does not explain why events such as these cannot be considered to have occurred in the extended now. An explanation that is often given is that the perfect is not possible because the events are completed when they are talked about. But the events are also totally finished in examples such as (e39) and (e40) above and yet the perfect is correct.

Baker (1989:470) introduces a new concept, 'the potential period of occurrence' of a certain event to explain the use of the present perfect in English. If the potential period of occurrence includes the moment of utterance, the present perfect will be used. If the moment of utterance is excluded, the correct tense is the simple past.

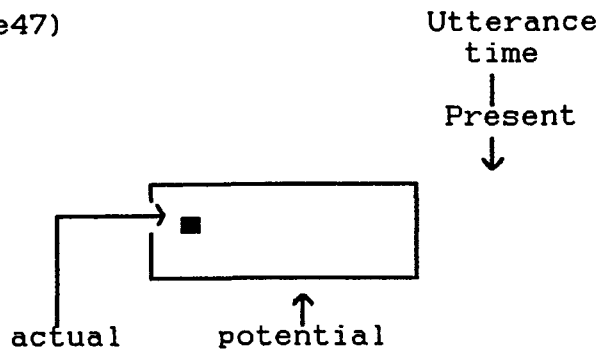
- (e43) a. Marsha accepted the position.
 b. Marsha has accepted the position.
- (e44) a. Alice finished her dissertation yesterday.
 b. *Alice has finished her dissertation yesterday.
- (e45) (asked after Truman's death)
 a. Did you ever talk with Truman?
 b. *Have you ever talked with Truman?

According to Baker, (e43b) is correct because the period of time during which Marsha could accept the position includes part of the past, but it also extends to the present and beyond. He represents this with the following diagram:



As for the other two examples, (e44b) and (e45b) are both incorrect because the potential period of occurrence of the events in the two sentences clearly exclude the moment of utterance, in (e44b) because of the adverb yesterday and in (e45b) because Truman is dead. The following diagram represents the examples of this kind.

(e47)



Baker explains the strangeness of the present perfect in the following examples in the same way.

(e48) (asked of a person who has nearly been run down by a reckless driver who immediately left the scene)

- a. Did you see the guy's license number?
- b. *Have you seen the guy's license number?

(e49) a. Did you hear that explosion?

- b. *Have you heard that explosion?

According to him, neither 'see the guy's license number' nor 'hear the explosion' are events that can take place in a potential period of occurrence that includes the moment of utterance, and so the present perfect is inadequate. On the other hand, 'accept the position' in (e43b) above and 'ask for a postponement' in (e50b) below can take place in a period of occurrence inclusive of the moment of utterance.

(e50) a. Kasparov asked for a postponement.

b. Kasparov has asked for a postponement.

Baker (1989:471) does not give a definition of his concept of 'potential period of occurrence'. He explains why the present perfect is not possible in (e49b) by simply saying that the potential period of occurrence of 'hear an explosion' does not include the moment of speech because 'it is extremely short and actually terminates before the moment of utterance'. Asking for a postponement or accepting a position do not seem to be any longer than hearing an explosion or seeing a license number, and yet the former but not the latter can be used with the present. In our opinion, the present perfect is possible in (e43b) and (e50b) and not in (e48b) and (e49b) because in the former the result of the action is included in the moment of utterance, and in the latter it is not.

The concept of the potential period of occurrence might seem to throw light on the fact that only the simple past is possible in examples such as (e41) and (e42) (repeated here for convenience's sake):

(e41) What did you say?

(e42) What was that?

Nonetheless, because of the vagueness of its definition, it is not always easy to decide whether or not the potential

period of occurrence of a given event includes the moment of utterance.

Baker does not mention the role played by the speaker's subjectivity in the choice between the perfect and the past. However, in our opinion, his theory can be used to explain the cases in which the speaker's subjective measurements of time are an important factor. Actions that have taken place before today are usually expressed with the simple past, because their potential period of occurrence is objectively exclusive of the moment of utterance. The present perfect can be used to express past events to indicate that the speaker, subjectively, wants to include the events in a potential period of occurrence that extends to the moment of speech and beyond. The speaker's reason to do such a thing is that he/she considers the event to be relevant in one way or another: i) the result of the action still holds, (e51); ii) the speaker is highly involved in what he/she is saying, (e52); or iii) the period of time has so recently finished that the speaker feels that it is not over yet, (e53).

(e51) Do you think you could put Peter up for a couple of weeks? His house **has burnt** down and now he has no place to live in.

(e52) Saddam Hussein **has declared** war on the U.S.

(e53) I **have worked** in this factory for 35 years, but now I have been dismissed.

In the cases in which both the present perfect and the simple past are possible - (e43) and (e50) above, (e54) and (e55) below - the present perfect would be represented by diagram (e46) and the simple past by (e47).

(e54) a. Joe wrote you a letter today.

b. Joe has written you a letter today.

(e55) (uttered in the morning)

a. Joe wrote you a letter this morning.

b. Joe has written you a letter this morning.

The a-sentences indicate that the speaker considers the part of today/the morning in which the letters were written as separated from the moment of speech. The b-sentences indicate that the speaker considers that the writing of the letters was done in a potential period of time that includes the moment of utterance. Here again we see how the subjectivity of the speaker can determine the choice between the two tenses.

There are other cases, however, in which both the simple past and the present perfect are possible, but there is no difference in meaning whatsoever. One such example from the data is (508):

(508) 'A: We only have one recorder.

B: No problem. I brought one of my own.'

Summing up, McCoard's (1978) and Baker's (1989) theories are useful in that they account for the difference (when it exists) between a present perfect sentence and a simple past sentence used to refer to the same event. What is at stake in such cases is the subjectivity of the speaker. If the speaker considers the action(s) relevant, the present perfect will be the tense chosen, whereas the simple past appears to be the unmarked choice. These two theories, however, fail to predict in which sentences both tenses are possible and in which only the simple past is acceptable.

The main difficulty in applying this theory to English seems to be to define with precision the extended now (or the potential period of occurrence). In Catalan this difficulty is quite easily overcome: if the action has taken place within the day or in a period of time that arrives up to the moment of speech, the present perfect is the only possible tense.

According to Badia Margarit (1962:424) the present perfect and the simple past are distinguished by 'la relación con el momento presente que caracteriza al [pretérito] indefinido [present perfect]'.

(e56) a. Ha treballat molt.

b. Va treballar molt.

(e57) a. L'ambaixador ha vingut a Barcelona.

b. L'ambaixador va venir a Barcelona.

(e56a) will be used to talk about an alive investigator and (e56b) for a dead one. (e57a) will be used if there is some connection with the present (the consequences of the event, our interest), and (e57b) turns it into a historical fact without any present relevance. The relation with the present can also be emotional:

(e58) a. Avui fa deu anys que ens hem casat.

b. Avui fa deu anys que ens vam casar.

Badia Margarit (1962:424) states that the sentence in (e58a) 'tiene valor subjectivo (la acción llega con sus efectos hasta el momento actual)', whereas in (e58b) 'tiene valor objetivo (la acción se produjo entonces y es lo único que hacemos constar)'. In Catalan, then, when the perfect is used to talk about events that have not taken place within the last twenty-four hours or in a period of time (explicit in the sentence or implicit in the context) that includes the present moment, the subjectivity of the speaker plays an important role. What is not so clear, however, is that the speaker has total freedom of choice.

1.6. Tense formulae

According to Reichenbach (1947) there are three different time points involved in the specification of all tenses: the time at which the event takes place (event time, E); the time at which the sentence is uttered (speech time, S); and the time to which the event time is related (reference time, R). Adverbials specify R, not E. The difference between these three time points is best seen in the past perfect.

(e59) John had left by three.

(e60) E — R — S

The dashes between the letters indicate sequence, while the commas indicate simultaneity. In (e59) event time (the time of John's leaving) occurs before reference time (three o'clock), and reference time occurs before speech time (now).

In other tenses, such as the present perfect and the simple past, two of the times coincide. The formulae for these two tenses are:

(e61) E,R — S simple past

(e62) E — S,R present perfect

The simple past expresses an action which is simultaneous with a past point of reference, whereas the present perfect

expresses an event that is anterior to a point of reference coincident with the moment of speech. The fact that adverbials are associated to R explains why the present perfect is indefinite. The exact moment of occurrence of the event cannot be specified, because R is simultaneous with S and not with E.

- | | | | |
|----------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
| (e63) a. | I read the paper today. | E,R — S | |
| | b. | I've read the paper today. | E — S, R |
| (e64) a. | The Prime minister resigned. | E,R — S | |
| | b. | The Prime minister has resigned. | E — S, R |

According to the formulae, in the a-sentences the events have taken place at a definite point in time (explicitly stated in (e63a) by the adverbial, and implicit or clear from the context in (e64a)), which is anterior to S. In the b-sentences the events have taken place at an indefinite point of time anterior to S (which is coincident with R). Since the two pairs of sentences can be used at a given moment to refer to the same event, the application of the formulae would imply that in one case the event is definite and in the other it is indefinite, and this is clearly not the difference between the two sentences of each pair. The formulae do not provide any information as to the exact environment in which each tense is to be used or as to the difference in meaning between the present perfect and the

simple past. Reichenbach (1947:292) was probably aware of the fact that in some occasions both tenses are possible, because he writes: 'Actual language does not always keep the schemas given in our table. Thus the English language uses sometimes the simple past where our schema would demand the present perfect'. But he leaves it at that: no examples and no further comments. If the formulae do not allow us to predict the correct tense in each environment, they do not seem to be of much use. He only gives one explanation for the tendency in English to use the simple past where other languages use the present perfect, which is far from clarifying: according to him, it 'may be a result of the strict adherence to the principle of the positional use of the reference point. When we say "this is the man who drove the car", we use the simple past in the second clause because the positional principle would compel us to do so as soon as we add a time determination, as in "this is the man who drove the car at the time of the accident"' (Reichenbach 1947:295). This does not explain, however, why the simple past is used in sentences such as the following, in which a 'potential time determination' plays no role:

(e65) a. Who left the door open?

b. Who was it? (somebody has just telephoned)

There is another problem with Reichenbach's theory. According to him, adverbials specify only R, but he does not seem to have taken into account sentences such as (e66), which are ambiguous.

(e66) Peter had bought the book yesterday.

This sentence can mean that the buying of the book had taken place by yesterday (in which case the adverb is related to R), or that the buying of the book took place yesterday (and then it is specifying E).

Hornstein (1977) tries to solve this problem by postulating that adverbials can apply either to R or to E. His solution has two basic shortcomings. The first is that it does not account for the fact that adverbs such as yesterday cannot occur with the present perfect, which is precisely why Reichenbach restricted adverbs to R. In the second place, and more important, Hornstein's theory cannot explain why sentences such as (e67) are incorrect.

(e67) *Last year John has climbed Mt Everest three times at present.

He hints that 'it might be the case that these forms are ruled out for pragmatic reasons. Being hopelessly redundant and adding not one whit of information, they violate certain Gricean maxims of conversation and so are unacceptable. In short, though semantically fine (from a

temporal point of view), they are pragmatically hopeless and so unacceptable' (Hornstein 1977:534-535). His comments about the present perfect are so vague that they are of no help in trying to establish the contexts in which this form is used.

It seems, then, that Reichenbachian theories cannot account for the differences between the simple past and the present perfect in English. First, because they do not predict when each of the tenses will appear. Second, because they cannot explain the differences between the two tenses when both can be used to talk about the same event.

These two problems are also found when trying to apply the theory to Catalan, but there is one further difficulty: the present perfect in Catalan appears frequently with time-when adverbials expressing periods/points of time included in the last twenty-four hours. If the adverbials are associated to R, as Reichenbach (1947) claims, this would be impossible. Hornstein's (1977) theory, according to which the adverbials can be linked to R or to E, would solve this problem, but it would consider correct sentences that are clearly ungrammatical.

1.7. Modes of description

Some authors claim that there are two kinds of description in all languages, one related to the objectivity of facts and another expressing the subjectivity of the speaker. They are called respectively histoire and discours (Benveniste 1959), Erzählen and Besprechen (Weinrich 1968), historical and experiential modes of description (Lyons 1977,1982).

According to Lyons, the historical mode is used for the narration of events, ordered in terms of successivity and presented dispassionately with the minimum of subject involvement. It is related to a static, non-deictic, objective conception of time. The experiential mode is used for the description given by somebody personally involved in what he/she is describing. It is related to a dynamic, deictic, subjective conception of time.

Weinrich (1968) disagrees with the traditionally held theory that the main function of tense is to locate events in time. He claims that the tenses of all languages are divided into two separate systems, depending on whether they are used in the historical (Erzählen) or the experiential (Besprechen) mode of description. The function of tense is precisely to inform the addressee of the mode of description the speaker is using. The tenses of the

historical mode tell the listener that he/she can listen relaxedly, because the speaker is objectively narrating events which are past, events the speaker is not personally concerned with. The tenses of the descriptive mode indicate the hearer that he/she should listen attentively, because the speaker is directly involved in what he/she is talking about.

Weinrich (1968) and Benveniste (1959) agree that in French the present perfect (passé composé) belongs to the experiential mode and the simple past (passé simple) belongs to the historical mode. In French (as in German and in Italian), both the present perfect and the simple past can be used to talk about events that took place long ago. Traditional grammars prescribe the use of the simple past in writing and the use of the perfect in speech. Weinrich and Benveniste, with minor differences between them, agree that the choice of one tense or the other depends not on the channel used (speech versus writing), but on whether the speaker wants to narrate the events as objective facts (historical mode), or wants to comment subjectively on them as part of his/her personal experience (experiential mode).

Whether this theory is valid or not for French is not for us to tell. We do want to discuss, however, its validity for English. Weinrich (1968) claims that in

English the present perfect is used in the experiential mode and the simple past in the historical mode. The perfect is used when the results or consequences of the event expressed by the verb are true at the moment of speech, and this has nothing to do with time. He agrees that there are many sentences with the simple past that express events with present result, but he does not draw the conclusion that maybe the simple past is unmarked in English and can be used in both modes of description, whereas the present perfect is clearly marked [+experiential mode].

Weinrich's theory accounts for the fact that the present perfect is occasionally used to express events that took place some time ago and that are relevant to the speaker, which is typical of news. By choosing the perfect instead of the simple past, the speaker is indicating his/her personal involvement in the facts mentioned. The listener, then, knows that he/she is to listen attentively. Relevance, which will be studied in more detail in section 1.8., seems to be the main explanatory factor in such examples. The difference between (e68a) and (e68b) can be explained in the same way .

(e68) a. I've **seen** him today.

b. I **saw** him today.

While Weinrich's theory is very useful to explain the use of the present perfect in news to make the events mentioned closer to the addressee, it fails to account for other problematic areas in the use of the present perfect in English. He is aware of the fact that the present perfect functions differently in English and in German, although in both languages it belongs to the experiential mode: 'En inglés se ha fijado la combinación entre los tiempos del relato y algunas determinaciones temporales (...) con más rigidez que en otras lenguas. Por ello, el campo de la narración es más dilatado, por ejemplo, que en alemán, de forma que al traducir de esta lengua al inglés muchas veces el perfekt se convierte en preterit' (Weinrich 1968:118). According to him, then, in (e69) and (e70) the a-sentences are commented on while the b-sentences are narrated, but the two members of the pair appear to be equally relevant at the moment of speech.

- (e69) a. This book has had an enormous influence on him. He **has read** it twice since last year.
- b. This book has had an enormous influence on him. He **read** it in May and then again in June.

- (e70) a. He's just **rung** up.
- b. He **rang** up a second ago.

The theory seems to imply that the subjectivity of the

speaker (whether he/she wants to narrate or to comment on events) is the only determining factor in the choice between the perfect and the past in English. However, there are grammatical factors, such as the presence of time-when adverbials, which compel the speaker to use the simple past (which is, according to Weinrich, a tense of the narration), even if he/she wants to comment on the events he/she is talking about, for instance because he/she feels they are relevant at the moment of speech. The theory also seems to imply that the speaker has total freedom of choice, but this is clearly not so. To start with, the present perfect, as we have just mentioned, is incompatible with time-when adverbials, but this is not accounted for. In the second place, the theory does not explain why events as recent as those of (e71) and (e72), which are clearly relevant to the speaker at the moment of speech, can only be expressed with the simple past.

(e71) (after a big noise has been heard)

- a. What **was** that?
- b. *What **has** that **been**?

(e72) (to request a repetition)

- a. What **did** you **say**?
- b. *What **have** you **said**?

The modes-of-description theory seems to work very

well to study literary works - Weinrich (1968:118-125) does a very interesting analysis of a few passages of Thornton Wilder's The Ides of March (1948) - but is not very helpful to solve the major problems posed by the distinction between the present perfect and the simple past in English.

This theory seems to work better in Catalan, because the simple past is the tense generally used to talk about events occurred before today, and the present perfect the one used for the events occurred within the last twenty-four hours. Moreover, it is possible to use the present perfect for events prior to today if the speaker feels they are relevant at the moment of speech, because the results persist, or because the speaker feels especially involved in the events. There are, however, two basic problems. The first is that both the simple past and the present perfect are possible to express events that are relevant to the speaker.

(e73) (Maria is married now.)

A: I la Maria?

B: a. Es va casar, no ho sabies?

b. S'ha casat, no ho sabies?

In fact, the simple past is compulsory if there is an adverbial of time that expresses a time not included in the

last twenty-four hours:

(e74) A: I la Maria?

B: a. Es va casar l'any passat.

b. *S'ha casat l'any passat.

The second problem is that, according to the theory, since the perfect is hodiernal in Catalan, it is not possible to narrate things that have taken place today. One has to comment necessarily on the events of today, whether or not one feels that they are relevant.

1.8. Relevance Theory

Relevance Theory, as developed by Sperber & Wilson (1986), is a theory of cognition and communication according to which communication is essentially inferential.

Human communication is relevance oriented. When somebody speaks, he/she is claiming an audience's attention. In doing so, the speaker suggests that what he/she is saying is worth the hearer's attention. This is the Principle of Relevance: 'every act of inferential communication carries a guarantee of its own optimal relevance' (Sperber & Wilson 1986:158). For an action to be relevant in a given context, it must have some contextual effects in that context. Contextual effects are derived from the union of the context and the new information uttered. The greater the contextual effects and the smaller the processing effort of an utterance, the more relevant the new information will be.

(e75) C: If the sun is shining then we'll go to the beach.

U: The sun is shining.

E: We'll go to the beach.

(e76) C: If the sun is shining then we'll go to the beach.

U: The sun is shining and my mother has called.

E: We'll go to the beach.

(e75) is more relevant than (e76), because they both have the same contextual effects, but (e75) is easier to process than (e76).

The context against which an utterance is interpreted is not given. It is created ad hoc when one hears the utterance in order to interpret it. There is an immediate context: the place of the act of communication, the audience, and so on. The immediately preceding sentence is also part of it. This immediate context can be expanded in three different ways: i) going back in time and adding assumptions used or derived in previous deductive processes; ii) adding the encyclopaedic entries of concepts already present in the context or in the utterance being processed; iii) adding information about the immediately observable environment. The immediate context and its possible expansions determine a variety of contexts, not only one. What determines the selection of one context in particular is the search for relevance. Relevance is taken as given, and a context is searched which maximizes it.

Relevance Theory can be applied to the study of the difference between the present perfect and the simple past. According to Smith (1981:260), the difference

between (e77a) and (e77b) is that (e77a) 'with the perfect has the conventional implicature (...) or logical implication (...) that the propositions relevant to the interpretation of the sentence include some present tense ones; i.e. has contains a subjective element incorporating the event described into the moment of speech'.

(e77) a. John has scored a goal.

b. John scored a goal.

In other words, the perfect constrains the context of interpretation. The sentences with the present perfect have to be interpreted against a present context, against a context tied to the moment of speech. This explains why the perfect cannot co-occur with adverbials that express a period of time exclusive of the present, such as the adverb yesterday, or phrases containing ago or last. On the other hand, the perfect is possible with adverbials expressing periods of time inclusive of the present moment, such as recently, just. This theory cannot explain, however, certain peculiarities of the co-occurrence of the perfect and the simple past with some adverbials, such as why the perfect is possible with just but not with just now, when both adverbials are so similar in meaning; or why the adverb recently can occur both with the past and the present, whereas lately (with the same

meaning) can only appear with the perfect.

According to Relevance Theory, the exact interpretation of each sentence in the perfect depends on the lexical meaning of the whole sentence and on the fact that relevance is taken for granted. Sperber & Wilson (1986:189) give the following examples:

(e78) I have had breakfast.

(e79) I have been to Tibet.

Both sentences are supposed to be relevant, otherwise the speaker would not have taken the trouble to utter them. After these sentences have been decoded, the hearer knows that the speaker has had breakfast or been to Tibet in a period of time previous to the moment of utterance. The hearer is expected to make some kind of assumption about the duration of the period. In (e78), it is evident that the speaker has had breakfast at some moment in his/her life. If the speaker wants the sentence to be relevant, he/she must intend to communicate that he/she has had breakfast recently enough to be worth commenting on it, for instance, so recently that he/she does not need to eat now. In the case of (e79), the fact of having been to Tibet at some point in the speaker's life is relevant enough in itself, and since there is no more information, 'this is the interpretation that would be consistent with

the principle of relevance' (Sperber & Wilson 1986:190).

We will consider another example to show how Relevance Theory can be applied to the study of the perfect in English, which is given by Smith (1981), quoted from Sperber & Wilson (1981). The context is set up in (e80a) and (e80b).

- (e80) a. If the chairman resigns, Jackson will take over his duties.
- b. If Jackson takes over the chairman's duties, the company will go bankrupt.

The utterance (e81) is interpreted against this context, yielding the effects (e82) and (e83).

(e81) The chairman has resigned.

(e82) Jackson will take over the chairman's duties.

(e83) The company will go bankrupt.

According to Smith (1981), it is clear that if (e81) were replaced by (e84), the contextual effects (e82) and (e83) would not exist.

(e84) The chairman resigned.

(e81) and (e84) are truth-conditionally equivalent, but (e84) with the simple past cannot be interpreted against the context in (e80a) whose protasis (subordinate clause)

is present. (e84), then, is irrelevant in this context. (e81), on the other hand, can be interpreted against the context in (e80a), because the present perfect precisely indicates that the sentence has to be interpreted against a present context. (e81), then, is relevant.

Other examples that Relevance Theory explains in a similar way are (e85) and (e86):

(e85) Peter has broken his leg.

(e86) She has lived in Barcelona for 15 years.

