

## Perfect and perfectivity re-assessed through corpus studies

Elena Seoane (University of Vigo, [elena.seoane@uvigo.es](mailto:elena.seoane@uvigo.es))

Cristina Suárez-Gómez (University of the Balearic Islands, [cristina.suarez@uib.es](mailto:cristina.suarez@uib.es))

Valentin Werner (University of Bamberg, [valentin.werner@uni-bamberg.de](mailto:valentin.werner@uni-bamberg.de))

While the area of the present perfect has always been a hotly contested ground, recent corpus-analyses have shown that grammatical variation in this realm in English is far more pervasive than has been assumed. This is particularly true when non-native and learner Englishes are taken into account (cf. Davydova 2011; Elsness 2009a, 2009b; Hundt and Smith 2009; Miller 2000, 2004; Seoane and Suárez-Gómez 2013; Suárez-Gómez and Seoane 2013; van Rooy 2009; Werner 2013; Yao and Collins 2012). These studies have addressed the issue from diverse theoretical perspectives and methodologies and using different approaches, both function-to-form and form-to-function, in an attempt to account for the envelope of variation under scrutiny.

This workshop is open to synchronic, diachronic and contrastive corpus-based research on the expression of the present perfect and the perfective in both native and non-native varieties of English. We especially welcome contributions which go beyond the traditional ascription of the perfect to the construction *have* + past participle for the expression of perfect meaning (Quirk et al. 1985: 192-195; Biber et al. 1999: 467; Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 143) and observe variation determined by sociolinguistic variables such as mode, dialect, style, register, genre as well as by the individual interpretation of what the 'perfect time span' means (Rothstein 2008), especially in cases in which there is no explicit time frame specification from a temporal adverbial.

We also want to motivate participants to foster discussion about how these new findings from data analyses help to shed light on theoretical issues such as the grammaticalization of some adverbs as perfect markers (e.g. *just*, *yet*, *(n)ever*, cf. Miller 2004), the implications behind the apparent reversal of the long-term shift towards analyticity of other Germanic languages observed in the retreat of the present perfect in English (cf. Ten Cate 2005: 5; Elsness 2009b: 242; Van Rooy 2009: 311-312; cf. Hundt and Smith 2009), the role of register in historical variation and change (cf. Elsness 2009b; Biber and Gray 2013), the potential role of language contact as a driving force in the innovations attested in the use of the present perfect and its different variants (Mair 2013) and the repercussions of corpus linguistics research on the teaching of English as a second language.

The deadline for abstract submission is 15 January 2014. Abstracts of 300-400 words (excluding references) should be submitted by email to the three convenors ([elena.seoane@uvigo.es](mailto:elena.seoane@uvigo.es), [cristina.suarez@uib.es](mailto:cristina.suarez@uib.es), [valentin.werner@uni-bamberg.de](mailto:valentin.werner@uni-bamberg.de)). Notification of acceptance will be sent by the end of February 2014.

## References

- Biber, Douglas and Bethany Gray. 2013. "Being specific about historical change: the influence of sub-register". *Journal of English Linguistics* 41: 104-134.
- Biber, Douglas, Stig Johansson, Geoffrey Leech, Susan Conrad and Edward Finegan. 1999. *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*. London: Longman.
- Davydova, Julia. 2011. *The Present Perfect in Non-native Varieties of English*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Elsness, Johan. 2009a. "The perfect and the preterite in Australian and New Zealand English". In Pam Peters, Peter Collins and Adam Smith, eds. *Comparative Studies in Australian and*

- New Zealand English: Grammar and Beyond. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins, 89-114.
- Elsness, Johan. 2009b. "The present perfect and the preterite". In Günter Rohdenburg and Julia Schlüter, eds. *One Language, Two Grammars? Differences between British and American English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 228-45.
- Huddleston, Rodney and Geoffrey K. Pullum. 2002. *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hundt, Marianne and Nicolas Smith. 2009. "The present perfect in British and American English: has there been a change, recently?" *ICAME Journal* 33: 45-63.
- Mair, Christian. 2013. Speculating on the future of English as a contact language. In Daniel Schreier and Marianne Hundt (eds.) *English as a Contact Language* (Studies in English Language). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 314-328.
- Miller, Jim. 2000. "The perfect in spoken and written English". *Transactions of the Philological Society* 98: 323-52.
- Miller, Jim. 2004. "Perfect and resultative constructions in spoken and non-standard English". In Olga Fischer, ed. *Up and Down the Cline: The Nature of Grammaticalization*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins, 229-46.
- Quirk, Randolph, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech and Jan Svartvik. 1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman Group.
- Rothstein, Björn. 2008. *The Perfect Time Span: On the Present Perfect in German, Swedish and English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Seoane, Elena and Cristina Suárez-Gómez. 2013. "The expression of the perfect in East and South-East Asian Englishes". *English World-Wide* 31: 1-25.
- Suárez-Gómez, Cristina and Elena Seoane. 2013. "They have published a new cultural policy that just come out. Competing forms in spoken and written New Englishes". In Kristin Bech and Gisle Andersen, eds. *English Corpus Linguistics: Variation in Time, Space and Genre*. Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 163-182.
- Ten Cate, Abraham P. 2005. "Descriptions of past events in German". *Cahiers Chronos* 13: 1-14.
- van Rooy, Bertus. 2009. "The shared core of the perfect across Englishes: a corpus-based analysis". In Thomas Hoffmann and Lucia Siebers, eds. *World Englishes — Problems, Properties and Prospects*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins, 309-30.
- Werner, Valentin. 2013. "Temporal adverbials and the present perfect/past alternation". *English World-Wide* 34: 202-240.
- Yao, Xinyue and Peter Collins. 2012. "The present perfect in World Englishes". *World Englishes* 31: 386-403.