Both (e85) and (e86) must be interpreted against a present context. This allows two interpretations in the case of (e85): i) Peter's leg is now broken; ii) at some point of time during his lifetime Peter has broken his leg. (e86) can only be understood to mean that she still lives in Barcelona.

In the cases in which both the present perfect and the simple past can be used to express the same event, this theory claims that the sentences with the perfect select a present context and the sentences with the past a past context. We will next see that this is not always the case:

(e87) a. The King has killed himself.

b. The King killed himself.

(e88) (uttered in the morning)

a. I've had two awful classes this morning.

b. I had two awful classes this morning.

(e89) a. You've always liked strawberries.

b. You always liked strawberries.

As far as (e87) is concerned, while it is the case that (e87a) means that the fact that the King has killed himself is of importance at the moment of speech, it is not the case that (e87b) means the opposite. In other words, (e87a) selects a present tense context, but (e87b) can also select such a context. Something very similar happens in (e88). In this example, the a-sentence can only be uttered in the morning, and the b-sentence in the morning, afternoon or evening of the same day. If the speaker is talking in the morning, the choice of (e88b), past, can indicate that the class-giving period is over or not, whereas (e88a), present perfect, can indicate that the speaker is still in the middle of it, but not necessarily. As for (e89), the two sentences are in fact totally interchangeable.

There is one example in the data, (508), that further shows that it is not always clear that the difference between the present perfect and the simple past is that the former must be interpreted against a present context and the latter against a past context.

(508) 'A: We only have one recorder.

B: No problem. I brought one of my own.'

(508') B: No problem. I've brought one of my own.

In our opinion, there is no difference in meaning between (508) and (508'). This implies that they are both interpreted against the same context, a present one (or that the fact that they are interpreted against different contexts does not cause a difference in meaning). According to Relevance Theory, however, (508) will be interpreted against a context inclusive of the moment of speech, and (508') against a context exclusive of the moment of speech.

Relevance Theory does not account for the difference between the present perfect and the simple past in all the cases. A way of solving the problem found in (e87), (e88), (e89) and (508) might be to say that the present perfect is [+ present context] and the simple past [\pm present context]. However, this is not always true: in some occasions, such as (e81) and (e84) above, the perfect is [+ present context] and the past is non-controversially [- present context]. The issue would be to establish in which cases the simple past is [+ present context] and in which it is [\pm present context].

There are other cases which Relevance Theory does not

account for. In the first place, we find those examples which express very recent and totally finished actions. Given the recentness, one would think that they would be interpreted against a present context, but these events must be expressed with the simple past:

- (e90) a. What was that noise?
b. *What has that noise been?

- (e91) (To request a repetition)
a. What did you say?
b. *What have you said?

In the second place, we find those cases which express a past action with a present result (so they are included in the moment of speech), but which are expressed with the simple past - (e92) and (e93).

- (e92) a. Who knitted this sweater?
b. *Who has knitted this sweater?
(e93) a. Peter bought this armchair.
b. *Peter has bought this armchair.

Summing up, by claiming that the difference between the present perfect and the simple past is that the former selects a present context and the latter does not, Relevance Theory does account for a series of cases in which both the perfect and the past can be used to talk

about the same event. However, there are other cases, such as (508), in which there does not seem to be any difference between the sentences with the two tenses. This lack of contrast can be explained in two different ways. First, it is possible that the two sentences select the same context, a present one, and so there is no difference in meaning between the two. Second, it might be the case that the present perfect selects a present context and the simple past a past context, but that this does not cause a difference in the interpretation of the two sentences.

The present perfect is always [+ present context]. The simple past, as a general rule, is [- present context]. However, there are cases in which either the simple past or the present perfect are possible with no difference in meaning, and then the simple past seems to be [\pm present context]. The problem would then be to establish in each case whether the past can select only one context or it can select the two.

Apart from this, the theory does not account for examples such as (e90) to (e91), which are clearly connected with the moment of speech, but which can only be expressed with the simple past.

In Catalan the difference between the present perfect

and the simple past is slightly different from English . To start with, the perfect is compulsory in Catalan if the verb expresses an action that has taken place within the last twenty-four hours. Problematic cases such as the English (e88), (e90), (e91), (e92) and (e93) simply do not exist in Catalan, because the perfect would be the only alternative in all of them. According to Relevance Theory all the events that have occurred within the day are interpreted against a present context in Catalan.

Relevance Theory is useful in Catalan to account for the cases in which the present perfect expresses actions that have taken place before today.

(e94) a. Helmut Kohl ha visitat Moscou.

b. Helmut Kohl va visitar Moscou.

(e95) a. El meu pare ha tingut un atac de cor.

b. El meu pare va tenir un atac de cor.

The a-sentences with the present perfect must be interpreted against a present context. In the case of (e94a), this would mean that Kohl's visit is quite recent and/or that his visit has important consequences at the moment of speech. As for (e95a), the implication would be either that my father has had a heart attack quite recently and/or that he is still suffering because of it.

1.9. Conclusion

The difference between the present perfect and the simple past has been a much debated issue. It has been approached from different points of view. All the analyses presented in this chapter provide useful insights in one aspect or another, but they fail to account for all the instances of the present perfect found in actual usage.

In the next chapter we present another approach to the study of the present perfect: a functional-semantic approach. The theories just reviewed aim at explaining all the uses of the present perfect based on one factor, such as continuative past, present result, extended now, indefinite past, relevance. We have combined several of these factors and have divided the present perfect into four different uses: perfect of persistent situation, experiential perfect, perfect of result and perfect of recent past. In our opinion, this division allows a more comprehensive analysis of the use of the present perfect in English and in Catalan.

2.

THE PRESENT PERFECT

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter we intend to study the present perfect in English and in Catalan from a functional-semantic point of view. This functional-semantic approach is developed in sections 2.4. to 2.7, while sections 2.2. and 2.3. are devoted to other areas concerning the present perfect.

In section 2.2. we try to establish whether the present perfect is a tense or an aspect, which is an issue much debated by linguists.

In section 2.3. we deal with the aspectual character of the verb, and review the theories of different authors about the relationship between the aspectual character of the verb and the meaning of the perfect. These theories will be checked against our data in Chapter 4.

2.2. The present perfect. Tense or aspect

The first issue that has to be considered when studying the present perfect is whether the present perfect is a tense or an aspect. Traditionally, the perfect has been considered an aspect in English, along with the progressive, for two main reasons. The first is that they are alike formally: they are both formed by an auxiliary and a non-finite form of a lexical verb¹. The second is the way they relate to what are clearly tenses in English, i.e., the present and the past (or non-past and past). These two tenses are in paradigmatic contrast, that is, an English finite VP is either present or past. The perfect and the progressive are in syntagmatic contrast with the two tenses. Combining the two aspects with the two tenses we have the present perfect (e1a), the past perfect (e1b), the present progressive (e2a) and the past progressive (e2b).

(e1) a. She has already left.

b. [By seven o'clock] she had already left.

(e2) a. She is singing a song.

b. She was singing a song.

Johnson (1981) agrees that the perfect is an aspect, but her arguments are different. According to her, 'verb aspect involves reference to one of the temporally

distinct phases in the evolution of an event through time' (Johnson 1981:152). There are three such phases: i) the actual time of the event itself, including its end-point; ii) the developmental phase, i.e., the period of time prior to the end of the event; and iii) the result phase, that is, the period of time following the end of the event. She claims that there are three aspect form categories, which make reference to the three phases just mentioned: the completive aspect to the actual time of the event; the imperfective aspect to the developmental phase; and the perfect aspect to the result phase.

For other authors, the issue of whether the perfect is a tense or an aspect is a very complex matter. Comrie (1976:3) gives the following definition of aspect: 'aspects are the different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation'. According to this definition, the perfect is not an aspect because it tells us nothing about the temporal constitution of a situation. The perfect expresses the relation between two points in time: the time of the state resulting from a prior situation and the time of the prior situation. In the case of the present perfect, the relation is between the present state and a past situation. The past perfect relates a past state and an earlier situation (past in the

past). The future perfect expresses the relation between a future state and a previous situation (past in the future). Comrie mentions the fact that the perfect does not fit in his definition of aspect, but he deals with it in his book Aspect because it has traditionally been considered so.

Lyons (1977) claims that what distinguishes aspect from tense is basically that the latter is deictic (that is, the interpretation depends on the here and now of the discourse), whereas the former is non-deictic. The past perfect and the future perfect are indeed non-deictic, i.e., their point of reference is not the moment of speech, but some other time explicit or implicit in the context. Nonetheless, the present perfect is deictic: it expresses that the action or state denoted by the verb has occurred at a point of time prior to the moment of speech. This would mean, then, that the past perfect and the future perfect are aspects (or secondary tenses), whereas the present perfect is a (primary) tense. Problems arise, however, when we contrast the present perfect with the simple past, because they both seem to work similarly, and the nature of the difference between them is not easy to establish. Both forms express anteriority in relation to the moment of speech, and, as Smith (1981) states, they are never truth-conditionally distinct. Quirk et al.

(1985:189) write that 'the overlap of meaning between tense and aspect is most problematic in English in the choice that has to be made between simple past and present perfective [present perfect]:

(e3) a. John lived in Paris for ten years.

b. John has lived in Paris for ten years.'

Both verb phrases indicate situations previous to the present moment, but the simple past means that John no longer lives in Paris, whereas the present perfect means that John is still living there. The difference between the two sentences, then, is not a difference of tense, because they do not indicate different locations in time.

Aspect and tense are the two morpho-syntactic categories typically associated with the verb phrase. There is wide agreement among linguists as to what tense is, but aspect has traditionally been a ragbag category that includes everything that cannot clearly be ascribed to the category tense. Since the difference between the simple past and the present perfect is obviously not a matter of tense, it is considered a difference of aspect.

The distinction between tense and aspect seems very clear when we take the definitions into consideration: tense indicates location in time and is deictic; aspect

expresses the internal structure of a situation and is non-deictic. Nonetheless, when trying to decide whether the perfect is a tense or an aspect, the issue becomes very thorny, because of the following factors: i) the present perfect is deictic and tells us nothing about the internal structure of the situation, so it should be considered a tense; ii) there is a difference in meaning between the present perfect and the simple past which, since it is clearly not a matter of tense, has to be a difference in aspect, and so the perfect is an aspect. According to Quirk et al. (1985:189), 'in fact, aspect is so connected in meaning with tense, that the distinction in English grammar between tense and aspect is little more than a terminological convenience which helps us to separate in our minds two different kinds of realization: the morphological realization of tense and the syntactic realization of aspect'. Following this, then, the present perfect is an aspect, and this is the stand taken in this work.

2.3. The aspectual character or "Aktionsart" of the verb

Garey (1957:106) introduced the terms 'telic' and 'atelic', from the Greek télos 'end', to classify verbs. These terms are later used by other grammarians, such as Comrie (1976), Mitchell (1979) and Dahl (1981).

Telic verbs are those that express an action tending to a goal, and atelic verbs are those that express an action that does not have to wait for a goal for its realization.

(e4) John is drowning.

(e5) John is eating.

(e4) is telic, whereas (e5) is atelic.

There are several tests that can be applied in order to establish whether a given verb is telic or atelic. First, "if one was Verb-ing and was interrupted while Verb-ing, has one Verb-ed?" If the answer is yes, the verb is atelic. If the answer is no, the verb is telic (Nehls 1975:284 note). For instance, if one was drowning and was interrupted while drowning, has one drowned? No. This verb is telic. If one was eating and was interrupted while eating, has one eaten? Yes. This verb is atelic.

Second, telic verbs can appear with in-time adverbials, and not with for-time adverbials, whereas the opposite is true with atelic verbs.

(e6) John drowned in two hours/*for two hours.

(e7) John ate for two hours/*in two hours.

Third, a sentence containing an atelic verb with the main verb in the present progressive will entail the corresponding sentence with the verb in the future perfect. This is not so with telic verbs.

(e8) John is eating.

(e9) John will have eaten.

(e10) John is drowning.

(e11) John will have drowned.

(e8) entails (e9), whereas (e10) does not entail (e11).

A problem that arises is whether it is really verbs that are telic or atelic, regardless of the other elements of the sentence in which they appear.

(e12) John is singing.

(e13) John is singing a song.

(e12) is atelic, whereas (e13) is telic, although the same verb is found in both sentences. The presence or absence of a direct object can turn a telic verb into an atelic one and vice-versa.

(e14) John is singing Christmas carols.

(e14) shows that whether a given verb is telic or atelic does not depend only on the presence or absence of an object, but also on the kind of object. (e13) is telic and (e14) is atelic.

The terms telic and atelic, then, do not apply to verbs but to the situations to which the verbs make reference. We will then be talking of telic and atelic situations, not of telic and atelic verbs.

Vendler (1967) established a four-fold classification of verbs: activities (e15), accomplishments (e16), achievements (e17) and states (e18).

(e15) Peter is running.

(e16) Peter is drawing a circle.

(e17) Peter reached the top at 2 o'clock.

(e18) Peter loves Mary.

Activities and states would be atelic, whereas accomplishments and achievements would be telic. Activities are different from states in two things. First, activities can naturally occur with progressive tenses; states cannot. Second, a state involves no change throughout its duration; an activity does. Accomplishments and achievements are different in that the former last a

certain amount of time (they are durative) whereas the latter occur at a given moment in time (they are punctual).

The division of verbs along these terms (either the telic/ atelic or Vendler's) is useful because verbs of different kinds interact differently with linguistic phenomena such as aspect. Comrie (1976:46), for example, states that a perfective form referring to a telic situation implies attainment of the terminal point of that situation, whereas an imperfective form implies that the situation is not completed.

(e19) John wrote a letter.

(e20) John was writing a letter when Peter arrived.

In (e19) the letter is finished. In (e20) the letter can be finished or not finished, but it most probably is not.

In sections 2.5.6., 2.6.7. and 4.2. below the interaction between the nature of the verb and the nature of the perfect will be studied.

2.4. The functional-semantic approach. Introduction

The functional-semantic approach consists in establishing the environments in which a given grammatical category is used (function), and the meaning of the category in each of the environments (semantics).

According to Chung and Timberlake (1985:202), 'in order to describe the tense, aspect, and mood systems of different languages, we need to identify and compare uses of morphological categories across languages in terms of a universal descriptive framework. The best candidate for such a framework seems to be one based (at least in part) on a priori distinctions'. This is what Comrie (1976:56) does. He gives a general definition of the present perfect: 'the continuing relevance of a previous situation'. Then he proceeds to study 'more specific manifestations of this general property', which are the perfect of result, the experiential perfect, the perfect of persistent situation and the perfect of recent past.

Comrie takes the form of the present perfect in English (have + past participle) as the starting point of his investigation. He studies the contexts in which the present perfect is used in English and its meaning in each context. He then tries to see what happens in other languages. There are two possibilities. On the one hand, it is possible to find instances of a non-perfect used to

express some of the meanings originally established for the present perfect:

- (e21) The house **is** painted blue. result
(e22) En Joan **acaba d'arribar**. recent past

On the other hand, there are verb phrases which are perfect in form, but not in meaning:

- (e23) a. L'anno scorso ho visitato la mia amica tedesca.
b. Last year I visited my German friend.
(e24) a. Hier je **suis allée** au cinéma.
b. Yesterday I went to the cinema.
(e25) a. Gestern **habe** ich ein Buch **gelesen**.
b. Yesterday I read a book.

The 'perfect' in Italian, French and German is translated into an English simple past because it has no perfect meaning (see section 2.5.4.).

Taking into account all the possible combinations of [\pm perfect form] and [\pm perfect function], we can have verb phrases which are perfect both in form and in function (e26), verb phrases which are perfect in function but not in form (e27), verb phrases which are perfect in form but not in function (e28), and verb phrases which are perfect neither in form nor in function (e29). Only the

first two will be studied in this paper.

(e26) Mary has been three times to Australia.

(e27) En Pere acaba de marxar.

(e28) Maria è arrivata ieri.

(e29) La Maria va comprar aquest llibre ahir.

This lack of correspondence between form and function is found in English and in Catalan. All perfects in form are also perfects in meaning in both languages, but there are 'perfect meanings' expressed with other forms, for instance (e30) and (e31). These forms are also studied in this chapter.

(e30) The city is destroyed. perfect of result

(e31) La ciutat està destruïda. result

The number of books and articles dealing with the English present perfect from various points of view is considerable. As it is to be expected, there is wide disagreement between them in different respects, but they provide a valuable starting point for the investigator. The literature on the Catalan verb, on the contrary, is very scarce. An original functional-semantic description of the uses of the present perfect in Catalan is proposed in this work, based on the framework proposed for the English present perfect, on traditional Catalan grammars

(which, naturally, do not devote much attention to the use of the different tenses), and on the data gathered.

The four uses established by Comrie (1976) are claimed to be universal, but they are clearly based on English². They have been taken as the basis for this chapter.

The functional-semantic approach developed has one basic shortcoming: it is not always easy to classify the instances of the present perfect found in the data. In fact, in some examples more than one meaning exists, and some arbitrary decisions have to be made (such as considering perfects of recent past all those that are clearly so, without taking into consideration whether or not the meaning of result is also relevant). Notwithstanding, it has been used to study the data in detail, because it is more comprehensive and easier to apply than all the other theories sketched in Chapter 1.

2.5. The Present Perfect in English

In this section Comrie's (1976) subdivision of the perfect will be followed in detail, with examples both in English and in Catalan (and in other languages when it is felt necessary), along with information extracted from Leech's book (1987), which deals more specifically with the English verb. Their analyses will be complemented by our own, based on the original data studied.

2.5.1. Perfect of result

In the perfect of result, the present state is the result of some past situation. This meaning is clearest with, but not exclusive to, verbs that denote the change from one state to another³:

(e32) a. Mary **has left** (she is not here now).

b. La Maria **ha marxat** (ara ja no hi és).

(e33) a. He **has broken** his leg (his leg is now broken).

b. S'**ha trencat** la cama (ara té la cama trencada).

This tense is not the only one that can be used to express this meaning. Another possibility is the present of a stative verb and an adjective, (e34b) and (e35b). McCoard (1987) claims that the meaning of both constructions is not the same: the present perfect

explicitly asserts the previous situation and simply implies the present state, whereas the present tense expresses explicitly the present state and merely implies the previous situation.

(e34) a. The window has been broken.

b. The window is broken.

(e35) a. Han trencat la finestra.

b. La finestra està trencada.

(e34a) and (e35a) imply (e34b) and (e35b) respectively, and vice versa, but they do not mean exactly the same.

The perfect of result does not necessarily indicate recentness of action. If somebody says 'I've taken a shower', what the sentence means is that the person is now clean, and does not need to shower. The shower can have been taken within the same day, week, month or even year, depending on how often it is culturally appropriate to take showers. If an American child is told to take a shower and the answer is 'But I've taken a shower', the parent, on the basis of the pragmatic/cultural context of American showering habits, will inevitably understand that the child took a shower in the morning or some other time of the same day, and will be shocked if he/she finds out that the child was referring to a shower taken three days ago.

The same sentence uttered by a British person could be an instance of an experiential perfect (see section 2.5.2.), since in Great Britain showers are not generally found in households. British people take baths, not showers, so having taken a shower would be something so rare to be worth commenting on, just like going to Burma.

(e36) I've been to Burma. experiential

2.5.2. Experiential perfect

The experiential perfect expresses the fact that a given situation has occurred at least once in a period of time that starts at some point in the past and finishes in the present. The end point of the period is always the present, whereas the beginning point can be specified or not.

(e37) a. Peter has travelled three times by plane.
(unspecified)

b. Peter has travelled three times by plane
since he got his new job. (specified)

(e38) a. En Pere ha viatjat tres cops en avió.
(unspecified)

b. En Pere ha viatjat tres cops en avió des que
va canviar de feina. (specified)

When the beginning point is not specified in the sentence where the present perfect appears, it can be understood

from the context if there is one, and if there is no context the default value will be interpreted. In the previous examples, the default interpretation would be 'during all his life'. In contextual specification, either the beginning point is established earlier in the discourse, or both hearer and listener know the person they are talking about, and hence know the period of time involved.

The most typical adverbials with this use of the present perfect are those expressing the number of times that the event has taken place and the earlier limit of the period of time referred to. Other adverbials, more general in meaning, that can also appear with this use of the perfect are never, ever and before:

(e39) He has worked as a carpenter before.

(e40) Have you ever sang in a choir?

Leech (1987) calls the experiential perfect 'indefinite past', and limits its appearance to 'event verbs'⁴. The perfect makes reference to some indefinite occurrence of the event in the past. The 'indefiniteness' means two things: the number of times that the event has taken place does not need to be specified, and neither does the period of time in which the event has happened. The present relevance of this use of the perfect is that

the period of time has to finish in the present.

According to Leech, the perfect is used to talk about a past situation when what matters is that the situation has taken place in a period of time that leads up to the present, not the exact moment in which it occurred. When the precise moment of occurrence is mentioned, the past tense is used instead.

(e41) A: Peter has broken his leg.

(e42) a. B: Oh, when did he break it?

b. B: *Oh, when has he broken it?

The 'indefiniteness' of the present perfect explains why it cannot appear with adverbials that specify the time in which the action took place, that is, time-when adverbials. Time-when adverbials, also called time-position adjuncts, are those that 'typically serve as a response to a potential when-question' (Quirk et al. 1985:530). If somebody uses the present perfect to talk about a given fact and the hearer wants to know when that fact occurred, the tense of the question must be the simple past⁵. This is always true when the time-when adverbial refers to a specific point of time. Nonetheless, there are time-when adverbials which express a definite time and which do not express one point, but rather a 'backward span' (Quirk et al. 1985:530 & ff.)⁶. With such

adverbials, it is possible to use the perfect in its experiential meaning, that is, 'at least once before now'.

(e43) He's read this book before.

(e44) They have grown vegetables in the past.

In Catalan the situation is different. In this language, the present perfect can and does appear with time-when adverbials.

(e45) A: En Pere s'ha trencat la cama.

(e46) B: Quan se l'ha trencada?

As with the perfect of result, there is nothing in this use of the perfect that compels us to interpret that the action has taken place recently.

2.5.3. Perfect of persistent situation

The perfect of persistent situation is used to talk about a situation that started in the past and still continues in the present. This is probably a typical English use of the perfect, since many other languages, such as Spanish, French, Catalan and German, generally employ the simple present instead:

(e47) I've studied at this university for three years.

(e48) Fa tres anys que estudio en aquesta universitat.

(e49) J'étudie à cette université depuis trois ans.

(e50) Ich studiere an dieser Universität seit drei Jahren.

(e51) Hace tres años que estudio en esta universidad.

Leech (1987) has two categories for the perfect of persistent situation: 'state-up-to-the-present' (with 'state verbs') and 'habit-in-a-period-leading-up-to-the-present' (with 'event verbs')⁷. In these uses, the present perfect means that the state or the event began somewhere in the past, continue up to the present, and might go on into the future (although this last feature is not compulsory).

This kind of perfect has to occur with an adverbial that expresses the span of time of the state or habit.

(e52) a. He has owed me money for years. persistent situation

b. A: You can't complain about his always owing money to people. He's never owed you any money, has he?

B: Oh, yes, he has owed me money. experiential

(e53) a. Mary has always had a red car. persistent situation

b. *Mary has had a red car⁸.

(e54) A: Peter is a very strange man. He will never say anything to anybody.

B: Oh, I've known people like him. experiential

If the adverbial is omitted, two things can happen. In the

first place, if the auxiliary has nuclear stress, the meaning of the perfect changes, becoming an experiential perfect, (e52b). Hill (1958:212), quoted by McCoard (1978:47), writes: 'Primary [nuclear] stress on have breaks any connection with action going on at the present time', hence the perfect will no longer be of persistent situation but experiential. Nuclear stress on have (as on any other auxiliary) requires the previous assumption (explicit or implicit) that what the verb in the perfect says is not true. This assumption provides the sentences with stressed have with the context needed by all perfects of persistent situation which are not accompanied by an adverbial expressing time span. In the second place, if the auxiliary is not stressed, the sentence becomes ungrammatical, (e53b). In the third place, as shown by (e54) and (e55), it is possible to have a perfect of persistent situation without an adverbial and with an unstressed have when the time span is implicit, either in the meaning of the sentence, or in the context, either linguistic or extralinguistic, as in (e54) and (e55).

(e55) She's been a good mother (all her life).

Again, the situation expressed by the verb does not need to have taken place recently. The only condition is that the situation still holds in the present, but it can

have started a million years ago.

2.5.4. Perfect of recent past

The fourth use of the present perfect is the perfect of recent past, in which the necessary present relevance of the past situation is simply a matter of temporal closeness: the action needs to have taken place in the immediate past⁷.

(e56) a. Peter has just arrived.

b. En Joan ha arribat ara mateix.

This form is not the only possibility to express recentness; other periphrases can be used. Dahl (1984:121) writes: 'in many languages (...) there are constructions that may be used to translate the English perfect with the adverb just [perfect of recent past]. In the Romance languages we thus find constructions like the French venir de + infinitive (...). The semantics of these constructions is not quite clear; although it might be tempting to assume that they express stronger closeness than a hodiernal past [see below]. It appears that the 'immediacy' involved is generally not measurable in objective terms, which would mean that these constructions are, strictly speaking, outside of the system of more objective remoteness distinctions.' In Catalan we find:

(e57) En Joan acaba d'arribar.

The period of time in which the perfect of recent past can be used is by no means universal. It is much shorter in English than in Catalan, for example. In English this use of the perfect is possible only with adverbs such as recently, just, lately, already, yet and the like. As a matter of fact, some kind of adverbial seems to be necessary in this use of the present perfect in English, in order to be interpreted as making reference to a recent action. If there is no adverbial, the perfect may be interpreted in a different way.

(e58) A: Where is John?

B: He's just left. perfect of recent past

B: He's left. perfect of result

In an example such as (e58), the difference between the perfect of recent past and the perfect of result is neutralized; both meanings merge: John has left recently and hence is not here now. Dahl (1984) claims that there is a general tendency in languages to have the same form for the perfect of result and for the perfect of recent past. Sometimes, he continues, temporal closeness and the fact of having a result at the point of speech may both be

relevant factors for the same category. The perfect of result, then, is distinct from the perfect of recent past only when the action expressed by the verb took place some time ago but its effects are still operative, as shown by (e59).

(e59) A: I can't drive you to the station because my car has been stolen.

B: Oh, when was that?

A: A couple of days ago.

In the study of the data, when the perfect occurs with adverbs typically related to 'recent past', it will be classified as such, disregarding the fact that it also has the meaning of 'result'. Under the heading of perfect of result will be classified only those perfects which can be exclusively perfects of result because of the time in which the action took place, as in (e59).

If the perfect co-occurs with adverbials such as this morning in English, the sentence must be uttered within the period denoted by the adverbial.

(e60) But I've seen him this morning (uttered in the morning).

(e61) But I saw him this morning (uttered in a period of time other than the morning, or in the morning).

In Catalan, this is not so: the perfect can co-occur with

aquest matí, even if the sentence is uttered in the afternoon or evening of the same day.

(e62) Però si l'he vist aquest matí (uttered in the morning, afternoon or evening of the same day).

Referring to this, Dahl (1984:114) writes '(...) a hodiernal past [perfect of recent past] would refer to 'the current unit of time', variously interpreted as 'today', 'this week', 'this year', etc. The day as a unit of time would then presumably represent the default value.' The period of time in which the perfect of recent past can be used without any specification of time in Catalan is the day in which we are talking, and the previous night. Dahl (1984) states that when a day begins is culturally determined. In Catalan it begins when we go to bed (see section 2.6.2. below). Compare (e63) with (e64).

(e63) He dormit molt malament (aquesta nit passada).

(e64) a. Ahir a la nit vaig sopar massa.

b. *Aquesta nit he sopat massa (uttered the following day).

In English, all these sentences would be expressed with last night and the simple past, because the day begins when we get up.



(e65) I didn't sleep very well last night.

(e66) I ate too much last night.

In languages such as German, Italian and French the present perfect is used instead of the simple past, at least in speech.

(e67) a. Letzten Wochen sind wir ins Theater
gegangen.

b. Last week we went to the theater.

(e68) a. Due anni fa mia zia è andata in Germania.

b. Two years ago my aunt went to Germany.

(e69) a. L'année dernière il y a eut beaucoup de
neige.

b. Last year there was a lot of snow.

In these languages, the perfect has expanded its temporal range of application to such an extent that it now covers the range of the simple past¹⁰. The choice between the perfect and the simple past is not a matter of recentness, but a matter of register. In speech, only the perfect is used, whereas in writing, grammar books prescribe the use of the simple past. Nonetheless, the use of this 'perfect' in the written form seems to be more and more widespread, whereas the simple past is used only in very formal occasions¹¹. These perfects do not fulfil the basic condition for the perfect, namely, that specific mention

of a past time is only possible under the following circumstances. First, the present moment must be included, or the period of time must have as its terminal point the present moment (for ten years, this week), (e70) and (e71). Second, in Catalan, the action must have taken place within the last twenty-four hours (e72) and (e73), and, in English, the action must have taken place in the immediate past (e74).

(e70) I have taught English for ten years.

(e71) She has read three books this week.

(e72) He escrit tres cartes aquest matí (uttered in the evening).

(e73) En Pere ha marxat ara mateix.

(e74) I've just eaten three apples.

The verb phrases of examples (e67)-(e69), then, are perfect in form, but not in meaning.

In certain occasions the present perfect can be used in English to express actions that have not taken place in the immediate past. This is possible and even usual if there is an adverbial in the same sentence which indicates a period of time inclusive of the time of utterance.

(e75) Wages have increased very little in the past few years.

(e76) There have been many car accidents this month.

More interestingly, the present perfect can be found in sentences with no adverbial of this kind to talk about a relatively distant situation. Brinkman (1906:728) quoted by McCoard (1978:125) writes: 'If we are dealing with a fact which the speaker holds in mind as vividly as if it had only just happened, as if it occurred in the time he can call 'present' or 'most recent past', then the perfect is used, regardless of whether it happened today, yesterday or the day before'. Thus, the subjectivity of the speaker plays a very important role. If he/she feels personally involved in what he/she is narrating, the present perfect will be used precisely to indicate this involvement. This use of the present perfect is quite common in news, and the purpose is to approach the events narrated to the speaker, in order to make him feel more involved in them.

(e77) "Drastic economic reforms introduced last January **have turned** the seller's market that existed for decades into a buyer's bazaar. They **have also helped** draw the battle lines for a political struggle that may dismember Solidarity... " (Time, May 7 1990, p.13)

(e78) "Here at home, the Minister of Defense **has indicated** that Turkey may participate in a multi-national force to be sent to the Golf."
(CNN World Report, August 31 1990)

All the present perfects in (e77) and (e78) could be replaced by simple pasts. The result would be to make the

events narrated more distant in time, and hence less relevant to the reader/listener. The use of the present perfect in these items of news can only be explained by appealing to the subjectivity of the speaker/writer: he/she has wanted to present the event closer in order to make the readers feel that it is important.

2.5.5. Non-deictic use of the present perfect

In its most frequent uses the present perfect is deictic (as all tenses), i.e. it locates the situation denoted by the verb in relation to the time of utterance. The present perfect indicates that the situation is previous to the moment of utterance, that is, that it is past. Nonetheless, in certain occasions, the present perfect is non-deictic: the temporal reference of the verb in the present perfect is not established by reference to the time of utterance, but in relation to some other time present in the sentence. In other words, in such cases the present perfect is a relative tense.

(e79) When you have done that tell me.

(e80) They will let me know as soon as they have finished.

In (e79) and (e80), the temporal reference of the verb in the perfect is not necessarily anterior to the time of utterance. It is anterior to the time indicated by the

verb of the main clause, future in both of these examples. In (e79) futurity is marked by the imperative, while in (e80) it is marked by will. As a matter of fact, the present perfect of these sentences would be interpreted as having future time reference.

This relative-tense use of the present perfect is also possible with repeated actions:

(e81) Whenever I want to take him out to lunch he **has** already **eaten**.

(e82) At seven o'clock sharp every morning she **has** already **had** breakfast.

In these examples, the present perfect does not express a situation anterior to the time of utterance, but anterior to another reference time present in the sentence. In (e81) it is another clause; in (e82) an adverbial.

The present perfect can also be used non-deictically in conditional constructions, where the reference point is indicated by a future-time adverbial:

(e83) If you **haven't finished** your homework in ten **minutes**, you'll be late for school.

2.5.6. Interaction of the kind of perfect with the aspectual character of the verb

The division of the present perfect into five different uses is convenient for practical reasons. The norms for the use of the present perfect are very elusive in English. The classification presented in the previous sections provides five different environments for which more concrete rules can be established. In our opinion, this facilitates the study of the present perfect.

Whether a given instance of the present perfect is interpreted as perfect of result, perfect of persistent situation, experiential perfect or perfect of recent past depends, among other things, on the aspectual character of the verb (telic/atelic). The exact influence of this factor on the determination of the kind of perfect will be studied in detail when the actual data are examined. In this section we will review the different proposals relating the perfect to the aspectual character of the verb, and we will show how this information can be accommodated into the functional-semantic approach.

Bauer (1970:189) wants 'to determine how much of the total meaning of a particular context (utterance) [of the perfect] has to be ascribed to the function of the morphological category tense (...), and what is due to

contextual elements, including (...) the LEXICAL meaning of the main verb (...). More specifically, our purpose is to clarify the interaction between the lexical meaning of the verb and the GRAMMATICAL meaning (henceforth to be called "function") of the perfect' (his capitals).

According to him, traditional grammar establishes two functions for the present perfect: 'resultative', in which the perfect expresses the present result of a past action; and 'continuous', in which the perfect denotes an action that began in the past and still continues in the present. Bauer claims that the "result" supposedly expressed by the perfect is often understood, not objectively verifiable. In fact, whether the action leads to tangible results or not depends on the lexical meaning of the verb, not on the perfect. What the perfect expresses is that 'the action is viewed, not as a past event, but as being an accomplished fact at the moment of speaking' (Bauer 1970:190) (his underlining).

Bauer states that the 'character' of the verb is of extreme importance when the 'continuative' meaning of the perfect is taken into account. The perfect means different things according to whether the situation denoted by the verb is telic or atelic, and to whether adverbials are present or not.

The continuative perfect (the perfect of persistent

situation) needs both an atelic verb and an adverbial.

(e84) He has lived in London since 1950.

The adverbial is not omissible; without it, the perfect would have an experiential interpretation. The most typical adverbials with this kind of perfect are: so far, up till now, (ever) since, for the last two months, all my life, never (yet). A telic verb and an adverbial usually express an action repeated within the period of time denoted by the adverbial.

(e85) Since Monday he has gone to the museum twice.

(e86) He has scored three goals within the last 15 minutes.

Within the functional-semantic approach developed above, both (e85) and (e86) would be considered perfects of recent past.

When no adverbials are present, the perfect with a telic verb expresses an accomplished fact, (e87), whereas with an atelic verb it indicates also an accomplished fact, but which has not reached any goal (e88).

(e87) I have persuaded him.

(e88) He has lived in different parts of the world.

In the approach developed above, (e87) would be a perfect of result ('he is now persuaded'), and (e88) would be an

experiential perfect.

Summing up, Bauer claims that the present perfect has a basic function, and that the different 'meanings' are the result of the combination of the function of the perfect with the lexical meaning of the verb. The basic function of the perfect is to express 'that the action, anterior as such to a certain point of reference (...) is viewed as being, at this point of reference, an accomplished fact. The time sphere of the perfect is not the past, but "anteriority" to the point of reference, i.e. a time-span not separated in the mind of the speaker by any interval, however short, from the point of reference' (Bauer 1970:191).

According to Rot (1988), there are three different aspects in English, stative, totalitive and progressive. The totalitive aspect denotes an action with a concrete starting point and a concrete termination point. There are four tenses that can express this aspect: the simple past (which is the most common), the present perfect, the past perfect and the past tense with 'would'.

Rot distinguishes tense from reference point. In the simple past, both tense and referent point are past, and in the present tense they are both present. The present perfect, on the other hand, involves a reference point

different to that of the tense. The reference point is present and the tense is past. This indicates that the action occurred in the past and has present relevance. The character of the verb is of great importance in the interpretation of the present perfect. With an event [telic] verb, the present perfect indicates result and a nuance of recent occurrence [perfect of result, perfect of recent past], (e89). With activity or state [atelic] verbs, it expresses a previous experience [experiential perfect], (e90). With state verbs it indicates a present continuation of a state begun in the past [perfect of persistent situation], (e91).

(e89) I have built a house.

(e90) I have studied Hungarian.

(e91) I have known him for two years.

Rot's account of the present perfect is incomplete, because he does not consider the role that adverbials play in the determination of the meaning of this tense. For example, (e90) with an adverbial would become a perfect of persistent situation, (e92), whereas (e91) without the adverbial would be ungrammatical, (e93).

(e92) I have studied Hungarian for ten years.

(e93) *I have known him.

Dillon (1973), within the framework of case grammar, establishes that the present perfect can have three different meanings depending on the aspectual features with which it occurs. The perfect indicates that the action 'continues up until now' if the verb is [+durative], (e94). It expresses that the action has 'happened at least once before now' if the verb is [+momentary], (e95), [+completive], (e96) or [+completive, +durative], (e97). The perfect has an 'iterative' meaning ('happening repeatedly before now') if the verb is [+momentary, +durative], (e98).

(e94) The money **has lasted** two months. (persistent situation)

(e95) He **has sneezed**. (recent past)

(e96) The lake **has frozen**. (recent past, result or experiential)

(e97) The lake **has frozen** for two months.
(persistent situation or experiential)

(e98) He **has sneezed** for two days.
(experiential or persistent situation)

This is not the place for a detailed discussion of Dillon's views, either on the aspectual categories that he establishes or on the interaction of these categories with the meanings of the present perfect. What is interesting is that he points out the close relationship that exists between the type of perfect and the kind of verb.

There is no doubt that the different meanings of the perfect are to a certain extent determined by the character of the verb. This will be examined carefully when the study of the data is carried out.

2.6. The Present Perfect in Catalan

Badia Margarit (1962) and Fabra (1956) have been taken as a starting point, and their analyses have been supplemented by our own work. Badia Margarit's book (1962) is not a book dealing specifically with the Catalan verb; it is a Catalan grammar. Logically his analysis cannot be as detailed and deep as Leech's and Comrie's are. He establishes three uses of the present perfect in Catalan, but he is not very precise as to the differences between the uses, and does not provide enough examples for it to be clear when the present perfect must be used.

Fabra (1956) just devotes an appendix in his Gramàtica catalana to the study of the uses of the different tenses. He postulates three uses for the present perfect, only one of which coincides with Badia Margarit's proposal. Fabra's analysis of this form is also very short and quite superficial.

2.6.1. Perfect of immediate past

The first use Badia Margarit (1962) proposes is for an action that has just taken place.

(e99) A: On és en Pere?
B: Ha marxat ara mateix.

In our opinion, with this use of the perfect, a time adverbial is needed, because otherwise it would rather be

interpreted as what Comrie (1976) calls a perfect of result.

- (e100) A: On és en Pere?
B: Ha marxat (he is not here now).

In Catalan the periphrasis acabar de is generally used to express the meaning of recent past.

- (e101) A: On és en Pere?
B: Acaba de marxar.

The same kind of construction is found in French and Spanish.

- (e102) A: Où est Pierre?
B: Il vient de partir.

- (e103) A: ¿Dónde está Pedro?
B: Se acaba de ir.

According to Fabra (1956:169), the present perfect is used to express 'un fet que s'acaba de produir o que s'ha produït en un temps encara actual'. His examples are:

- (e104) El gos s'ha menjat la cansalada.
(e105) L'espectacle ha estat una enganyifa.

In the absence of further context, it is quite difficult to decide if the examples Fabra gives are indeed perfects of recent past. (e104) would rather be a perfect of result, whereas (e105) could be either a perfect of

unfinished period (see below) or indeed a perfect of recent past. This use of the present perfect established by Fabra, then, corresponds to the first two in Badia Margarit's book (perfect of immediate past and perfect of unfinished period).

2.6.2. Perfect of unfinished period

The second case in which the present perfect is used is when the action has taken place in a period of time that is not finished yet. This period of time can be as wide as the speaker finds suitable, provided that it is specified in the sentence (or in the context), and that it includes the present time, for instance (e106).

(e106) En els dos últims segles hi ha hagut un augment extraordinari de la població mundial.

The perfect of unfinished period can be used without adverbial specification and then it is usually interpreted as making reference to the day. In other words, the day is the default value.

(e107) Estic molt cansada perquè he treballat molt (avui).

(e108) (Avui) Ha telefonat en Pere per dir que arribarà tard.

In Catalan the day is considered to begin when we go to bed, whereas in English it starts when we get up. The

present perfect is the tense used to talk about the previous night in Catalan if it refers to the part of the night after going to bed, (e109a). If reference is made to the previous night before going to bed, the simple past is used, (e109b). In English the appropriate tense is the simple past whenever we refer to the previous night, (e110):

- (e109) a. *Aquesta nit m'he trobat malament*
(uttered after going to bed).
b. *Ahir a la nit em vaig trobar malament*
(uttered before going to bed).
- (e110) *Last night I felt ill* (uttered before or after going to bed).

In certain occasions, the speaker can choose between the simple past and the present perfect in Catalan to refer to the same situation. Consider, for instance, (e111) and (e112):

- (e111) *Ahir a la nit em va costar molt adormir-me.*
(e112) *Aquesta nit m'ha costat molt adormir-me.*

Both the sentence with the perfect and the sentence with the preterit can be used to talk about the same event, provided that the appropriate adverbial is used with each of the tenses. (e113) and (e114) would be ungrammatical.

(e113) *Ahir a la nit m'ha costat molt adormir-me.

(e114) *Aquesta nit em va costar molt adormir-me.

Going to bed is the dividing line. The act of going to bed can be treated as part of the current day or of the previous day, depending on the closeness or relevance to the time of speaking. (e111) and (e112) seem to indicate two different attitudes on the part of the speaker. In (e111) the falling-asleep period is considered part of yesterday, part of the past, being separated from today, the present, by the night's rest. (e112) could probably be uttered only in the morning of the following day. Apart from that, it is different from (e111) in that the speaker, in uttering (e112), expresses that the results of it taking him/her so long to fall asleep still hold. With (e112) the speaker implies that the difficulty in falling asleep is still relevant for him at the moment of speaking because he/she is exhausted.

Summing up, in Catalan, if a sentence with a perfect of recent past occurs without an adverbial specifying the period of time, the period of time has to be, compulsorily, the day and the previous night, from the moment we go to bed. Past time-when adverbials can appear if they are included in the period of time just mentioned.

(e115) Aquest matí m'he llevat molt d'hora.

If the adverbials make reference to any earlier period, the past tense is compulsory.

(e116) *Ahir he anat al cinema.

(e117) *La setmana passada ha plogut molt.

Adverbials expressing periods of time not included within the last twenty-four hours are possible with the present perfect if they denote a time span inclusive of the present moment.

(e118) La ciència ha fet molts progressos aquest segle.

(e119) En l'últim mil·leni, el clima ha canviat molt.

(e120) Últimament hi ha hagut moltes inundacions al Sudan.

Previous sentences, or even the whole discourse or the situation, may already have established the period of time that is being talked about. In such case, the perfect can make reference to a wider period of time, even if no adverbial appears in the same sentence. It must not be forgotten that sentences never appear in isolation (except in grammar books), and that the context does not need to be linguistic, it can also be extralinguistic.

2.6.2.1. Aquest

The rule that requires that the perfect be used only if the period of time is not finished works in most cases. Nonetheless, when the demonstrative aquest is involved, the picture becomes very complex. Traditional Catalan grammars (Badia Margarit 1962, Ruaiix 1985 and Fabra 1956) say that this demonstrative is used to denote proximity to the speaker, meaning spatial proximity, but it is clear that the demonstrative can also denote temporal proximity. This temporal proximity can be of three kinds: it can mean that the time modified by the demonstrative is contemporaneous with the moment of the utterance, that it is slightly earlier, or that it is slightly later.

The following sentences provide examples of aquest modifying the basic units of time (night, week, month and year) with the present perfect. The day is not included as a unit, because aquest dia is not used. The appropriate expression is avui.

Aquest + present perfect

- (e121) a. Aquesta nit ha fet molta calor (previous night).
b. Aquesta nit hi ha hagut un robatori a Manlleu (current night or previous night).
- (e122) Aquesta setmana he treballat molt (current week; it can only be uttered towards the middle or the end of the week).

(e123) Aquest mes hem gastat molt (current month if uttered towards the middle or the end of the month; previous month, if uttered at the very beginning of the month).

(e124) Aquest any hi ha hagut moltes vagues (current year, if uttered towards the middle or the end of the year; previous year, if uttered at the very beginning of the year).

Aquest mes + present perfect and aquest any + present perfect can be used in one unit of time to refer to the previous one. This use is only possible if the sentence is uttered 'at the very beginning' of the following month/year. The fact that it can be used 'at the very beginning' of the month/year, and only then (not later) indicates that the speaker is psychologically anchored in the previous month/year. The speaker needs some kind of adaptation period to pass from one month/year to the next. This would mean that the separation between one month/year and the other is far less marked than that between one week and another, where the use of aquest + present perfect is not possible to refer to the previous week.

Examples (e122)-(e124) can be used to refer to the current unit of time at the end of the period or in the middle of it. When they are used in the middle of the period, the speaker is stopping and looking back at the first part of the period as if it were already over, as in (e125).

(e125) (Uttered on the 15th) Aquest mes ja hem gastat molt. Ara hem de vigilar perquè si no no arribarem a final de mes.

The present perfect cannot be used if instead of aquest mes we say el mes passat. With the latter, the use of the simple past would be compulsory. And, conversely, even if aquest mes refers to the previous month, the simple past is impossible. If a combination of both is used, aquest mes passat, the present perfect is compulsory, which means that the proximity expressed by aquest is powerful enough to require the use of the present perfect. This combination is also possible with nit, setmana and any.

At the very beginning of one month/year the speaker can choose the present perfect (with aquest mes/any) or the simple past (with el mes/any passat) to talk about the previous month/year. The choice of the perfect alternative shows that the speaker, subjectively, considers the event closer to the present than to the past. It is a marked choice, because the usual tense to refer to periods that are already over is the simple past. The use of the present perfect to talk about the previous night, on the contrary, is unmarked. Provided that we are referring to a period of the night posterior to the moment of going to bed, the perfect is the only appropriate tense. This shows that the preceding night is considered to belong to the

following day¹².

Under special circumstances, the present perfect can be used to make reference to a 'finished period'. According to Eberenz-Greoles (1979:177), the present perfect can be used to talk about something temporally distant to indicate 'la proximitat afectiva de l'esdeveniment referit'. The use of the present perfect without adverbial modification to make reference to situations obtained before the moment of speech (or rather of writing) is very common in newspapers. The day as a unit of time is the default value for the perfect of unfinished period. We see, though, that in news this basic rule is not always followed. The result of this special use of the present perfect is to make the piece of news closer in time to the reader, and hence more relevant to him/her.

(e126) "BARCELONA. Diverses discrepàncies han aparegut entre els representants del PSC i d'Iniciativa a l'equip de govern de la Diputació de Barcelona en relació amb la possible creació d'una comissió mixta amb els Consells Comarcals." (Avui, May 8 1990, p.6)

The reader would not be confused by this use of the present perfect. He/she would have no trouble understanding that the situation expressed in this piece of news has not taken place the same day in which he/she

is reading the newspaper. Other similar examples are:

- (e127) "MARC-ANDRÉ CAPT, un tennista suís de 23 anys, ha establert un nou rècord de durada jugant vint hores seguides." (Avui, May 8 1990, p.16)

These examples could be explained by saying that the present perfect is used here because the results of the situation expressed by the verb are still operative. In other words, these perfects could be considered perfects of result: 'ara hi ha discrepàncies'; 'ara hi ha un rècord nou'. Something analogous happens with what could be called 'verbs of communication'. They appear in the perfect, although they do not indicate a recent action because what matters is what is communicated, and not the act of communication¹³:

- (e128) "JUAN MUÑOZ CAMPOS, president estatal de Càritas, ha assegurat que la pobresa 'posa en perill la democràcia i tot'." (Avui, May 8 1990, p.16)

- (e129) "BARCELONA. (...) En aquest sentit, Molins ha anunciat que aprofitarà la reunió que avui té a Madrid..." (Avui, May 7 1990, p.13).

There are other cases, however, which cannot be explained so easily. In (e130) there is a perfect without adverbial modification, but its result is not easily identifiable. In other words, it is a perfect which cannot be considered a perfect of result, but which does not fulfil the conditions of the perfect of unfinished period

either.

(e130) "BELGRAD. La segona volta de les primeres eleccions parlamentàries lliures de la postguerra a la República iugoslava de Croàcia ha mobilitzat menys gent que a la primera volta." (Avui, May 7 1990, p.4)

In (e131) and (e132) we find present perfects with adverbial modifications which in principle can only co-occur with the simple past.

(e131) "GIRONA. Els càmpings de la Costa Brava han experimentat durant la Setmana Santa i els dies posteriors una recessió del nombre d'ocupants en un 5 per cent..." (Avui, May 8 1990, p.16)

(e132) "XINA. Un nou terratrèmol ha afectat el nord de la Xina, en el matí de dilluns a les 0.46, hora espanyola..." (Avui, August 10 1976, p.13) [Example provided by Eberenz-Greoles (1979:177)]

In these cases we see that the 'objective' rules of grammar are overridden by 'subjective' factors, that is, the relevance and immediacy that the writer wants to convey.

2.6.3. Perfect of result

The present perfect is also used to express a past action whose results hold in the present.

(e133) M'han robat la moto (ara no en tinc).

(e134) En Pere ha tingut un accident (ara està ferit).

In some cases it is difficult to distinguish between a perfect of result on the one hand, and a perfect of immediate past and a perfect of unfinished period on the other, because the meanings overlap. In Catalan, this overlapping is more usual than in English because the perfect of immediate past and that of unfinished period are more frequent than the English perfect of recent past (where the temporal scope of application is very restricted).

(e135) a. Avui ha estat un dia esgotador (now we are tired). result

b. Avui ha estat un dia esgotador (simply stating the fact). unfinished period

The two meanings are kept separate because sometimes there are perfects which are perfects of result only, that is, the action has not taken place either recently or in a period of time which is not yet finished. As a general rule, the perfect of result occurs without adverbial modification.

(e136) A: No et puc tornar el llibre que em vas deixar perquè l'he perdut.

B: Quan?

A: La setmana passada me'l vaig deixar al tren.

There is nothing in this use of the perfect that makes it necessary for the action to be recent. The only thing that matters is that the result is still operative.

According to Eberenz-Greoles (1979), this use of the perfect keeps its original meaning of present tense plus perfective aspect. (e137), then, would be equivalent to (e138). The perfect of result, according to Eberenz-Greoles (1979), makes reference to the present moment, not to the past.

(e137) He fet els deures.

(e138) Tinc els deures fets.

The perfect of result can also be expressed with the present tense of a stative verb and an adjective.

(e139) a. Han plantat arbres per tot el jardí.

b. Hi ha arbres plantats per tot el jardí.

2.6.4. Experiential perfect

The present perfect can also be used in Catalan to express an action that has taken place at least once in a period of time leading up to the present (experiential perfect), although neither Badia Margarit (1962) nor Fabra (1956) establish this use in their studies of the present perfect.

(e140) A: Has estat mai a Banyoles?

B: Sí, hi vaig anar un cop amb els meus pares
quan era petita.

(e141) Des d'ahir ja s'ha barallat tres cops amb son
pare.

What matters here is that the period of time referred to finishes at the present time. The number of times and the starting point can be specified by means of adverbials or not specified. In Catalan, the perfect cannot co-occur with a past time-when adverbial that is not included either in the immediate past or in an unfinished period. For instance, (e142) is an ungrammatical answer to question (e140), whereas (e141), in which the time in which the action happened is left unspecified is perfectly correct.

(e142) *Sí, hi he anat un cop amb els meus pares quan
era petita.

(e143) Sí, hi he anat un cop amb els meus pares, i
dos amb els alumnes de l'escola.

2.6.5. Perfect of persistent situation

Comrie (1976) claimed, and in principle we agreed with him, that the perfect of persistent situation is typical of English, and that it is not found in other languages. In Catalan, this kind of perfect is by no means

central, that is to say, it is not very frequently used, but it does certainly exist. With the appropriate context, this type of perfect can be elicited in Catalan, although it is a marginal use.

As Fabra (1956:169) states (although he does not give it this name), the perfect of persistent situation is possible in Catalan. It expresses 'un fet habitual o cert en qualsevol moment'. In this use, the perfect must co-occur with adverbials such as sempre, mai, tota la vida, d'ençà que va néixer, des que el món és món and the like¹⁴.

(e144) A: Aquest any vas de vacances a Begur?

B: Jo sempre he anat de vacances a Begur.

(e145) Avui tampoc no l'has castigat? Sempre has estat un tou, tu.

(e146) D'aixó en dius una truita. Mai no n'has sabut fer, tu, de truites.

(e147) En Pere ha viscut a Gurb d'ençà que va néixer.

(e148) La Maria ha estat així de prima tota la vida.

(e149) La voluntat dels forts sempre ha constituït la llei dels dèbils.

(e150) Des que el món és món les riqueses han envilit els homes.

2.6.6. Non-deictic use of the present perfect

As a general rule, the present perfect is, as all tenses, deictic. It indicates that the time of the situation is previous to the time of utterance. Fabra (1956) states that the perfect can be used to express a future action after a conditional si, provided that it is accompanied by an appropriate adverbial.

(e151) Si no l'heu trobat d'aquí a dues hores,
comuniqueu-ho a la família.

(e152) Si demà encara no ha vingut és que està
malalt.

In these cases, the present perfect is non-deictic because the time of the situation is not established by reference to the moment of speech, but in relation to some other time expressed elsewhere in the sentence. In (e151), this secondary time reference is established by the adverbial d'aquí a dues hores and by the imperative in the main clause. In (e152), the important temporal reference is demà. In this respect, then, the present perfect is acting here as a relative tense.

The combination of future-time adverbial plus present perfect is possible only in subordinate clauses. Compare (e151) and (e152) with the following:

(e151') *No l'heu trobat d'aquí a dues hores.

(e152') *Demà encara no ha vingut.

The present perfect is also a relative tense, as Badia Margarit (1962:424-425) notes, when a habitual action is expressed:

(e153) Cada vespre a les vuit ja han tancat les portes.

(e154) Al matí quan marxem ja han portat el diari.

The present perfect here indicates not anteriority to the time of utterance, but anteriority to another temporal reference, an adverbial in (e153) and an adverbial clause in (e154).

2.6.7. Interaction of the kind of perfect with the aspectual character of the verb

Both Badia Margarit (1962) and Fabra (1956) establish different uses for the present perfect. Fabra (1956:169) simply writes 'el pretèrit indefinit [present perfect] expressa', and then lists the three uses of the present perfect that he considers. According to Badia Margarit (1962:423), the present perfect expresses 'las acciones pasadas y perfectas que tienen alguna relación con el momento presente; como esta relación puede tener distintas motivaciones, el valor fundamental del pretérito indefinido varía en consecuencia'. He then lists the different uses of the perfect. Neither of the two authors

establish any specific correlation between the different uses of the present perfect and the character of the verb.

Notwithstanding, Badia Margarit (1962), in the introduction to the chapter about tenses, talks about the interaction between the aspectual character of the verb and the aspect of the grammatical tenses. According to him, there are two basic aspectual characters: perfectivo and imperfectivo. In the verbs belonging to the first group, if the action is not finished we cannot say that it has taken place. Verbs of this kind are declarar, posar, disparar, saltar. The actions of the verbs belonging to the second group have unlimited duration. In this group we find verbs such as reflexionar, odiar, buscar. It is clear from the definitions of perfectivo and imperfectivo that they are equivalent to telic and atelic respectively. Verbs in themselves cannot be said to be either telic or atelic, because depending on the sentences in which they appear they can change from one category to another. Viure is usually atelic, but viure una aventura can be telic.

Tenses are divided into two groups: imperfectos (imperfective) and perfectos (perfective). In Catalan, all simple tenses except the pretèrit perfecte (anà/va anar) are imperfective, whereas all the compound tenses plus the pretèrit perfecte are perfective. It is possible to find atelic verbs in perfective tenses and telic verbs in

imperfective tenses:

(e155) En Pere va reflexionar molt abans de donar una resposta (atelic/perfective).

(e156) Mentre la Maria cridava, en Joan **es**criviva una carta (telic/imperfective).

The present perfect is a perfective tense. A perfective tense with a telic verb expresses that the whole situation denoted by the verb is anterior to the time of reference (which usually coincides with the time of utterance in the present perfect):

(e157) En Pere ja ha acabat els deures.

An atelic verb in a perfective tense indicates that the situation continues up to the reference time and maybe even beyond it:

(e158) En Pere ha estudiat tot el matí.

In the study of the data we will try to see if the aspectual character of the verb plays a role in the determination of the kind of perfect.

Blasco (1982) imports the terms telic and atelic into Catalan, using the test 'if one was Verb-ing and was interrupted while Verb-ing, has one Verb-ed?' (Nehls 1975:284 note). If the answer is yes, the verb is atelic.

If the answer is no, the verb is telic.

(e159) En Pere eixuga la vaixella (telic).

(e160) En Pere cantava alegrement (atelic).

According to him there is an intimate relationship between the grammatical aspect of the verb and the aspectual character: telic verbs tend to appear with perfective tenses and atelic verbs tend to occur with imperfective tenses.

(e161) Vam llogar un pis en aquest carrer
(telic/perfective).

(e162) Aleshores vivíem en un tercer pis (atelic/
imperfective).

He mentions that a distinction between perfective and imperfective has been established by some linguists in relation to the present perfect. According to these linguists (he does not quote them), if the action is perfective there is clear information about the results of the action in question; otherwise, the action is imperfective. In the first case the perfect makes reference to the present moment and in the second to the past. We will check these statements against our data.

2.7. The Present Perfect across languages

So far we have seen the uses of the perfect in English and in Catalan. The next step is to see how the different uses match.

COMRIE	B.MARGARIT
perfect of result	perfect of result
experiential perf	experiential perf
perf of persistent situation	perf of persistent situation
perf of recent past	just taken place unfinished period
non-deictic	non-deictic

This chart shows how the different meanings of the present perfect match in the two languages. Only those forms that are perfect in form (have/haver plus past participle) as well as in function are included here. In English and in Catalan, all the verb phrases that are perfect in form are also perfect in meaning, unlike languages such as French, Italian or German. In Catalan and English, though, there are sentences with perfect meaning, but which have verb phrases which are not in the perfect.

(e163) The window **is** broken. result

(e164) Fa deu anys que **sóc** casada. persistent situation

The only place where there is total coincidence of form and function between the two languages is in the perfect of result. Both Comrie and Badia Margarit agree that the perfect is used with such purpose, and what remains to be seen is if the perfect of result in English always corresponds to a perfect of result in Catalan.

The experiential perfect appears in bold type in Catalan because it does not exist in Badia Margarit's or in Fabra's classifications; it is a result of our own analysis. The non-deictic use of the present perfect in English is in bold type for the same reason.

Comrie's category of perfect of recent past corresponds to two different categories in Catalan. Badia Margarit claims that the perfect is used in Catalan to talk about an action that has just taken place, and it is true, provided that a time adverbial accompanies it.

(e165) En Pere se n'ha anat ara mateix.

The perfect, however, is by no means the most usual form to express such a situation: a periphrasis with acabar de is more frequently used instead.

(e166) En Pere se n'acaba d'anar.

We have assimilated Badia Margarit's perfect of unfinished period to Comrie's perfect of recent past in spite of the fact that the time span covered by the former is much bigger than that of the latter. What is relevant in both cases is that the period of time is felt to be close enough to the present moment to require the occurrence of the present perfect.

As for the perfect of persistent situation, since in Catalan it is expressed with a perfect very rarely, and in very marked contexts, it is not likely that it appears in the data. A present tense will be expected instead.

In regards to the non-deictic use of the present perfect, which is not listed by Comrie, it remains to be seen if a non-deictic present perfect in English corresponds to a present perfect in Catalan. If we translate the English examples given in section 2.5.5. into Catalan, sometimes we get a present perfect indicative - (e167) and (e168) - and sometimes a present perfect subjunctive - (e169) and (e170) in Catalan.

(e167) a. Whenever I want to take him out to lunch he
has already eaten.

b. Cada cop que el vull convidar a dinar
(resulta que) ja ha menjat.

(e168) a. At seven o'clock sharp every morning she
has already had breakfast.

b. A les set en punt cada matí ja ha esmorzat.

(e169) a. When you have done that tell me.

b. Quan ho hakis fet digues-m'ho.

(e170) a. They will let me know as soon as they have finished.

b. M'ho faran saber així que hagin acabat.

In the next chapter we will check whether the correspondences drawn in this chart are indeed corroborated by the data, and what kind of correspondences appear when the perfect in English yields something else in Catalan, and viceversa.

In order to classify the examples in both languages, Comrie's labels have been chosen, since they are claimed to be universal. Despite this claimed universality, the differences in the uses of the perfect in the two languages that have been presented above must be borne in mind.

3.

STUDY OF THE DATA

3.1. The corpus

In this chapter we apply the theoretical study of the present perfect in English and in Catalan developed in Chapter 2 to a corpus formed by pairs of English-Catalan verb phrases. The English verb phrase is the original, and the Catalan one is its translation. James (1981:117) writes 'translated texts are an obvious basis for textual contrastive analysis'. Translations are useful because they provide the same environment for the two structures that are to be compared. As Halliday (1973:124) writes, translation is 'the relation between two (...) texts playing an identical part in an identical situation' (but he warns the reader not to take 'identical part' and 'identical situation' as absolute terms). Marton (1980) and Krzeszowski (1977) agree that equivalent (comparable) constructions are those that are mutually translatable in a given context. Whether or not a certain translation is correct and optimal is 'left ultimately to the authority to a competent bilingual speaker' (Marton, 1980:20), or to a competent translator.

Using translations as the basis for a comparison of two languages can be dangerous. James (1981:117) says that

'their main limitation is their potential for translation-distortion, ie, the target language text can show signs of interference from the source language'. Since the data presented here are taken from Catalan translations published by a prestigious publishing house and films broadcasted in the Catalan public television, in principle, it can be taken for granted that the translators are competent. In any case, all the data have been analyzed and evaluated as to the adequacy of the translation on the basis of our study of the present perfect.

The present perfect relates a past event with the moment of utterance, and hence it is much more used in speech than in writing. Ideally, the data should be gathered from natural conversation, because only conversation can provide the kind of spontaneous use of the perfect that would allow us to establish exactly what governs its use. Nonetheless, there are two factors that make conversation unsuitable for our purposes (without considering the problems posed by surreptitious recording). In the first place, it would be impossible to find the perfect used in exactly the same environment in English and in Catalan, thus making comparison virtually impracticable. In the second place, the context, both

linguistic and extra-linguistic (such as the assumed shared information or the relationship between speaker and hearer) plays a determinant role in the use of the present perfect, and in the recording of spontaneous conversation, the researcher might not be fully aware of the relationship between the speakers and the information they share.

The data have been gathered from four American police novels and four filmscripts, three of them American and one Australian (with a comparable use of the present perfect to that of American English). What these two kinds of texts have in common is that they are self-contained. All the context necessary to interpret them is included in them in one way or another. In this sense, they are superior to natural conversation.

Police novels were chosen for two main reasons. The first is that they include a great deal of dialogue. The present perfect is a tense which relates a past event with the present time, so it is very rare to find it in a past-time narrative discourse. It is a tense used mainly in conversation, and so finding a written text which provided enough amount of dialogue from which to collect the data was fundamental. The second reason is that these police novels had been translated into Catalan, so the data were relatively easily available. The basic shortcoming is that

they are written texts, and the style used in writing tends to be more formal than that used in speech. This might give distorted information about the use of the present perfect. However, police novels are typically written in colloquial English, and hence it is to be assumed that the language used in the dialogues will be quite close to that of natural conversation.

The four police novels chosen are written in the first person singular. Since the present perfect is a tense that ties a past situation to the present, it is rare to find it in a story narrated in the past tense. Nonetheless, it can be, and actually is, found in first person narrative, because the narrator is telling his/her story in the past, but he/she still exists in the present (even if it is fictitously), and hence can make statements about the present time.

The filmscripts are much closer to natural conversation than the novels, because they are transcripts rather than scripts. The texts from which the data were extracted are the ones used to translate and dub the films. In other words, they reflect not what the script-writer wrote (which would be as little natural as the novels), but what the actors actually said.

The data have been gathered objectively. As far as the films are concerned, we have taken all the present

perfects that we came across, be it in English or in Catalan. As for the novels, we have not started taking the data from the first chapter, because the use of the tenses in the first chapters of novels is always special being as it is an introductory chapter. We have started collecting the data from chapter seven onwards, taking then all the present perfects that we encountered.

The final corpus consists of 665 items (each item being formed by an English verb phrase and its Catalan translation) including those pairs in which both members are in the present perfect, and those in which only one of the members is in the present perfect, be it in English or in Catalan. The items have been divided into three groups: those that have present perfect in both languages; those that have present perfect in English and a different form in Catalan; and those that have present perfect in Catalan and a different form in English.

3.2. Analysis procedure

The items of the data have been categorized according to the type of perfect: experiential perfect, perfect of persistent situation, perfect of result, perfect of recent past, and non-deictic perfect. Some of the examples are not easy to classify because the verb phrases express actions that have taken place recently and whose results still hold. Such verb phrases are at the same time perfects of recent past and perfects of result. These examples have been classified as perfects of recent past, thus leaving the category of result for those past actions with a present result which have taken place in a period of time not included in the recent past.

The 665 items of the data are listed in two appendices. In Appendix A the data are divided into three sections: i) present perfect in English and in Catalan, ii) present perfect in English and another form in Catalan, and iii) present perfect in Catalan and another form in English. Within the first section they are grouped according to the kind of perfect, and in the other two according to the translation equivalence. The order number of this appendix is the number used throughout the dissertation to refer to the data. In Appendix B the data are presented in their most immediate context. They are grouped according to the novel or film to which they

belong.

The data will be studied in three different sections, which correspond to the three groups into which the items have been divided. First we will study those cases in which a present perfect in English corresponds to a present perfect in Catalan and has been translated as such (section 3.3.). Section 3.4. deals with those cases in which an English perfect has been translated into some other form in Catalan. Section 3.5. studies the cases in which the Catalan present perfect corresponds to other tenses in English. The uses of the present perfect found in the data will be checked against the standard description of the present perfect given in Chapter 2. The description will then be reformulated to account for the data observed.

The different aspects studied for each of the 655 items are: i) categorization of the perfect into the different types established in Chapter 2, ii) use of the adverbials with each kind of perfect, iii) aspectual character of the situation that the verb refers to (telic/atelic), in relation to the different types of perfect, iv) the verb form in the translated version, and v) the correctness of the translations.

3.3. Present Perfect in English and in Catalan

There are 146 cases in the data in which an English present perfect corresponds to a Catalan present perfect. In all the examples the uses also coincide: experiential with experiential (24 items), persistent situation with persistent situation (16 items), result with result (14 items) and recent past with recent past (92 items).

3.3.1. Experiential perfect

The 24 instances of experiential perfect found in this group represent the 72.7% of the all the English experiential perfects found in the data (33 examples). We see, then, that the vast majority of English experiential perfects are translated into a Catalan perfect. This is what was to be expected, because the meaning of this kind of perfect, i.e. 'at least once in a period of time that started in the past and continues up to the present', is generally expressed with the present perfect both in English and in Catalan. The only condition is that the exact moment(s) of occurrence be left unspecified. If the definite time of occurrence is expressed by an adverbial in the same sentence (or previous ones) the simple past must be used in both languages.

(e1) I've visited my Canadian friend three times.

- (e2) a. I visited my Canadian friend in 1979, 1984 and 1987.
- b. *I've visited my Canadian friend in 1979, 1984 and 1987.
- (e3) He visitat tres cops la meva amiga canadenca.
- (e4) a. Vaig visitar la meva amiga canadenca el 1979, el 1984 i el 1987.
- b. *He visitat la meva amiga canadenca el 1979, el 1984 i el 1987.

Nonetheless, it is possible to specify when the visit took place if the years appear after a pause, as an afterthought:

- (e5) I've visited my Canadian friend three times... in 1979, 1984 and 1987.
- (e6) He visitat la meva amiga canadenca tres cops... el 1979, el 1984 i el 1987.

Since the correspondence English experiential perfect - Catalan experiential perfect is what is to be expected, it will not be further commented on. The relevant examples are found in Appendix I, items (1) to (24). The rest of this section is devoted to explaining some special cases.

23 of the examples in this group are in the dialogue, and only one in the first person narrative. The experiential perfect expresses a situation that has taken place at least once in a period leading up to the present. Even if the story is in the past, the narrator is writing in the present, so he uses the experiential perfect

because something that occurred in the past still fulfils the condition of having taken place in a period of time that started somewhere in the past and continues up to the present. Hence, he writes:

- (3) 'Louella, drawn from The Sexes, was a tiny, earnest, appealing creature, the most persistent and transparent liar I have ever known'/'Louella, portada d'"Els Sexes", era una dona petita, tenaç, atractiva, la mentidera més persistent i transparent que mai he conegut.'

When the narrator lived the events narrated in the novel, Louella was the 'most persistent and transparent liar' he had ever known, and this is still true now, when he is writing.

- (1) 'I been on the hind tit myself'/'Ja hi he estat jo, en el seu lloc.'
- (4) 'I been around the world six times...'/ 'He fet la volta al món sis vegades.'
- (20) 'Mooney's forty-one, never been married, still live with his parents'/'En Mooney té quaranta-un anys, no s'ha casat mai i encara viu amb els pares.'

In examples (1), (4) and (20) the verb form is not the appropriate form of have plus the past participle of a lexical verb, but only the past participle, in all cases been. Quirk et al. (1985:17) point out that in dialects such as Pennsylvanian or Virginian English, the past

participle is used instead of the simple past. Thus, I seen it would mean I saw it. In spite of this, in the examples from our corpus it is clear from the context that been means have/has been, and that is why they have been included here.

3.3.2. Perfect of persistent situation

There are 16 examples in this group, 37.2% of all the instances of perfect of persistent situation in English in the data (43 items). This use of the present perfect is typical of English. In other languages, such as Catalan, German, French or Spanish, the meaning of persistent situation ('a situation that started in the past and still continues in the present') is usually expressed by the present tense with the appropriate adverbials (des de fa quatre anys, fa vuit dies que).

(e7) En Pere fa tres mesos que treballa a la IBM.

(e8) La Isabel viu a Anglaterra des de fa cinc anys.

(e9) Afanya't, que els alumnes t'esperen des de les deu.

The most natural translation of an English perfect of persistent situation into Catalan is a simple present, and this is indeed what is found in the data. All the cases in this group (with a perfect of persistent situation in Catalan) are special in one way or another, and they need

to be accounted for.

Fabra (1956) pointed out that the present perfect can be used with this meaning if sempre or an adverbial semantically similar to it is present in the sentence. In three items we find a perfect of persistent situation in Catalan with one of the adverbials just mentioned: des del començament in (29); and sempre in (32) and in (38). All these are correct instances of the perfect of persistent situation in Catalan.

- (29) 'I have been a bastard right from the beginning'/'He estat un carallot des del començament.'
- (32) 'I've always liked Larry'/'Sempre m'ha agradat en Larry.'
- (38) 'It's always been this way'/'Sempre ha estat igual.'
- (40) 'Oh yes life has been very good to me'/'Oh, sí, la vida m'ha somrigut.'

In (40) although there is no such adverbial, the meaning of sempre is implicit in the sentence. The present perfect with the meaning of persistent situation, then, is possible both in English and in Catalan.

In examples (28) and (37) there is a progressive present perfect in both languages.

(28) 'It's been building up for twenty-three years./'Ho has estat covant durant vint-i-tres anys.'

(37) 'Now for the big event of the afternoon. The one you've all been waiting for'/'I ara el gran esdeveniment de la tarda. El que tots hem estat esperant.'

The present perfect progressive is possible in Catalan to express the meaning of persistent situation, as the two previous examples show. In (28) there is another element worth mentioning: 'the implication that THE EFFECTS OF THE ACTIVITY ARE STILL APPARENT' (Leech 1987:51) (his capitals). (28), therefore, would be an example which is half-way between a perfect of persistent situation and a perfect of result. In Catalan result is expressed with the present perfect, but persistent situation is usually expressed with the present tense. (28') is a possible alternative to (28):

(28') 'Fa vint-i-tres anys que ho coves.'

With the present tense the meaning of result is emphasized, and with the present perfect the meaning of persistent situation or process. Both alternatives are equally correct.

Although in (37) there is a perfect of persistent situation without a sempre-like adverbial, the Catalan sentence is acceptable because the whole situation takes

place in the afternoon, and then the present perfect is possible in Catalan in its hodiernal use. A much better alternative, however, would be 'El que tots esperàvem'. Something similar happens with (35):

(35) 'Look, I've been under the gun all morning, Sarge'/'He estat sota vigilància tot el matí, sergent.'

In this case, the present perfect is the only possible tense in English. The Catalan sentence could be rephrased as (35'):

(35') 'Porto sota vigilància tot el matí.'

Both sentences can be used in the same environment, but with a slight difference in meaning. The one with the present perfect would focus on the fact that he has been under the gun, whereas the one with the present would focus on the amount of time that he has been under the gun.

(36) 'Would you believe that I haven't been laid in seven years?/'Em creu si li dic que no he cardat des de fa set anys?'

It was established earlier that the presence of a sempre-like adverbial is necessary for the Catalan perfect of persistent situation. In (36), however, there is a correct

perfect of persistent situation without a sempre-like adverbial because the sentence is negative. The Catalan sentence with a present tense, (36'), is also correct, which is what was to be expected.

(36') 'Em creu si li dic que fa 7 anys que no cardo?'

It is possible to express a perfect of persistent situation in Catalan without sempre-like adverbials if the sentence is negative. Other examples are (27), (30) and (31).

(27) 'In twenty-three years my feelings for you have never changed'/'En vint-i-tres anys els meus sentiments per tu no han canviat.'

(30) 'I haven't changed since I left Tenafly'/'No he canviat gens des que me'n vaig anar de Tenafly.'

(31) 'I haven't eaten anything since this morning'/'No he menjat res des de l'hora d'esmorzar.'

(26), (33) and (39) are translation errors of different kinds.

(26) 'This is purely a big-time business scandal that Hagen himself and a few others have been digging into for some time in the past. Now, it's due to break'/'Això és simplement un gran escàndol que el mateix Hagen i alguns altres han estat investigant fa algun temps. Ara és a punt d'esclatar.'

- (33) '... that a (...) college graduate who has driven me crazy the last nine months...'/ '... que una llicenciada (...), que durant nou mesos m'ha fet tornar boig...'
- (39) 'I know how hard you've been working on this Bowden case'/'Sé que has treballat de valent en el cas Bowden.'

In (26) The English sentence means that Hagen and the others started investigating some time ago, and they are still investigating. In Catalan, given the context (the small one present here, and the wider one of the whole conversation), this is the only possible interpretation, but it is not the correct way of expressing in Catalan what the English text says. The problem with the Catalan sentence in (26) is that 'fa algun temps' should appear with a simple past, because it does not express an immediate past or a period of time that has not finished yet¹. Even if it had the meaning of a perfect of result or of an experiential perfect, which do not imply recentness of action, the verb could not be in the present perfect, due to the presence of the adverbial. A more normal Catalan sentence would be (26') or (26''):

- (26') '(...) que Hagen i els altres fa un cert temps que estan investigant.'
- (26'') '(...) que Hagen i els altres estan investigant des de fa un cert temps.'

The alternative with a present perfect progressive would

also be possible:

(26''') '(...) que Hagen i els altres han estat
investigant des de fa un cert temps.'

In (33) and (39) it is clear from the context of the film that, both in the Catalan and in the English sentences, the action started in the past and continues in the present. In both cases, the Catalan sentence should have contained either a present tense - (33') and (39') - or a present perfect progressive - (33''') and (39'''):

(33') '(...) una llicenciada que fa nou mesos que em
fa tornar boig...'

(39') 'Sé que fa temps que estàs treballant en el
cas Bowden.'

(33''') '(...) una llicenciada que m'ha estat tornant
boig des de fa nou mesos.'

(39''') 'Sé que has estat treballant en el cas Bowden
des de fa temps.'

We see, then, that in Catalan the present perfect progressive can be used to express the meaning of persistent situation.

3.3.3. Perfect of result

The 14 examples of this group represent the 77.7% of the 18 English perfects of result found in the data. The perfect of result is a category traditionally recognized both in English and in Catalan. The present perfect is

used in both languages to talk about an action whose results still hold. The translation of an English perfect of result into a Catalan perfect of result is, then, to be expected. In both languages the perfect is a very appropriate choice, although not the only one. Some examples are:

- (52) 'I've explained it all to Bert, and we're finishing the article together'/'Ho **he explicat** tot a Bert i ara acabem l'article plegats.'
- (53) 'By the way, I've assigned somebody to follow the Delos murder'/'I, a propòsit, **he encarregat** algú de seguir l'assassinat de la Delos.'

Comrie (1976) asserts that the meaning of the perfect of result can also be expressed with the simple present of a stative verb. All the examples classified here as perfects of result do have a present-tense-sentence equivalent. See for example:

- (42) '... our troops **have established** themselves across Gallipoli'/'... les nostres tropes s'**han establert** als voltants de Gallípoli.'
- (42') '... our troops **are now** (established) across Gallipoli'/'les nostres tropes **són** ara als voltants de Gallípoli.'
- (44) 'He's not talking much these days. The cops **have put** the fear of God in him'/'No parla gaire ara. Està aterrit. Els policies li **han ficat** la por al cos.'
- (44') 'He's not talking much these days. He **is** very afraid.'

(54) 'The jury has reached a verdict'/'El jurat ha arribat a un veredicte.'

(54') 'The jury has a verdict'/'El jurat té un veredicte.'

In (44), the Catalan translator has added a present tense sentence with a meaning similar to that of the present perfect one: 'està aterrit'. Since this example belongs to one of the film scripts, the addition might have been due to problems of dubbing. It is interesting that the translator has chosen to add precisely that sentence, which does not alter the meaning of the sentence but reinforces the meaning of result.

While it is true that the perfect can be and indeed is used to talk about a past action with present results, it must be borne in mind that all the things that have happened to us have some kind of influence (result) on our present-day life. That is, the present perfect is not the only tense that can be used to express an action whose results are still operative. A case in point would be:

(e10) a. I was born in 1962.

b. Jo vaig néixer el 1962.

Being born is an event whose results are indeed important, at least until you die. Nonetheless, the simple past is the tense used to talk about it, regardless of whether the person is alive or dead.

It is not always easy to distinguish between the perfect of result and the perfect of recent past. When the action has taken place in the immediate past and its results are still operative it is difficult to decide what kind of perfect it is. The overlap of the two kinds of perfect is more frequent in Catalan than in English, because in Catalan the period of time during which the perfect of recent past can be used is much longer than in English. Only those perfects which could not be perfects of recent past have been included in this section. In other words, the examples which could be considered both perfects of result and perfects of recent past have been classified as perfects of recent past.

3.3.4. Perfect of recent past

The 92 examples in this section represent the 93.8% of the 98 English perfects of recent past found in the data. Since the period of time to which the perfect of recent past can refer to is much smaller in English than in Catalan (see 2.5.4.), it is natural that the vast majority of perfects of recent past in English are translated into Catalan perfects.

The items in this section can be divided into two groups: a) those that are clearly perfects of recent past because they appear with adverbials such as already,

lately and the like (either in the same sentence or in a previous one); and b) those in which the context indicates that they are perfects of recent past, but which do not co-occur with any adverbial of the kind just mentioned.

In both groups there are examples in which it is difficult to distinguish between a perfect of recent past and a perfect of result. In fact, it is not only that the two kinds of perfect are difficult to distinguish, but rather that the two meanings merge, that is, that both meanings can be present in a given instance of the present perfect. It is not uncommon for the result of a recent action to be operative at the moment of speech. These perfects will be considered perfects of recent past. An example of the overlap between the perfect of result and the perfect of recent past is (103):

(103) 'Have you had your dinner?'/ 'Que ja ha sopat?'

This sentence is uttered at a time of the evening when one can have had dinner or not. The result meaning of this sentence is quite clear: the speaker wants to know if the addressee has had dinner or not (and hence is hungry or not). In Catalan, even if the result meaning did not exist in this sentence, the present perfect would be used, because the perfect is compulsory if the action has occurred in the last twenty-four hours, whether or not its

result still holds. In Catalan, then, the overlap between the perfect of result and the perfect of recent past is clear in this example. In English the perfect is not hodiernal. If the question in (103), which is uttered in the evening, had been about breakfast or lunch, the only appropriate tense would have been the simple past:

(e11) (uttered in the evening)

- a. Did you have lunch/breakfast?
- b. *Have you had lunch/breakfast?

The overlap between the perfect of result and the perfect of recent past is also clear in English in (103), because even without the result meaning, (103) could have been expressed with the present perfect. The only difference with Catalan is that the period of time during which the perfect of recent past can be used in English is shorter.

(71) 'The reason she's locked herself in the bathroom is that she's afraid'/'El motiu pel qual s'ha tancat al bany és que té por.'

(71') 'The reason she is now locked in the bathroom is that she is afraid.'

In (71) we find a good example of McCoard's (1978) point that the perfect of result and the corresponding present tense sentence are not quite equivalent. The simple-present sentence (71') does not mean exactly the same as

the present perfect sentence (71). In (71) the girl was afraid and that made her lock herself in the bathroom. The fact that she is now still in the bathroom is implied, not explicitly stated, in the present perfect sentence, and is a consequence, not of her fear, but of her having locked herself.

3.3.4.1. Perfects of recent past with adverbial modification

There are 30 examples in this section - (67), (68), (76) to (82), (85) to (87), (89) to (100), (104), (109), (111), (126) to (128), (144) and (146) - in which the present perfect co-occurs with one of the adverbials typically associated with the present perfect, be it in the same sentence or in the previous one. According to Leech (1987), adverbials of this kind are, for instance, yet, already, lately, recently, this month. The examples in this group are non-controversially classified as perfects of recent past because of their co-occurrence with such adverbials. In Catalan these perfects express 'an action that has just taken place', which is the first use that Badia Margarit (1962) establishes for the present perfect. The fact that we find present perfect in both languages is, then, what is to be expected.

- (76) 'Remember everything I've told you now' /
'Recorda tot el que t'acabo de dir.'
- (146) 'James was an innocent man. A good man. And now we've proved it to the world' / 'En James era un bon home... i innocent, a més. I ara ho hem demostrat a tothom.'
- (102) 'At the same time, one of the most sensational murders of the year has occurred' / 'Al mateix temps hi ha hagut un dels més sensacionals assassinats de l'any.'

These three cases will be studied in some detail. In them, the present perfect is syntactically required by an adverbial modification present in the context. In (76) and (146) it is the presence of the adverb now. The Catalan translation of the English perfect in (76) into acabar de is very appropriate. The perfect of recent past is typically expressed with this periphrasis in Catalan. The perfect accompanied by ara mateix would also have been possible:

(76') 'Recorda el que t'he dit ara mateix.'

Now is a present time adverbial incompatible with the simple past. It is compatible with the present perfect because the present perfect is a past inclusive of the present moment. There are other adverbials, however, that can occur with both tenses, such as just:

- (e12) a. Remember everything I've just told you.
b. Remember everything I just told you.

(e12a) is typically used in British English and (e12b) in American English.

Swan (1980) mentions that just can be used with the present perfect and with the simple past, but just now, with a very similar meaning, can only occur with the latter²:

(e13) a. *Remember what I've told you just now.

b. Remember what I told you just now.

In (102) above the adverbial at the same time makes the situation denoted by the present perfect verb simultaneous with a present moment (the previous sentence is: 'Right now I have to work on a special, outside job'). Hence, the simple past is excluded, and only the present perfect is possible.

(126) - (128) 'You have chosen to riot while I've been gone. You've taken some of my administrators and guards as hostages. In order to protect the lives of these hostages, the people in charge have not taken the action required'/'Us heu volgut amotinar mentre jo no hi era. Heu pres uns quants administradors i guardians meus com a ostatges. Per protegir la vida d'aquests ostatges, els serveis de l'ordre no han pres les mesures adequades.'

Examples (126) to (128), all belonging to the same sentence, are also special. The adverbial modifying the

three verb phrases under study is while I've been gone/mentre jo no hi era. (The present perfect in the English adverbial is not studied here because its Catalan counterpart is an imperfect; cases like this will be dealt with in section 3.4.) The speaker is the warden of a prison in which a few inmates have started a riot. The period of time to which the adverbial makes reference is past, because the warden is already back in the prison. Nonetheless, the present perfect is the appropriate tense because the prisoners are still rioting. The past tense would be the correct choice if the riot were already over. If the verb in the adverbial subordinate clause were in the simple past ('while I was gone'), the present perfect would still be possible.

3.3.4.2. Perfects of recent past without adverbial modification

The problem with the perfect of recent past without adverbial modification is, using Quirk's words (1985:190), that 'the present perfect is to some extent limited by the fact that it shares the same past "territory" as the simple past'. In certain occasions it is difficult to explain exactly why only one of the tenses is possible, and when both are possible, to account for the difference existing between the two.

Swan (1980) tries to explain the difference between the present perfect and the simple past by establishing distinct environments for each of these two tenses. According to him, (Swan 1980:#495), the present perfect 'is often used to talk about finished actions and events. This normally happens when the past events have some present importance, and when we could make a present tense sentence (with a similar meaning) about the same situation'. This is especially common when giving news in reports, letters and conversations. If it is not possible to have a present tense sentence, the present perfect cannot be used even if we are giving news; the simple past must be used instead. The kinds of examples Swan 1980:#495) gives are:

- (e14) a. According to latest reports, government forces have pushed back the rebels and retaken the town.
b. Forces are occupying a town.
- (e15) a. I'm delighted to tell you that you've passed your exam.
b. Somebody has a new qualification.
- (e16) a. I've never had scarlet fever.
b. So I can still get it.
- (e17) a. Granny hit me!
b. *Granny has hit me!

- (e18) a. John **said** the most horrible things to
Melissa.
- b. *John **has said** the most horrible things to
Melissa.

Swan's claim that it is not possible to find equivalent present tense sentences for examples such as (e17) and (e18) while it is possible to find them for the rest is quite arbitrary. He does not give any arguments in favour of accepting (e14b), (e15b) and (e16b) as real equivalents to (e14a), (e15a) and (e16a) respectively, nor does he consider (e17c) and (e18c) as possible equivalents to (e17a) and (e18a) respectively.

- (e17) c. Now I'm sore.
- (e18) c. Now she's hurt.

If Swan criteria really discriminated between the present perfect and the simple past, all the sentences from the data with a perfect of recent past without adverbial modification should have an equivalent present tense sentence, but this is not what is found. There are indeed examples which have a corresponding present tense sentence, such as:

- (107) 'No no no, we've opened this up, let's bring
it all out.'
- (107') '... now this is opened up ...'

(108) 'I've told you the truth, Karen.'

(108') 'Now you know the truth, Karen.'

(122) 'I've looked over this list of grievances.'

(122') 'Now I know what the list says.'

The use of the perfect in examples such as (107), (108) and (122) is justified, according to Swan, because of the related present tense sentence. Other examples which have a corresponding present-tense sentence are (61) to (66), (69) to (75), (101) to (103), (106), (108) to (110), (112) to (116), (123) to (134), (137), (138) and (140).

Notwithstanding, it is not possible to find equivalent present tense sentences for all the examples, even being as flexible applying the criterion as the examples above show. (56), (57) and (58) are some cases in point.

(56) 'I know I've done my best'/'Sé que he fet tot el que he pogut.'

(57) 'I've done my best and we failed her'/'He fet tot el que he pogut i hem fracassat.'

(58) 'The way they've handled this whole thing... It goes beyond incompetence'/'Sí, però... la manera com han portat tot això passa d'incompetència.'

It remains to be explained why the perfect is the appropriate choice in items such as (56), (57) and (58),

and others. It could be argued that, in fact, these examples fit none of the categories that have been established. These perfects do not express i) 'a situation that has obtained at least once in a period of time that started in the past and continues up to the present' (experiential perfect); or ii) 'a situation that started in the past and still continues in the present' (perfect of persistent situation); or iii) 'a situation whose results are still operative' (perfect of result); or iv) 'a situation that has obtained in the immediate past' (perfect of recent past). These perfects express a situation that is felt by the speaker to be RELEVANT to him/her and that is precisely why it is phrased in the present perfect.

The present perfect in items (56) to (58) could be changed to a simple past. Compare (56) - (58) with (56') - (58'):

(56') 'I did my best'/'Sé que vaig fer tot el que vaig poder.'

(57') 'I did my best and we failed her'/'Vaig fer tot el que vaig poder i vam fracassar.'

(58') 'The way they handled this whole thing...'/ 'Sí, però... la manera com van portar tot això...'

In English these simple-past sentences are grammatical, but they are not pragmatically equivalent to the present-tense constructions. With the simple past, the speaker

indicates that he/she considers what he/she is talking about as something distant, not necessarily in time but in relevance. (56) and (57) are uttered by a mother whose daughter is on the point of getting married and some problems have arisen. With the present perfect, the mother is expressing that she is still very much concerned with what happens to her child. The simple past would indicate that the mother and the daughter had been out of contact for some time, and that the mother no longer feels responsible for her child's acts. In (58) the present perfect conveys that the mishandling of the 'whole thing' is still important at the moment of speech, whereas the simple past would not indicate this. These explanations are also valid for the Catalan sentences.

Summing up, the present perfect sentences convey the idea that, for the speaker, the situation expressed by the verb is intimately connected with the present moment. Although this close link can be, and indeed often is, temporal, it does not have to be so necessarily. The speaker can feel that a given situation, although remote in time, is relevant to him/her in the present moment and hence chooses to express it with the present perfect (provided that there are no syntactic constraints preventing it, such as the presence of a time-when adverbial).

There are four examples from the film Gallipoli which are interesting in this respect, (136) to (139).

(136) 'Has it been a success or hasn't it?'

(137) 'Our marker flags have been seen in the Turkish trenches.'

(138) 'Those men should have gone, Barton. Marker flags have been seen.'

(139) 'Not by me, sir! I've asked for confirmation... from General Gardner'.

Swan's criteria have been proved inadequate to explain why in some cases the present perfect is possible in English whereas in other similar environments it is not possible. Only two of the cases under study here can be justified using his approach, (137) and (138). It is possible to account for the use of the present perfect in all of them using the notion of relevance. The extralinguistic context is very important in cases such as (136) to (139). An Australian Colonel wants his troops to attack the Turkish trenches, although it is clear that the attack is doomed to failure. After a first attempt, in which many soldiers die, the Colonel utters (136). The attack was already over, so he could have used the simple past, just like the appropriate question after a big noise is (e19a) and not (e19b).

(e19) a. What was that?

b. *What has that been?

Nonetheless, the present perfect is used because whether the attack was a success or not is relevant to the Colonel. His further acts will be conditioned by the answer he is given. After a while, the Colonel again orders that the attack should proceed, but the Major disagrees totally. (137) and (138), uttered by the Colonel, are meant to be arguments in favour of the attack, because the fact that Australian flags have been seen in the Turkish trenches indicates that there are Australian troops there and hence that the attack is bound to be a success. The past tense would have been possible in these two examples, too, but then the sight of the flags would not have been so directly related to the moment of speech and the argument in favour of the attack would not have been so strong^s. (139) is uttered by the Major when he receives the final orders to attack. He has sent a runner to General Gardner (the telephone is out of order), and is still waiting for him to come back. The message that the runner brings back will be of extreme importance to the Major, and he expects it soon; that is why the present perfect is used. Incidentally, the message to cancel the attack arrives too late, and a big number of soldiers die unnecessarily.

In Catalan, relevance plays no role in these cases, because all the events have taken place within the last twenty-four hours, so the perfect is the only alternative.

Summing up, the use of the present perfect in these examples can be explained pragmatically. What is felt by the speaker to be RELEVANT to him is expressed in the present perfect (if the syntactic environment allows it).

(101) 'Thanks for what you've told me'/'Gràcies pel que m'ha dit.'

In this example, the simple past would also have been possible. In English, as soon as an action/event is finished, it is liable to be expressed with the simple past. For instance, in a conversation, when a repetition is required because something was not clear enough, (e20) and not (e21) is the correct question:

(e20) What did you say?

(e21) What have you (just) said?

The choice of the present perfect in (101) indicates that what the speaker has been told is very important to her: she now knows who killed her boyfriend, whom she really loved, and hence can get her revenge. In Catalan, the factor of relevance plays no significant role in this case because, since the telling was done within the last

twenty-four hours, the present perfect is the only possibility.

3.3.4.3. Special cases

- (79) 'She was the girl Angel Grace had called Nancy Regan. I have already said she was nice'/'Era la noia que l'Angel Grace havia anomenat Nancy Regan. Ja he dit que era maca.'

In this example, which is found in the first person narrative, the recent past does not refer to the past of the story, but to the past of the act of narrating. The narrator is telling a story, which is in the past, but the act of narrating is done in the present. Within this act, the narrator has said that this woman was nice, and that is why he is using the present perfect, because his saying it has taken place in the immediate past.

Items (84) and (85) have been included here, although it is not clear whether they are instances of the present perfect of the verb get or instances of simple-present have + got:

- (84) 'Have you got that?'/ 'Ho has entès?'

- (85) 'Yes, sir! I've got it'/ 'Sí, Sam. Ho he entès.'

The fact that they are translated with a perfect in Catalan might be understood as an indication that the

English verb phrases are also perfect. However, it is often the case that a Catalan perfect of result corresponds to an English simple present. It has been claimed - Comrie (1976), Swan (1980) - that what is expressed by sentences with perfects of result can also be expressed by simple present tense sentences. McCoard (1978) disagrees: according to him, the present perfect expresses a prior event and implies a present state, whereas a simple present expresses a present state and implies a prior event. In the sentences under study here, the two meanings distinguished by McCoard seem to merge: there seems to be no difference between 'have got' (get) something and now have it and having it because you got it before. Actually, there is no way of, or much point in, distinguishing between the two. This is most probably due to the fact that have got is a special, frequently occurring form. Frequency of occurrence is a pragmatic factor that affects the use and meaning of grammatical forms.

3.4 Present Perfect in English and another form in Catalan

There are 47 examples in this group, 27 perfects of persistent situation, 9 experiential perfects, 4 perfects of result, 6 perfects of recent past and 1 non-deictic perfect. These English perfects are translated into different forms in Catalan, depending in each case on the kind of perfect.

3.4.1. Translations of the English perfect of persistent situation

Twenty-one of the forty-one English perfects of persistent situation are translated into a simple present in Catalan, and one into a present progressive. That is, in 53.6% of the cases the English perfects of persistent situation correspond to present tenses in Catalan. If we add the four inadequate translations mentioned in section 3.3.2., which should also have been translated into a present tense, we have 60.9%

The perfect of persistent situation is, if not exclusive to, at least very typical of English, whereas in Catalan this meaning is usually expressed with the present tense. Two examples of this are (160) and (165).

- (160) 'Look, Grossman, for over four years I've watched you crack the whip around here' /
'Escolta, Grossman, fa més de quatre anys que et veig fent petar la xurriaca.'

(165) 'How long have you owned this store?'/ 'Quant fa que té aquesta botiga?'

The only case of an English perfect corresponding to a Catalan present progressive is (168).

(168) 'The Turks have had us pinned down ever since'/ 'Els turcs ens estan fregint aquí des que vam arribar.'

The meaning of persistent situation can be expressed in Catalan with a present perfect if the sentence is negative. This does not mean, however, that the present tense is excluded in such cases. Five of the items in this group - (148), (150), (154), (155) and (157) - consist of negative perfects of persistent situation in English and negative present tenses in Catalan. In all the cases the Catalan verb phrase could be replaced by a present perfect. See, for example, item (148):

(148) 'A friend of mine I haven't seen for years comes in here...'/ 'Un amic que no veig fa anys ve aquí...'

The Catalan sentence with the present is perfectly correct, but it would also have been possible to express the same idea with the perfect: 'Un amic que no he vist des de fa anys'.

The English perfect of persistent situation can also be translated, as in (172), with a kind of perfect

progressive periphrasis.

- (172) 'It's just some old stuff I've had hanging around.' / 'Hi ha un grapat de coses sense importància que he anat recollint.'

In items (170) and (171) the English perfect of persistent situation corresponds to a past tense in Catalan, imperfect in (170) and preterit (171).

- (170) 'You've known it all along, haven't you?' / 'Vostè ja ho sabia, oi?'

- (171) 'She's never liked me from the first day she saw me' / 'El primer dia que em va veure ja no li vaig agradar.'

The perfect of persistent situation expresses a situation that started somewhere in the past and still continues in the present. The Catalan past tense indicates the past point in time in which the situation started, and the adverb ja means that the situation still holds. The simple past can also be used in English with the meaning of persistent situation. The environment needed is the same for both languages: a definite point in time in the past explicit in the sentence, the adverb ja/already, and that it is clear (contextually) that the action continues up to the present.

- (e22) a. In 1921 I already knew her (I still know her).
 b. El 1921 jo ja la coneixia (encara la conec).
- (e23) a. Last summer, we already had this boat (we still have it).
 b. L'estiu passat ja la teníem, aquesta barca (encara la tenim).

In (169) the English perfect of persistent situation also corresponds to a Catalan past tense, an imperfect, but it is different from the cases just studied:

- (169) 'It's been ages since we saw each other, Jesse'/'Feia segles que no hi érem, Jesse.'

Here the change from present perfect into imperfect is due to a change in point of view, which is studied in more detail in section 3.4.2. below (items (174) to (178)).

In example (173) the perfect of persistent situation is translated into a past perfect:

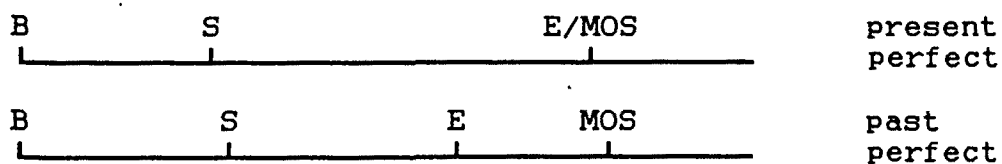
- (173) 'And he says, in his own language of course, this been in his family for generations after generations ...'/'I ell va dir, en la seva llengua, és clar, que havia estat de la seva família durant generacions ...'

The English subordinate clause in which the perfect occurs is embedded in a sentence in the present, whereas in Catalan the corresponding superordinate clause is in the past, thus yielding a past perfect in the subordinate, due

to the consecutio temporum.

3.4.2. Translations of the English experiential perfect

In five items - (174) to (178) - the English experiential perfect corresponds to a Catalan past perfect. Both in English and in Catalan the past perfect can have a meaning parallel to that of the experiential perfect: instead of expressing a situation that has obtained at least once in a period of time that started somewhere in the past and continues up to the present as the present perfect does, the past perfect expresses a situation that obtained at least once in a period of time that started somewhere in the past and finished later, but still in the past. With the 'experiential past perfect' the upper limit of the period of time is not 'now' but 'then'. In the following diagrams the difference between the two tenses is made clearer:



[B=beginning of period; S=situation; E=end of period;
MOS=moment of speech act]

It remains to be explained, however, why the English present perfect has been translated into a Catalan past perfect. One possible reason for a change of this kind

would be that the sentences in the two languages were embedded in different superordinate clauses, and that the change was produced by the consecutio temporum, which is what happens in example (173) in the previous section. In the cases under study here, the change from present perfect to past perfect is not syntactically determined. It is rather determined by a shift in the point of view of the speaker.

- (174) 'I've never been in the Plaza [Hotel] before' /
'No hi havia estat mai al Plaza.'

This sentence is uttered by a woman who is precisely in the Plaza. In English, the speaker, as it were, leaves aside the fact that she is now in the hotel; the present moment does not include this fact, and so the present perfect is used, because the speaker has not been in this hotel before now. In Catalan, on the contrary, the fact she is now in the Plaza is important. The speaker's point of reference is not the present moment, 'now', but 'then', the period of time previous to her being in the hotel, hence the past perfect is the appropriate tense. The same phenomenon is found in (176), (177) and (178).

- (176) 'That's because I've never tried one [kind of criminal case]' / 'Això és perquè no h'havia portat mai cap.'

- (177) 'Has this store ever been held up before' /
'Havien atracat mai abans aquesta botiga?'

(178) 'Have you ever been robbed before?'/ 'I només li
pregunto si l'havien atracada mai.'

(176) is uttered by a lawyer who is precisely in the middle of one such case. (177) and (178) belong to the same conversation, in which a lawyer is investigating a recent robbery. Clearly he knows that the addressee has been robbed before now, because he is precisely investigating the last robbery. His question refers to the period of time previous to that last robbery. In English the present perfect is used, in Catalan the past perfect. In fact, in Catalan, a present perfect would not be possible in any of these cases.

Examples (179) and (180), in which an English experiential perfect corresponds to a Catalan simple past, are, in our opinion, translation errors. They appear in the same sentence and can, therefore, be explained together.

(179) 'I know I've co-operated with you people in the
(180) past, and you've co-operated with me'/'El que
sé és que fa temps vaig col·laborar amb
vosaltres, i que vosaltres vau col·laborar amb
mi.'

The experiential perfect can appear with past time-when adverbials if they express 'backward span' both in English and in Catalan, so the English sentence is correct. The

translator has changed the adverbial into a Catalan one corresponding to 'a long time ago', which is incompatible with the present perfect. This has compelled him to change the tense of the verb into the past tense. The consequence is a total and unnecessary change of meaning. A much better alternative would have been to keep the tense and the adverbial, for instance, '... ja he col·laborat amb vosaltres en el passat/abans...'

The other two examples in this group are special cases. In (181) there is a total restructuring of the sentence, very appropriate, which turns the English present perfect into a Catalan perfect infinitive.

(181) 'Maybe I haven't seen you in fifteen years but I know an awful lot about you'/'Tot i no haver-te vist durant quinze anys, sé un munt de coses de tu.'

In (182) the use of the present perfect in English is quite idiomatic, and is translated into a Catalan future Perfect.

(182) 'Oh, has he been talking about us, has he?'/ 'T'haurà xerrat molt de nosaltres, oi?'

The speaker is not asking a genuine question, but rather expressing his opinion about the likelihood that the subject of the sentence has indeed been talking about them

to the addressee. In fact, the speaker is quite certain that the speaker has been talking about them. Epistemic modality is expressed in this case, in English, by having a question followed by a tag question of the same polarity, and in Catalan by using the future perfect. As Badia Margarit (1962:432) states, however, the use of the future perfect in Catalan to express probability is a 'construcción castellanizante que hay que evitar'. The correct Catalan construction is the periphrasis deure + infinitive. The Catalan translation of (182), then, should have been:

(182') 'Et deu haver parlat molt de nosaltres, oi?'

3.4.3. The English perfect of result translated into a Catalan present

There are four items in this group, which represent the 21% of the English perfects of result found in the data. The meaning of result, that is, a past action whose results still hold, can be expressed, both in English and in Catalan, either with the present perfect or with the present tense. The English sentences would also be correct with a present tense, and the Catalan sentences could have been translated with a present perfect. This seems to indicate that the two tenses are totally interchangeable.

McCoard (1978), however, disagrees. In the cases under study here, while it is true that there is a difference of emphasis between the present-perfect sentence and the simple-present sentence, the meaning of the English original is not significantly altered by the change of tense in the translation. The change of tense is more appropriate in (184) and (185) than in (183) and (186).

(184) 'In ten minutes she's gonna be a married woman because I've had enough of this nonsense' /
'D'aquí a deu minuts ja serà casada, perquè n'estic fart d'aquesta ximpleria.'

(185) 'Have any of them been injured?/'N'hi ha cap de ferit?'

(183) '... and tell him you've been hired by me to help him as much as you can' / '... i que li diguis que jo et pago perquè l'ajudis tant com puguis.'

(186) 'He keeps asking if I've hired a lawyer' / 'Em pregunta si tinc un advocat.'

In other words, the Catalan sentences in (184) and (185) sound better with the simple present than with the present perfect, whereas in the other two cases the change is unnecessary.

3.4.4. Translations of the English perfect of recent past

Given that the scope of application of the perfect of recent past is much more reduced in English than in Catalan, one would expect all the English perfects of

recent past to have equivalent perfect phrases in Catalan. Nonetheless, there are 6 cases (6.1% of the total) in the data in which this is not so. There are 3 English perfects of recent past corresponding to Catalan imperfects, one to a simple past, one to a present subjunctive and one to a present indicative.

In (188) and (189), where the English present perfect corresponds to a Catalan imperfect, the translations are correct; a perfect would have been impossible in Catalan.

(188) 'You have chosen to riot while I've been gone'/'Us heu volgut amotinar mentre jo no hi era.'

(189) 'Free country, or haven't you heard?'/ 'Som un país lliure, no ho sabies?'

In fact, the English sentences would also have been possible with a past tense:

(188') 'You have chosen to riot while I was away'

(189') 'Free country, didn't you know?'

In four cases, (187), (190), (191) and (192), the Catalan translation is not appropriate.

(190) 'I'll see if we haven't missed something in recent political developments'/'Veuré si no vam passar per alt res en els esdeveniments polítics recents.'

(192) 'What's happened?'/ 'Què passa?'

(187) 'You don't have to set up the chairs. All right leave it; you've done it already'/'No cal que hi posi cadires. És igual, deixi-la, ja l'hi tenia.'

(191) 'There's only one reason why I haven't knocked you down, mate'/'Només hi ha un motiu perquè no t'inflí la cara.'

(190) is the clearest case of an incorrect version. It is a very strange error. The English sentence makes reference to something that has happened in the very recent past. In Catalan the scope of application of the perfect of recent past is much wider than in English, so no explanation can be found to account for this change from the English perfect to the Catalan past. In Catalan, it must be remembered, the simple past indicates, compulsorily, that the action has taken place before the day in which the sentence is uttered. Hence, this translation error would lead to an incorrect interpretation of the events narrated in the novel.

In (192) we have a totally unnecessary change of tense, but which does not yield an ungrammatical sentence nor gives rise to any radical change in meaning. Nonetheless, the version with the present perfect would have been correct, and more faithful:

(192') 'Què ha passat?'

In (187) and (191) the change in tense does not lead to an

incorrect interpretation of the events narrated either, but the Catalan sentences are awkward. The following sentences would be much better alternatives:

(187') 'No cal que hi posi cadires. És igual, deixi-la, ja n'hi ha posat una'

(191') 'Si no t'he inflat la cara és només per una raó'.

3.4.5. Non-deictic use of the present perfect

The present perfect can be used non-deictically both in English and in Catalan. In (193) a non-deictic present perfect in English is translated into a future perfect in Catalan.

(193) 'If you don't pass him, you've lost all four of us' / 'Si no el passa a ell, ens haurà perdut a tots quatre.'

The translation is correct, and the meaning is not significantly changed, but a present perfect would also have been possible in Catalan:

(193') 'Si no el passa a ell, ens ha perdut a tots quatre.'

3.5. Present Perfect in Catalan and another form in English

There are 473 examples in this section, all of them in the dialogues.

3.5.1. Simple past in English and perfect of recent past in Catalan

There are 363 items in which an English simple past is translated into a perfect of recent past in Catalan. These items represent the 54.5% of all the data, and the 76.9% of the examples in which there is a present perfect in Catalan and another form in English. This correspondence has been dealt with in detail above (sections 2.5.4., 2.6.1. and 2.6.2.). Recapitulating, there are two main explanations for the fact that a past tense in English corresponds to a present perfect in Catalan. The first is that the scope of the perfect of recent past is wider in Catalan than in English. The second is that when the recentness of the action would allow a perfect in English, if there is a time-when adverbial in the same sentence the tense has to be the simple past.

3.5.1.1. English simple past with adverbial modification

The second reason mentioned in the previous section explains that in examples (229), (268), (292) and (295), in which there is an adverbial expressing a definite point of time, a simple past is found in English, although the action has taken place recently.

- (229) 'Jack Counihan called a couple of minutes ago'/'Fa un parell de minuts que ha trucat en Jack Counihan.'
- (268) '(...) your Red O'Leary came home to roost half an hour ago'/'(...) el teu Red O'Leary ha comparegut per anar a jóc fa mitja hora.'
- (292) 'Not ten minutes ago somebody shot at me from this building'/'Encara no fa deu minuts que algú m'ha disparat des d'aquest edifici.'
- (295) '... I talked to Paul Masetti of the CCG, just a couple of hours ago'/'... fa un parell d'hores he parlat amb Paul Masetti, de l'ASM.'

The recentness expressed by the adverbials ranges from a couple of minutes ago, (229), ten minutes ago, (292), half an hour ago, to a couple of hours ago (295).

In examples (279), (400) and (434), the English simple past co-occurs with this morning and this afternoon, which are adverbials compatible both with the present perfect and with the simple past.

- (279) 'This morning Masetti called me'/'Aquest matí Masetti m'ha trucat.'

(400) 'He called me some nasty names this morning'/'Aquest matí m'ha dit coses molt desagradables.'

(434) 'You saved our lives this afternoon, Mr Briston'/'Ens ha salvat la vida aquesta tarda, Sr. Briston.'

The general rule is that the present perfect can be used with such adverbials only if the sentence is uttered during the period of time denoted by the adverbial. The simple past must be used if the time period denoted by the adverbial is over, and can also be used if the sentence is uttered within the time span conveyed by the adverbial. The present perfect would not have been possible in English in any of these three examples, because (279) and (400) are uttered in the afternoon, and (434) in the evening.

In four cases - (435), (436), (549) and (550) - the simple past occurs with the adverbial today.

(435) 'And when you faced those loudmouths today, you (436) also became a leader'/'I quan t'has enfrontat a tots aquells miserables, t'has convertit en un líder també.'

(549) 'In your direct testimony today, you said he made three attempts'/'En el seu... en el seu testimoni d'avui ha dit que en va fer tres.'

(550) 'What you did with that officer today...'/ 'El que ha fet amb aquest policia avui...'

The present perfect would have been possible in English because the sentences are uttered within the time span

denoted by the adverbial. Nonetheless, the simple past is used. Swan (1980:#495) writes: "'definite" time expressions (like today, this week, this morning) are not often used with the present perfect when we talk about finished events. Compare (e24a) with (e24b):

- (e24) a. I've spoken to the boss about my holiday.
b. I spoke to the boss today about my holiday.
(Not: *I've spoken ... today.)'

In all the examples from the data under study, the actions are indeed 'finished events'. The presence of today makes the situation denoted by the verb very close to the present moment, which in principle provides the necessary connection of the past action with the present moment required for the use of the present perfect. Notwithstanding, the fact that the event is completed is a stronger factor in determining tense choice in English, and so the simple past is used.

It is worth mentioning that in the Catalan translation of the sentence in which (435) and (436) are found, the adverbial today, present in the English original, has been left out. Since the last twenty-four hours represent the default value for the Catalan perfect of recent past (hodiernal past) there is no need to state explicitly that the action denoted by the verb has taken place within the day. If there is no other temporal

specification, be it in the same sentence, in previous sentences or in the context, the sentence will be interpreted as referring to the same day.

In examples (444) and (532) we find the adverbs yet and already, which appear with the present perfect in British English and with the simple past in American English.

(444) 'Now uh - you get outside the wall yet?'/ 'Heu passat del mur ja?'

(532) 'I already subpoenaed him'/'Ja he enviat una sollicitud per interrogar-lo.'

Vanneck (1958) claims that in American English the distinction between the simple past and the present perfect is being lost. American speakers use what Vanneck calls 'colloquial preterit' instead of the present perfect. Some of the examples he provides are:

(e25) He isn't here now. I don't know what **happened**
to him. result

(e26) Yes, he's here. I just **saw** him. recent past

(e27) Did you **have** lunch yet? recent past

In Catalan, all the examples examined so far are in the present perfect because all the actions referred to by the verbs have occurred in the same day. Other factors, such as the result still holding, or the action being

completed or not, play no role.

In items (269), (271) and (278) there is also a past-tense adverbial which in English prevents the presence of the present perfect: last night.

(269) 'Last night he was in a hotel from eleven...'/
'Aquesta nit passada ha estat en un hotel des de les onze...'

(271) 'Could you identify any of the men you saw in the cars last night?'/ 'Podries identificar alguns dels homes que has vist als cotxes aquesta nit?'

(278) 'I spent all last night worrying about it'/ 'i tota la nit he estat preocupat.'

In Catalan, this adverbial is translated as aquesta nit (or something similar, such as tota la nit), and requires the present perfect.

3.5.1.2. just + past tense vs acabar de

There are eight more items which are examples of a 'colloquial preterit': (267), (283), (285), (291), (340), (341), (420) and (456). In all of them we find an English simple past with the adverb just. This adverb co-occurs with the present perfect in British English. Three of these examples are listed below:

(283) 'I just talked to him'/ 'Acabo de xerrar amb ell.'

(340) 'I just got into town'/'Acabo d'arribar.'

(456) 'Fraker just delivered Fisk through the main gate'/'En Fraker acaba d'entregar en Fisk a la porta principal.'

Seven of the examples mentioned at the beginning of this section - all but (285) - should not be dealt with at all in this study because there is no present perfect either in English or in Catalan: in English we have just + past tense, whereas in Catalan we have the periphrasis acabar de. They have been included here because this kind of periphrasis is very common in some Romance languages to express recent past. The recentness of the past in English is signalled by the presence of the adverb just.

(285) 'I take it (...) that Masetti just called you'/'Em fa l'efecte que Masetti no fa gaire que us ha trucat.'

In this example the same combination appears in English (just + past tense), but it has been translated in Catalan as a present perfect. The Catalan sentence is correct, but the alternative with acabar de would also have been possible:

(285') 'Em fa l'efecte que Masetti us acaba de trucar.'

3.5.1.3. Simple past without adverbial modification in English

Going back to the first of the reasons given in the introductory part of this section, that the range of application of the perfect of recent past is much more restricted in English than in Catalan, the study of the data reveals facts that had not been mentioned in section 2.5.4. (dealing with the perfect of recent past in English).

The period of time in which the perfect of recent past can be used in Catalan is very straightforward: the last twenty-four hours. Exceptions are possible when the speaker is highly involved in or concerned with what he/she is talking about. In such cases the speaker may choose to use the present perfect even if the event has not taken place today. In Catalan it is possible to use the perfect of recent past, instead of the past tense, for events that have taken place before today, but it is absolutely impossible to use the simple past for events that have taken place today; the present perfect is compulsory in such cases, and there are no exceptions.

In English the picture is much more complex. It is possible, as in Catalan, to use the present perfect to talk about situations which have obtained before today if the speaker feels especially involved in what he/she is

narrating. But English differs from Catalan in that the present perfect is not compulsorily used if the situation has obtained in the last twenty-four hours. In other words, the English present perfect is not a hodiernal past.

In the data there are 305 cases of perfect of recent past without adverbial modification either in the same sentence or in previous ones in which, in principle, the present perfect could have been used, because it is clear from the context that the situation conveyed by the verb has obtained within the day.

A few of these 305 examples, such as (259), (281), (320), (465), (484) and (515), are contextually constrained: the environment in which they appear makes it clear that the action has taken place much earlier in the day, in most cases the morning. The use of the past tense in these examples, then, agrees with the rules that were given in section 2.5.4. The present perfect cannot be used because the action denoted by the verb has taken place in a period of time that is already over.

The other items (which represent the vast majority of the total of 305), however, fall out of the scope of the rules just mentioned. In all of them, the action expressed by the verb has taken place very, very recently, sometimes even just a few seconds or minutes ago, and yet the tense

used is the simple past, not the present perfect. The present perfect would be a marked choice which would indicate that the speaker is especially concerned with what he/she is talking about. Moreover, this tense is not always possible, even with special involvement on the part of the speaker. The actions in all these examples have one thing in common: although they are very recent, they are already totally finished when they are talked about. It seems, then, that in English, as soon as an action/event is over, it belongs to the past, and so the unmarked choice is the simple past tense. Temporal closeness does not make the past actions included in the present, which is a necessary factor for the use of the present perfect.

A few examples of this section are:

(277) 'Nobody gave you anything to give me?'/ 'No t'ha donat ningú res per a mi?'

(339) 'Would you like that cup of coffee now? I stopped shaking'/ 'Que vols el cafè ara? He parat de tremolar.'

(508) A: 'We only have one recorder'/ 'Només tenim un magnetòfon aquí.'

B: 'No problem. I brought one of my own'/ 'No passa res. N'he portat un.'

These three items are special because they express actions which have taken place in the immediate past and whose results still hold. In other words, even if the action is

completed and so the perfect of recent past cannot be used, the present perfect could be used in its meaning of perfect of result. Yet even in these cases the simple past is the unmarked form.

Some examples without the meaning of result are:

(346) 'It was a wonderful kiss, Muriel' [he has just finished kissing her]/ 'Muriel, ha estat un petó meravellós.'

(543) 'That was beautiful' [the way a lawyer has conducted a questioning in court which has just finished]/ 'Ha estat sensacional'.

What all these examples have in common is that the situations referred to by the verbs are completed at the moment of speech.

Since all the examples in this section have taken place within the day, the only possible tense in Catalan is the present perfect.

There is a group of examples which is especially interesting, because the present perfect and the simple past occur in the same sentence to refer to actions that have taken place at the same time. In some cases, the two tenses are interchangeable; in others only the simple past is possible.

(187) A: 'You don't have to set up the chairs. All right leave it; you've done it already.'
B: 'Yes, you did it already.'

(30) 'I haven't changed since I left Tenafly. I made
(343) a couple of pictures, that's all.'

'If I'm late for Larry's dinner he'll want to
(349) know where I was and I don't lie very well, and
(350) oh God, why did I come here in the first place?
(113) What have I done?'

(115) 'Oh! I haven't done anything? I let you kiss
(351) and grope me.'

(457) 'They crossed over to the auditorium. Fraker's
(130) gone in there too.'

All the simple pasts of these examples can be replaced by present perfects except for two, (113) 'did (...) come' and (115) 'let'. These two verbs must be in the past tense because they express actions which, although they have occurred very recently, they are finished when they are referred to. The speaker feels they already belong to the past. Examples (30), (43), (349), (350), (551), (457) and (130), then, seem to be evidence that there are environments in which both tenses can be used indistinctively and in which the choice between one form or another is probably a matter of personal taste.

3.5.1.4. Non-hodiernal present perfect in Catalan

There are 30 Catalan present perfects corresponding to English simple pasts which were in principle classified as perfects of recent past. At first sight they seemed to be typical instances of the Catalan hodiernal use of the

present perfect. Nonetheless, after closer examination, it becomes clear that these perfects do not express actions which have taken place within the last twenty-four hours (which is the characteristic of a hodiernal past), but earlier, sometimes the day before, sometimes in an indefinite period of time.

Two of the cases could be considered perfects of result, because the result of the past action is quite clear.

(463) 'Peter Travalein joined up last week'/'En Peter Travalien ja s'ha allistat.'

(507) 'Who gave you this address?'/ 'Qui li ha donat aquesta adreça?'

The result of (463) would be that Peter Travalien is now a soldier, and that of (507) is that the addressee now has an address. The action in the perfect of result does not have to be recent. What matters is that the result is still operative at the moment of speech.

Two other cases are examples of what Leech (1987:11) calls 'verbs of communication', (509) and (510). What matters in sentences of this kind is the content, not the act of communication⁴. In these two cases, the corresponding English verb phrase is in the past tense, but it is very common to find them in the present tense.

(e28) They tell me you're going to Holland this summer.

(e29) I hear that Mary is getting married.

The connection of the past event with the present moment necessary to use the present perfect consists here in the fact that what was said in the past is important to the speaker when he/she is reporting it. The Catalan examples are:

(509) 'Yeah, I heard you're takin' on the TPF'/'Ja m'han dit que vas darrera de la TPF.'

(510) 'Michael told me you're back at the hospital'/'Sí, en Michael ja m'ha dit que treballa a l'hospital'.

Both in these two cases and in (463) above, it is interesting to note the presence of ja in Catalan, since in English there is no adverbial. In our opinion, the presence of this adverb in the Catalan sentence is precisely an indicator of the fact that the speaker considers that there is a connexion between the past action and the moment of speech.

Other examples of non-hodiernal present perfect in Catalan are the following:

(368) 'I paid for my sister to come all the way from California'/'He pagat el viatge de la meva germana des de Califòrnia.'

- (442) 'More than seventy per cent of the men in the penitentiaries committed their crimes under the influence of alcohol'/'Més del setanta per cent dels homes que hi ha a les presons han comès els crims sota la influència de l'alcohol.'
- (466) 'Just wondered why you didn't try out for the Light Horse'/'Per què no has provat a la Cavalleria Lleugera?'
- (337) 'I tried stopping it a few times; it didn't work'/'He provat de deixar-ho unes quantes vegades, però no ha resultat.'
- (392) 'I tried to teach her there could be more than just love between mother and daughter'/'Li he ensenyat que entre mare i filla hi pot haver més que amor.'

In most of the examples listed in this section, the Catalan present perfect could be replaced by the simple past, but the perfect is the unmarked form. The speaker will use the present perfect, unless he/she knows or assumes that the action he/she is referring to is relatively distant in time. Thus, when breaking the news the present perfect is the form used, even if the baby was born a few months ago:

- (e30) Sabies que en Pere i la Maria han tingut un nen?

3.5.1.5. Inadequate translations

There are four examples, (203), (230), (303) and (525), in which the Catalan translation is inadequate, for various reasons:

(203) 'That's the only reason I went'/'Només hi vaig anar per això.'

(525) 'It was Bobby Doyle and Mike Fagan'/'Van ser en Bobby Doyle i en Mike Fagan.'

In these two examples the English past tense corresponds to a Catalan past tense. The Catalan version should have a present perfect because the situation has obtained within the last twenty-four hours. They are instances of a very typical mistake: in English there is a simple past because the speaker is narrating something that happened earlier in the day, in a period of time which is already finished. In Catalan it has been translated by a simple past, and hence the action is immediately interpreted by the reader as having taken place before today, and so the meaning of the story can be greatly changed.

(303) 'He was here two days ago'/'Ha estat aquí fa dos dies.'

In this case there is a quite incomprehensible translation error. The English verb is in the simple past, and the Catalan verb should be expressed with this form, too^s. In Catalan, the present perfect cannot co-occur with past time-when adverbials if the time is not included in the last twenty-four hours.

(e31) Aquest matí he anat a comprar.

A sentence such as (e31) is possible, because it refers to the morning belonging to the same day. It can be uttered in the morning, afternoon or evening of the same day. Adverbials which denote a past period of time which includes the present moment are also possible - (e32) and (e33) -, but this is not the case in (303).

(e32) Aquesta setmana ha plogut molt.

(e33) En els últims tres anys he hagut d'anar tres cops a Anglaterra.

The last mistake, the one found in (230), is probably due to a distraction of the translator.

(230) 'Jack Counihan called a couple of minutes ago,' Fiske told me, and **gave** me an Army Street address'/'- Fa un parell de minuts que ha trucat en Jack Counihan - m'informà en Fiske i m'ha donat una adreça d'Army Street.'

The verb phrase gave is in the narration and so should have been translated into a Catalan past tense va donar. The translator seems to have misunderstood and interpreted that it was part of the dialogue, and hence has translated it with a present perfect.

3.5.2. Simple past in English and non-recent-past perfect in Catalan

The English simple past has been translated into a perfect of result, an experiential perfect or a perfect of persistent situation in 28 occasions, 5.9% of the cases in which the Catalan present perfect corresponds to some other form in English.

3.5.2.1. Simple past in English and perfect of result in Catalan

The perfect of result does not necessarily imply, neither in English nor in Catalan, that the action denoted by the verb is recent. Nonetheless, some degree of recentness is needed in both languages. If the action took place a long time ago, it will be expressed with the simple past, even if its results still hold.

- (e34) a. My car **was stolen** (three years ago), and I
still haven't got it back.
- b. Em **van robar** el cotxe (fa tres anys), i
encara no l'he recuperat.

In English the perfect of result is used less often than in Catalan. Only 32.2% of the cases found in the data with the meaning of result are expressed with the present perfect in English, versus 93.2% in Catalan. There are various reasons that explain this fact. In the first

place, if there is a time-when adverbial in the English sentence the present perfect is not possible. In the second place, to use the perfect the action needs to be more recent in English than in Catalan. In the third place, if the action is felt to be completed, part of the past, the perfect of result cannot be used in English unless the result is either very clear contextually or explicitly expressed. Moreover, even if the result is absolutely obvious, the simple past can always be used. In our data the simple past is used in the 23.7% of the cases with the meaning of result, versus 0% in Catalan. The simple past in English is [\pm result], whereas the present perfect is marked [+ result] with a certain amount of constraints. It seems, then, that in English the simple past is the unmarked choice and the present perfect the marked form. In the following examples, only the English past tense in (562) can be replaced by a present perfect, because the result is very clear and we know from the context of the film that the action is relatively recent.

(562) 'They passed the ball to me'/'M'han passat la pilota a mi.'

(557) 'Four years he went to law school and all he
 (558) learned how to say is Cool it?'/ 'Ha estudiat cinc anys per advocat i tot el que ha après a dir és "calma't?'

(563) 'Now, where did that locomotive get to'/'A veure on ha anat a parar aquesta locomotora.'

In Catalan, if the result meaning is clear and if the speaker does not know (or think he knows) that the action is distant in time, the perfect will be the unmarked choice. For example, if the speaker has just found out that the addressee, whom he/she has known for some time and thought single, is married, (e35a) will be the appropriate question, because for the speaker the fact that the hearer is married is new information, and so he/she will assume that the marriage has taken place recently. (e35b) will be used if the speaker assumes or knows that the hearer is married (old information), but wants to know when.

(e35) a. Quan t'has casat?

b. Quan et vas casar?

Along the same lines, (e36a) would be correct if the watch looks new to the speaker. (e36b) would be the adequate form if the speaker was already familiar with the watch.

(e36) a. On t'has comprat aquest rellotge?

b. On et vas comprar aquest rellotge?

In Catalan, as in English, the present perfect is [+result] whereas the simple past is [± result], but the use of the present perfect is not so strongly constrained

as in English . For actions that are clearly distant in time, the simple past is the unmarked choice. If the speaker has no indication that the action is remote, the present perfect is the default value.

3.5.2.2. Simple past in English and experiential perfect in Catalan

There are seven examples in this group. In four of them the adverbial ever is present and in two of them never. According to Leech (1987:46), with the adverbials always, ever and never, the present perfect and the simple past are 'largely interchangeable when describing a period up to the present'. Not all native speakers agree with him, however.

(572) 'Most boring people I **ever** met in my life'/'La parella més sonsa que he conegut mai.'

(574) 'Did he **ever** explain to you about that?'/ 'T'ha explicat què va passar?'

(576) 'Did you **ever** use it as a front for a bookie joint?'/ 'No l'ha feta servir mai pel joc clandestí?'

(579) 'That's a lie. I **never** said such a thing'/'Això és mentida. No he dit mai això.'

According to some native speakers of English, both the present perfect and the simple past are possible in (572), but in (574) and (579) the simple past is the only possibility. In (576) both tenses are accepted, but there

is a difference in meaning. (576) would be used if making reference to one single occasion, and (576') for more than once.

(576') Have you ever used it as a bookie joint?

There is one other example in which there is no adverbial of the kind just mentioned, and yet the present perfect and the simple past are also interchangeable in English:

(573) A: 'Frank Sinatra. Have you ever met him?'/ 'En Frank Sinatra. L'has vist mai?'

B: 'I just had dinner with him a few times'/
'Només hi he sopat unes quantes vegades.'

In Catalan, this alternation between present perfect and simple past with the meaning of 'at least once in a period of time which started in the past and continues up to the present' (experiential perfect) does not exist. If the speaker does not have in mind the exact moment of occurrence of the action denoted by the verb (either because he/she is not interested in it or because he/she does not know it), the present perfect is the only possible tense. Notwithstanding, it is erroneous to use the experiential perfect in Catalan if the period of time referred to is already over, which is what happens in

(577) because the subject of the sentence is dead when the sentence is uttered.

(577) 'If they think James Bowden even looked at a gun we're finished'/'Si s'arriben a imaginar que en Bowden ha vist mai una pistola ja hem begut oli.'

(577), then, presents a translation mistake. It should have been translated 'Si s'arriben a imaginar que en Bowden va veure mai una pistola ja hem begut oli.'

3.5.2.3. Simple past in English and perfect of persistent situation in Catalan

The four examples in this section are:

(580) '(...) and when I took it back to my hotel, I couldn't make the damn thing work. And never could since'/'(...) vaig portar la bola al meu hotel, però no vaig aconseguir fer treballar aquesta merda. I fins ara no ho he aconseguit.'

(581) 'At that time he was a newspaperman, the bartender believes, and he never heard of him as working for an advertising concern'/'En aquella època era periodista, creu el barman, i mai no ha sentit a dir que treballés en publicitat.'

(582) 'Well, no, sir... they never received as much recognition as they deserved'/'Veurà, senyor, mai no han rebut el reconeixement que es mereixien.'

(583) 'Hey, now, look, I always wanted to join the Light Horse'/'Ei, sempre he volgut ser a Cavalleria Lleugera'.

These four examples seem to be a counterexample of the

rules given for the perfect of persistent situation. This kind of perfect is typical of English and occurs very restrictedly in Catalan. In the Romance language, the perfect of persistent situation is only possible i) if there is a sempre-like adverbial in the sentence, and ii) if the sentence is negative.

The English verb phrases are correct. Leech (1987:43) states that the simple past can occur with always, ever and never as 'a colloquial variant of the present perfect with "state verbs", and can always be replaced by the equivalent present perfect form'.

The Catalan verb phrases are correct and normal instances of the perfect of persistent situation: (583) appears with sempre, and the other examples are negative.

3.5.3. Present tense in English and present perfect in Catalan

There are 68 examples in this group (including simple present and present progressive), which represent 14.4% of the cases in which there is a present perfect in Catalan and some other form in English. On closer study of these items, one discovers that in 19 of the cases the change from the English present to the Catalan present perfect is unnecessary. Adding these 19 to the 3 in which the English present is, for one reason or another, strange, the actual

number of examples with the correspondence present tense - present perfect is 46, 9.7%.

3.5.3.1. Present in English and perfect of result in Catalan

The 26 examples in this section (all showing a simple present) represent the 56.5% of all the correct translations of an English present. The meaning of result can be expressed, both in English and in Catalan, either with a present tense or with the present perfect. According to Comrie (1976), English tends to use a stative present with this meaning more often than other languages. 44% of the examples with meaning of result in English are expressed with the simple present, in front of a bare 6.7% in Catalan. In some occasions, a present tense would also have been possible in Catalan, but the present perfect sounds much more natural and is, therefore, a very appropriate translation.

In all the cases the English verb is stative, either be or have. The most frequently repeated structures are i) be + adjective (11 items) and ii) have + object (8 times). (609) and (634) are examples of the former, while (619) and (620) are examples of the latter.

(609) 'Obviously, you're still not very much impressed'/'La veritat és que no t'ha impressionat gaire.'

- (634) 'Look who's awake'/'Mira qui s'ha despertat.'
- (619) 'Your mother has got torn stockings and your
(620) father's got a broken arm'/'Ta mare s'ha
estripat les mitges i ton pare s'ha trencat el
braç.'

Other structures are, for instance, locative be (4 cases), or what we could call 'old perfect' (2 cases). (621) and (688) exemplify the former, and (610) and (611) the latter.

- (621) 'If she's not out of there in five minutes...'/ 'Si no ha sortit d'aquí a cinc minuts...'
- (628) 'Dunne, Lewis, Wilkes! Where the hell are you?'/ 'Dunne, Lewis, Wilkes! On cony us heu ficat?'
- (610) 'I've got the nicest corner picked out for you...'/ 'T'he trobat la cantonada més maca de la ciutat...'
- (611) 'He's got us stopped'/'Ens ha ben fotut.'

The English 'old perfect' construction is: present tense of have + got + direct object + adjectival participle. It is called 'old perfect' because it is similar in meaning to the older construction from which the present perfect is historically derived. This construction is found in the English sentences in (610) and (611), and it has been translated into a Catalan present perfect because the 'old perfect' is much less common in English than in Catalan (tenir + direct object +

adjectival participle).

Visser (1973:2189), quoted by McCoard (1978:222) writes: 'Originally have in colligation with a past participle was a notional verb denoting possession, while the past participle was a complement or attribute to the object and had a good deal of adjective force, teste its being (in the beginning) inflected in agreement with the gender and number of the object: I have my work done = I possess or have my work in a done or finished condition'.

Badia Margarit (1962:423) writes: 'en la fase primitiva de las lenguas románicas (cuando haver significaba 'tener, poseer'), el pretérito indefinido [present perfect] expresaba el resultado presente de una acción anterior: hem fet les paus 'hemos hecho las paces' equivalía a tenim fetes les paus', and, in a footnote: 'de acuerdo con la mencionada equivalencia, en catalán antiguo había concordancia del participio'. It falls out of the scope of this study to trace the historical development of the present perfect in English and in Catalan, but it is rather interesting that the tense has the same origin in both languages. Both in English and in Catalan there are remnants of this construction, which can usually be paraphrased by a perfect of result:

(e37) a. Tens la roba planxada?

b. Has planxat la roba?

(e38) a. He has the letter written.

b. He has written the letter.

The English sentences of items (610) and (611) are examples of these remnants of the old perfect. In both cases, the choice of a present perfect for the Catalan version is appropriate, because a literal translation would have sounded, at best, very odd.

(610') ?'Tinc la cantonada més maca de la ciutat triada perquè t'hi passis la resta de la nit.'

(611') ?'Ens té parats.'

3.5.3.2. Present in English and perfect of recent past in Catalan

There are 20 examples in which the Catalan perfect of recent past is a translation of an English simple present or of a present progressive. They represent the 45.4% of all the correct translations of an English present. The correspondence English present - Catalan perfect of recent past is not something that one would expect from the study of the uses of the present perfect in English and in Catalan carried out in sections 2.5. and 2.6. The verb phrases found in this group are of three different kinds: idiomatic expressions, colloquial storytelling and verbs

of communication.

Ten of the examples are expressions idiomatic in different degrees. They naturally demand special treatment, that is to say, they have to be translated as a whole, and the tense of the verb is part of that whole, so it cannot be isolated and then translated. The following sentences show some expressions of this kind translated into a corresponding idiom.

(589) 'You don't hear me beefing about whose idea it was' / 'Jo no m'he exclamat de si era idea d'un o de l'altre.'

(591) 'What's the dope?' / 'Com ha anat la cosa?'

(592) 'Am I rotten?' / 'L'he cagada?'

In six of the items in this group the present tense in English is, using Leech's words, 'typical of a highly-coloured popular style of oral narrative' (Leech 1987:10-11). In the novels all the examples occur in the dialogue, and in all cases the speakers are telling something that has happened to them, and they are highly involved in what they are saying. The use of the present to narrate past events makes the events closer in time and hence they become more vivid. In Catalan, this use of the simple present is also possible, but it is not as common as in English, so the tense has been changed. The present perfect is the appropriate choice because all the verbs

make reference to actions that have taken place within the last twenty-four hours. See, for instance, items (600) and (601).

(600) 'So he lets me out, see, and we swung the rest of them'/'Després m'ha obert a mi i hem tret tots els altres.'

(601) 'Sayin' we beat the hell outa twenty-five hostages'/'Diu que hem retingut més de vint-i-cinc ostatges.'

Finally, there are four examples of the use of the present tense in English with past meaning with verbs of communication. What matters in sentences with present-tense verbs of communication is not the act of telling but the message. In Catalan, this use of the present with verbs of communication is not possible. The translation with a present perfect is correct, because even if the telling has not taken place today, what was told is important at the moment of speech.

(593) 'Dan tells me you have something to tell to us'/'Dan m'ha dit que tenies alguna cosa a dir-nos.'

(648) 'I'm sorry, Larry, they're telling me that there's no tape for the 29th'/'Ho sento, Larry. M'han dit que no tenim cinta del 29.' [This sentence does not express an action ongoing at the moment of speech.]

3.5.3.3. Inadequate translations of the English present tense

There are 68 pairs in which an English present tense corresponds to a Catalan present perfect. In 16 of the cases, which represent a surprisingly high 23.5%, the reason for this correspondence is far from clear. Hence, they are not taken into account in the final proposal of the use of the present perfect in English and in Catalan. These cases are dealt with because they present a perfect in Catalan (which is an inadequate translation of the English present tense). The correspondences found in these inadequately translated examples have not been systematically studied because they are gratuitous variations.

The Catalan versions are not incorrect Catalan sentences; they are simply not good translations of the English originals. The changes of tense do not produce a great difference in meaning, but they are, in our opinion, totally unnecessary. See a few examples:

- (585) 'I'm not one of those hard-headed punks who does just the opposite of what he is told'/'No sóc pas un mesell d'aquests que sempre fan el contrari del que se'ls ha dit de fer.'
(alternative translation: ... el contrari del que se'ls diu...)

- (598) 'I'm the only one who doesn't follow in his royal footsteps'/'Jo sóc l'únic que no ha seguit els passos de sa majestat.' (alt. trans.: ... l'únic que no segueix els passos de sa majestat)
- (599) 'You see that? You see?'/ 'Ho ha sentit? Ho veu?' (alt. trans.: Ho veu/sent? Ho veu?)
- (640) Hey, Red what's going on down there?'/ 'Ei, Red, què ha passat allà baix?' (alt. trans.: Ei, Red, què passa allà baix?)

3.5.4. Miscellaneous group (present perfect in Catalan and other alternatives in English)

There are 16 examples in which the Catalan perfect is translated into various structures. In nine cases, the changes are necessary because of the syntactic structure of the English and Catalan sentences.

- (654) 'We must've failed her'/'Segur que hem fallat.'
- (655) 'Somebody shoulda told me'/'I per què no m'han avisat?'
- (658) 'I can't do anything except work from the facts supplied to me'/'Jo no puc fer res més llevat de treballar a partir dels fets que m'han donat.'
- (660) I was asked to write the letter by someone I couldn't very well refuse'/'He escrit aquesta carta només perquè m'ho va demanar algú a qui no podia dir que no.'
- (662) '(...) and they brought us there, going into that house down the street'/'(...) ens han portat fins aquí; han entrat en aquella casa al capdavall del carrer.'

(664) 'We seem to have lost our train'/'Em sembla que hem perdut el tren.'

In (654) there is a modal perfect which is translated in Catalan into a present perfect plus an adverb expressing epistemic modality. The same phenomenon is found in (653) and (655). It is possible to express epistemic modality with modal verbs in Catalan, too, but this modality is much more frequently conveyed by adverbials, so the translations provided are very appropriate. In (655) there is deontic modality, which could have been expressed with a perphrasis in Catalan:

(655') 'M'haurien d'haver avisat.'

In our opinion, however, the translation with the present perfect is more natural, since this would be the expression used in Catalan in the same situation.

In (658) (as well as in (659)) the English sentence has a past-participle subordinate clause. Since such clauses do not exist in Catalan, it has to be replaced by a clause with que. The correct tense is the present perfect because it expresses an action that has taken place recently.

In (660), the change from an infinitive into a perfect of result is due to the necessary and complete reorganization of the English sentence when translated

into Catalan.

In (662) there is a present participle in English. In Catalan, the present participle or gerund can only express an action simultaneous with or anterior to the action of the main verb (RuaiX 1985:126). Since in (622) the action expressed by the gerund is posterior to that of the main verb, the gerund cannot be used in the translation.

In (664) we find the verb seem in English, which subcategorizes for a to-subordinate clause. In Catalan the equivalent verb, semblar, is constructed with a que-subordinate clause which needs a tensed verb. Since the action referred to is very recent, the tense of this verb can only be the present perfect.

In three cases, (656), (657) and (665), there is some past verb form in English and a present perfect in Catalan. All the verb phrases make reference to some completed action in the recent past. As a general rule, these actions are not expressed in English with a present perfect, either because they are finished - (656) and (657) - or because they took place in a period of time which is already over - (665). But they must be expressed with this form in Catalan since they have taken place within the day.

- (656) 'It's not the kiss. It's where you were kissing me'/'No és pel petó, sinó pel lloc on me l'has fet.'
- (657) 'Where was I kissing you?'/ 'On te l'he fet?'
- (665) 'Half these people wouldn't even open the door'/'La meitat ni m'han obert la porta.'

In (651) there is a present progressive in English and a perfect of persistent situation in Catalan. Given that the meaning of persistent situation is typically expressed in English with the present perfect and in Catalan with the present, it is surprising that we find precisely the opposite here. The Catalan present perfect sentence is correct because of the presence of the adverb sempre, but the same meaning could also have been expressed with the present.

- (651) 'We're always taking a backseat'/'Nosaltres sempre hem estat a segona fila.' (alt. trans.: Nosaltres sempre estem a segona fila)

In three other cases we find inadequate translations. The meanings are not significantly altered by the changes of tense, but they are totally unnecessary.

- (650) 'Come on out; see how thin I'm getting'/'Ei! Surt, mira com m'he aprimat.' (alt. trans.: Ei! Surt, mira com m'estic aprimant)⁷

- (661) 'We hadn't gone into that'/'Encara no n'hem parlat'. (alt. trans.: Encara no n'havíem parlat)
- (663) 'Take a look at that clock'/'Has vist aquest rellotge?' (Mira't aquest rellotge)

4.

USE OF THE PRESENT PERFECT. A PROPOSAL

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a tentative model that accounts for the use of the present perfect in English and in Catalan. It is derived from the application of the theoretical account of the present perfect presented in Chapter 2 to our data.

This chapter is divided into four main sections. In section 4.2. we study the interaction of the aspectual character of the verb and the occurrence of adverbials with each kind of perfect (experiential perfect, perfect of persistent situation, perfect of result and perfect of recent past) in English and in Catalan. In section 4.3. we provide three maps of usage of the present perfect: i) a map of the English and Catalan perfects (form and function), ii) a map of perfect function in Catalan, and iii) a map of perfect function in English. In section 4.4. we give a schematized summary of the forms that express each of the perfect meanings in each of the two languages, along with information about aspects such as the occurrence of adverbials or the aspectual character of the verb. Finally, in section 4.5. we present some of the uses

of the present perfect that our model cannot account for.

According to Zabrocki (1980), while doing a contrastive analysis, the linguist may come across data that compel him/her to change existing grammatical descriptions. The model presented in this chapter includes all the new facts that we have discovered about the present perfect in the two languages while analyzing the data.

4.2. The types of perfect in relation to the aspectual character of the verb and the occurrence of adverbials

The present perfect has a basic meaning: it is a past inclusive of the present. This relationship with the present can be of different kinds, depending on the lexical meaning of the verb, on its aspectual character, and on the presence or absence of adverbials, either in the same sentence or in previous ones.

4.2.1. English

4.2.1.1. Experiential perfect

There are 33 cases of experiential perfect in English in the data. The experiential perfect expresses an action that has taken place at least once in a period of time that started in the past and finishes at the moment of

speech. It is not surprising, then, that both telic and atelic verbs are found with this use of the present perfect. 72.7% of the verbs are atelic and 27.2% are telic. The lexical meaning of the verb is not a determining factor in this type of perfect.

As for adverbials, we find them in 75.7% of the examples. The adverbials are of two main kinds: those indicating the frequency of occurrence of the action denoted by the verb (twice now, six times, two nights any month, ever, so often), and those giving information about the period of time concerned. Some examples of the latter are (never/ever) before, in the past, in fifteen years.

In the 24.2% of the cases in which there is no adverbial, the period of time referred to is either clear from the meaning of the sentence itself - (14), (24) - or from the context in which the sentence occurs - (11), (182):

- (14) 'We've been through a lot of scraps together.'
- (24) 'Every O'Donnell in this family has gone to Law School.'
- (11) 'Larry and I have had our ups and downs.'
- (182) 'Oh, has he been talking about us, has he?'

Summing up, the experiential perfect is possible both with telic and atelic situations. Some kind of temporal specification is compulsory, be it explicitly with

adverbials or implicitly by the meaning of the sentence or by the context.

4.2.1.2. Perfect of persistent situation

The perfect of persistent situation indicates an action that started in the past and continues until the present moment. It is to be expected, then, that all the verbs will be atelic. The present perfect with a telic verb means that the action is completed, and hence it is impossible that it continues up to the present. The vast majority of the verbs, 88.3% of the total of 43, are indeed atelic, but there are five (11.6%) which are telic.

- (27) 'In twenty-three years my feelings for you have never changed.'
- (30) 'I haven't changed since I left Tenafly.'
- (31) 'I haven't eaten since this morning.'
- (36) 'Would you believe that I haven't been laid in seven years?'
- (154) 'I haven't had a drink in years.'

All the telic expressions with the meaning of persistent situation are negative. As McCoard (1978:142) writes, 'the negative eliminates the end-point from the assertion', so that the expression, although telic in the affirmative, is not really telic in the negative. This explains why negative telic expressions can have the meaning of

persistent situation: something started not being the case in the past and it still is not the case.

72% of the examples in the data have adverbial modification. In the 12 examples without adverbial modification (27.9%), the period of time referred to is clear, either from the meaning of the sentence or from the context. A few examples of this are:

(40) 'Oh yes life has been very good to me.

(147) 'We've all been kind of upset, Tim.'

(155) 'It hasn't all been good, mind you.'

All the time adverbials that appear with this kind of perfect are duration adverbials. Some of them express periods of time: for some time past, in all the years, last couple of weeks, all day. Others express a beginning point: since I left Tenafly, ever since, since this morning, from the first day she saw me. Others have meanings similar to always: right from the beginning, all my life, all along.

Recapitulating, the expressions with the meaning of persistent situation must be atelic, except if the sentence is negative. Some kind of adverbial specification is needed, unless the period of time referred to is clear from the context. The perfect of persistent situation is

not conditioned by the lexical meaning of the verb.

4.2.1.3. Perfect of result

There are 18 English perfects of result. All of them are telic expressions and all of them appear without adverbials.

The fact that none of the perfects of result co-occurs with adverbials is due to our classification procedure. All the perfects which appear with adverbials typically associated with the perfect of recent past, such as yet and already, have been classified as perfects of recent past, even when the result meaning is also clear. The cases in which the result of the action still holds, if it is obvious from the context that the action has taken place in the immediate past, have also been considered perfects of recent past. Perfects of result, then, are only those examples which express actions that have not necessarily taken place in the immediate past but whose results are still operative. Given all these constraints, the perfects of result of our data cannot appear with time adverbials. If a verb phrase denoting an action that has taken place some time ago and whose results still hold appears with an adverbial indicating the moment of occurrence of the action, the present perfect is not possible (except if the adverbial is

included in the recent past or if it includes the moment of speech):

- (e1) *Mary has bought a new dress a couple of hours ago. (She now has a new dress.)
- (e2) *John has arrived ten minutes ago, and he is still here.

All the perfects of result in the data express telic situations. At first sight, this seems self explanatory: in order for an action to have results it needs to be completed, finished. Nonetheless, after closer inspection, it becomes apparent that this is not necessarily so. In the following examples, the meaning of result is very clear, but the situations are atelic:

- (e3) Mary has been writing letters all afternoon. (A lot of letters are written now.)
- (e4) John has been swimming since five o'clock. (Now he is exhausted.)

In the classification proposed here, (e3) would be considered a perfect of recent past - it is often the case that the results of a recent action still hold - and (e4) a perfect of persistent situation - the meaning of result is often also present with the present perfect progressive of persistent situation.

Summing up, only those perfects which could only be perfects of result have been classified as such in the

data. The consequence is that in 100% of the cases the situations are telic and they all appear without adverbial. This type of perfect is typical of verbs which denote a change of state.

4.2.1.4. Perfect of recent past

In the data there are 97 perfects of recent past. In 69.3% of the cases the situations are telic and in 30.6% they are atelic. 33.6% of the examples appear with adverbial and 66.3% without it. There is no co-variance between these two variables.

Since the only condition for the perfect of recent past is that the action has taken place recently, it is logical that both telic and atelic expressions are found with this kind of perfect, and that the lexical meaning of the verb plays no role.

The time adverbials found express recentness of time: two nights this month, yet, already, lately, now, still, for one day, tonight, since I've arrived in New York. As a general rule, in the examples from the data, when an adverbial is not present in the same sentence or in the previous sentence, it is clear from the context that the action has taken place recently:

(143) 'Has Dad looked at these cards?'

(120) 'I've been nice but I'm thinking of scorin' a base hit offa somebody's head.'

Nonetheless, there are a few cases in which it is not so clearly the case that the action is recent. What matters in them is that the action is relevant to the speaker, and that is why the present perfect is used:

(58) 'The way they've handled this whole thing... It goes beyond incompetence.'

(112) 'In many ways, Muriel, I've regretted it.'

The perfect of recent past in English, then, can be used with telic and atelic verbs, and adverbials may be present or not. This kind of perfect generally expresses an action that has taken place in the immediate past, but it can also be used to express more distant actions which are relevant to the speaker. By using the present perfect, the speaker is precisely indicating his/her involvement in what he/she is talking about.

4.2.2. Catalan

4.2.2.1. Experiential perfect

There are 34 Catalan experiential perfects in the data, 70.5% of which are atelic expressions and 29.4% telic. Given the meaning of this type of perfect it is

normal to find situations of both types, and that the lexical meaning of the verb is not a significant factor.

There are adverbials in 73.5% of the cases, which can be divided into two major groups: those that express frequency of occurrence (dues vegades, sis vegades, quants cops?), and those that express a period of time (mai, fins ara, abans, des de fa mesos). Apart from these, we find the adverb ja in one occasion. In the cases in which there is no adverbial, the period of time referred to (which always ends at the moment of speech) is clear from the context, be it the same sentence - (3), (24) - or the environment in which the sentence occurs - (11), (25):

(3) 'Louella (...), la mentidera més persistent i transparent que he conegut.'

(24) 'Tots els O'Donnell hem passat per la facultat de dret.'

(11) 'En Larry i jo hem tingut molts alts i baixos.'

(25) 'No ha estat fàcil.'

The Catalan experiential perfect, then, can be used with telic and atelic verbs. An adverbial expressing time span is compulsory, unless the period of time referred to is clear from the context. Adverbials expressing frequency of occurrence are also possible.

4.2.2.2. Perfect of persistent situation

The perfect of persistent situation is seldom used in Catalan. There are only 19 instances in the data, 3% of the total examples. Three of these cases are incorrect uses of the perfect in Catalan, (26), (33) and (39) (see section 3.3.2.). In two more cases we find correct present perfects in Catalan, but, rather than being pure perfects of persistent situation, there is in them also recent-past meaning, (35) and (37). That leaves us with only 14 clear and perfectly correct perfects of persistent situation in Catalan, 2.2%

The three conditions for the Catalan perfect of persistent situation are: i) that the sentence is negative, as illustrated by (31) (53.8% of the correct sentences in this group are negative); ii) that there is a sempre-like adverbial in the sentence, as in (32), which is found in 38.4% of the cases; or iii) that it is a present perfect progressive, of which the only example is (28), 7.8% of the cases.

(31) 'No he menjat res des de l'hora d'esmorzar.'

(32) 'Sempre m'ha agradat en Larry.'

(28) 'Ho has estat covant durant vint-i-tres anys.'

As for the aspectual character of the verb, 61.5% of the situations in this group are atelic, and 38.4% are

telic. All the telic situations are negative, so that the end-point is eliminated:

(27) 'En vint-i-tres anys els meus sentiments per tu no han canviat.'

(582) 'Veurà, senyor, mai no han rebut el reconeixement que es mereixen.'

As for adverbials, we find them in 92.3 of the correct sentences, and the only case in which there is no adverbial, (40), the meaning of the sentence makes it clear that the period of time referred to is tota la meua vida, a sempre-like adverbial.

(40) 'Oh, sí, la vida m'ha somrigut.'

Summing up, the Catalan perfect of persistent situation is possible with atelic verbs and with negative telic verbs. The presence of a negative or a sempre-like adverbial is compulsory, unless the period of time referred to is otherwise clear from the context.

4.2..2.3. Perfect of result .

There are 58 perfects of result in Catalan, all of them with telic situations, and all of them without adverbial modification.

The present perfect can appear with different kinds

of adverbials, depending on the kind of perfect. There are no adverbials typically associated with the perfect of result. Whenever a present perfect has been found to have another meaning apart from that of result, it has been classified according to the other meaning. For instance, (e5) is considered a perfect of recent past, although the result meaning is obvious.

(e5) En Pere ha arribat ara mateix. (Ara és aquí).

This explains why none of the examples of perfect of result from the data appear with an adverbial.

As for the character of the situations associated to the perfect of result, they are all telic for a very similar reason. There are atelic situations with result meaning, but they can all be ascribed to other kinds of perfect, so they are not considered perfects of result.

(e6) La Maria ha cantat tota la tarda, i ara està afònica.

(e7) En Pere no ha anat mai a l'escola, per tant no sap llegir ni escriure.

(e6) would be considered a perfect of recent past and (e7) a perfect of persistent situation.

4.2.2.4. Perfect of recent past

There are 508 instances of the perfect of recent past in Catalan in the data. This kind of perfect expresses an action that has taken place recently. Hence, it is possible to find it with telic situations (73.6%) and with atelic situations (26.3%).

As for adverbial modification, the vast majority of examples in the data appear unspecified in this respect. Only 20.2% of the examples appear with adverbial modification, be it in the same sentence or in the previous one. The perfect of recent past is hodiernal in Catalan, so it can co-occur with adverbials that indicate a point/period of time included in the last twenty-four hours: ja, avui, encara, ara, aquesta nit (passada), aquesta tarda, fa un parell de minuts, no fa gaire, quant fa?, des de les tres del matí. Other possible adverbials are those that express a period of time that includes the present moment: més de dos cops durant els darrers vuit o deu mesos, ni dues nits en tot el mes, últimament, darrerament. The present perfect is used in Catalan to narrate events if they have taken place within the last twenty-four hours. Consequently, it is possible to find this perfect with adverbials that order temporally the events narrated: mentre jo no hi era, durant els deu o quinze minuts següents, una mica més tard, llavors,

després d'una mitja hora.

The perfect of recent past cannot co-occur with adverbials that express a point/period of time that is not included in the last twenty-four hours or a period of time that does not include the present moment. Nonetheless, it is possible for this kind of perfect to express actions that have taken place before today, if the speaker feels that they are relevant. Some examples of this are:

(275) 'Qui s'ha carregat el teu Paddy el Mexicà?'

(311) 'A més, si m'he equivocat, tampoc t'he comprat cap regal.'

(470) 'Molts nois de per aquí s'hi han allistat.'

Summing up, the perfect of recent past is compulsorily used in Catalan to express an action that has taken place within the last twenty-four hours. It can also be used to convey earlier actions if the speaker feels especially involved in them. Adverbials are possible if they indicate a point/period of time included within the day or a period of time inclusive of the present moment. It is found both in telic and atelic situations.

4.2.2.5. The adverb ja

There are 113 verb phrases with adverbial modification in Catalan. In 30 of the cases, 26.5%, the adverb is ja. This in itself is not significant, because

ja is one of the adverbs that typically occur with the present perfect. What is interesting is that 66.6% of the instances of ja do not have a counterpart in the English sentence. In other words, there is no adverbial in the English original, but the translator has considered it necessary to add ja in the Catalan version.

In our opinion, the addition of ja is very appropriate in all the cases. In some of them it is even compulsory to make the Catalan sentence grammatical. In others, it is not obligatory, but the Catalan sentence sounds much better with it.

(75) 'Ambulance is on its way. Headquarters' been notified'/'L'ambulància ja ve. Ja n'he informat la central.'

(276) 'He cleared himself with the police, so there is no reason why he should have moved, maybe'/'Ja ha passat comptes amb la policia, per tant en principi no hi ha cap raó perquè hagi hagut de traslladar-se.'

(336) 'I told you it was stupid talking about it'/'Ja t'he dit que era una bestiesa parlar d'això.'

(426) 'We started the tunnel'/'Ja hem començat el túnel.'

There seem to be two adverbs ja. The first is a temporal adverb that means 'des d'abans, no més tard, d'un temps determinat (passat, present o futur)' (Diccionari de la Llengua Catalana, 1983). The second is a discourse marker with no temporal meaning that makes the sentence

more natural in Catalan. This latter ja is the one found in the examples quoted in this section.