The Continuous Path of Grammaticalization in Modern Peninsular Spanish

Meagan Day  
*University of Florida, [mmday@ufl.edu](mailto:mmday@ufl.edu)*

Sara Zahler  
*Indiana University, [szahler@indiana.edu](mailto:szahler@indiana.edu)*
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Abstract

Haber + past participle (PP) is an example of a resultative construction that evolved into a perfect form, known as the present perfect. This form derived from the Latin periphrastic perfect, which was “a possessive construction consisting of transitive habere followed by a direct object and agreeing past passive participle” (Lopez-Couso & Seoane 2008: 135-136). It was originally used similarly to tener + PP, which in modern peninsular Spanish may signify the present result of a past action (Harre 1991; Kato 1993), and also shared the same formal characteristics as tener + PP. Furthermore, this construction has grammaticalized as the default past perfective in the peninsular variety of Spanish (Schwenter & Torres Cacoullos 2008), following the perfect to perfective path of grammaticalization (Bybee et al. 1994; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000).

The current study considers whether tener + PP is following the same evolution as haber + PP by diachronically extending into the realm of the perfect. 550 tokens of tener + PP and 1083 of haber + PP were extracted from the Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual (CREA). All tokens were coded for several variables in order to determine if tener + PP expresses any of the four primary uses of the perfect (Dahl 1985:132, Comrie 1976: 56-61). The data were then analyzed using the statistical program Goldvarb X.

Results indicate that tener + PP remains principally a resultative form, as it most frequently occurs with several factors indicative of resultative uses. However, uses of this construction with psychological, perception, and communicative verbs, as well as frequency adverbs, non-specific temporal reference, and without a direct object, are indicative of an extension to perfect uses. These first steps are consistent with accounts of the evolution of the Romance habeo (Pinkster 1987, Vincent 1982, Benveniste 1968) and the Old English perfect (Carey 1994, 1995) from resultative constructions.
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1 Introduction

The trajectory of haber + past participle (PP) along the resultative to perfect to perfective path of grammaticalization in peninsular Spanish has been well documented by several linguists (Benveniste 1968, Vincent 1982, Pinkster 1987, Lopez-Couso and Seoane 2008, Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2008, Holmes and Balukas 2011, etc.). However, prior research on tener + PP in peninsular varieties suggests that this form may be following the same evolution (Harre 1991, Kato 1993). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine whether tener + PP is acquiring perfect uses by employing the variationist method. As such, the factors that favor the use of haber + PP and tener + PP in modern peninsular Spanish will be analyzed and compared to previous investigations on the evolution of haber + PP.

Particularly, this study seeks to answer two main research questions: (1) What are the different linguistic factors that condition the variation between tener + PP and haber + PP in modern peninsular Spanish?, and (2) Do the constraining factors indicate that tener + past PP has attained any of the four prototypical functions of the perfect?

2 Background

Perfecs studied across the European languages are most commonly of resultative origin (Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca 1994). In peninsular Spanish, haber + PP is an example of a resultative construction that evolved into a perfect construction, known as the present perfect. This form derived from the Latin periphrastic perfect, “a possessive construction consisting of transitive habere followed by a direct object and agreeing past passive participle” (Lopez-Couso and Seoane 2008: 135-136). This form was originally used similarly to tener + PP, which in modern peninsular Spanish may denote the present result of a past action (Harre 1991, Kato 1993), and also shared the same formal characteristics as tener + PP. These characteristics included obligatory presence of a direct object (DO), agreement between the DO and the PP, and variable positioning of the PP. Additionally, the use of these forms was, and is, restricted to change-of-state verbs, which can be generalized to resultative constructions cross-linguistically (Bybee et al. 1994).

Gradually, as haber + PP began to signify resultative actions less frequently, and was more often employed with perfect actions, the agreement between the DO and the PP was lost (Holmes and Balukas 2011), and the position of the PP was fixed to the left of the DO. Furthermore, as this construction began to acquire perfect functions, it also began to spread first to dynamic verbs of all types, including those not requiring a DO, i.e. motion verbs, and then to stative verbs (Bybee et al. 1994: 69).

However, haber + PP has since evolved further, and has grammaticalized as the default past perfective in modern peninsular Spanish (Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2008), following the widely recognized perfect to perfective path of grammaticalization (Bybee et al. 1994, Squartini and Bertinetto 2000). At the same time, the originally perfective form, the preterit, has been losing many of its original functions to the present perfect.

This study will consider whether the construction tener + PP is following the same evolution as haber + PP by diachronically extending into the realm of the perfect. Due to occurrences of this construction with certain psychological verbs such as prever ‘to foresee’ and entender ‘to understand’, as in (1a), and with ir ‘to go’, as in (1b), it is hypothesized that this form has already extended semantically into the perfect realm. Furthermore, given examples without agreement (1c), it may be that the morphosyntactic characteristics of tener + PP, as mentioned above, are showing similar changes to those that occurred in the evolution of haber + PP.

(1) a. Según tengo entendido yo, que se pelearon delante del pub. (CREA)
   ‘According to what I understand, they fought in front of the pub.’
   b. Yo tengo ido tenemos ido a Muros varias veces. (CREA)
‘I went we went to Muros several times.’
c. Canalla, yo tengo investigado una cosa rara por ahí. (CREA)
‘Canalla, I have investigated something weird there.’

3 Aspect

The aspectual distinctions within past temporal reference that are crucial to this study are the resultative, the perfect, and the perfective. Resultatives can be of two types, adjectival and verbal. Adjectival resultatives have a predicate (verb) and a predication (adjective), where the predication is the result of the predicate performed by the subject (Levin 1993). One such example is (2a), in which the verb paint is the predicate, and red is the predication. Verbal resultatives, as in (2b), are verb forms that express a state resulting from a previous event (Nedjalkov and Jaxondov 1988), with the emphasis on that state, not on the action (Bybee, et al. 1994). The latter (2b) is similar in form and function to the original use of tener + PP.

(2) a. I painted the wall red.
    b. I have my homework done.

Cross-linguistically, the principal feature of the perfect is current or present relevance of a past situation (Comrie 1976, Dahl 1985, Bybee et al. 1994, Lindstedt 2000). Comrie (1976:56-61) identifies four cross-linguistic types of perfects, which Dahl (1985:132) defines as four prototypical uses of the perfect:

(3) a. Perfect of result
    A: It seems that your brother never finishes books.
    B: (That is not quite true.) He READ this book (=all of it).
    b. Experiential perfect
    A: You MEET my brother (at any point in your life up until now)?
    c. Continuative perfect or perfect of persistent situation
    Context: (Of a coughing child) For how long has your son been coughing?
    Sentence: He COUGH for an hour.
    d. Perfect of recent past
    Context: The speaker has just seen the king arrive (an unexpected event).
    Sentence: The king ARRIVE

According to Comrie (1976:56), in using the perfect of result, “a present state is referred to as being the result of some past situation”, with the emphasis on the action. Furthermore, the continuative perfect, or perfect of persistent situation, conveys an event that began in the past and continues up until the moment of speech (Comrie 1976). Additionally, the experiential perfect is used when “one or more occurrences of an event-type is asserted to have taken place” (Dahl and Hedin 2000:389). Thus, it is often said that these events must be repeatable, and consequently, commonly combine with temporal reference related to frequency and extended periods of time (Dahl and Hedin 2000). The final use of the perfect is that of recent past. This perfect consists of past situations that are temporally close to the current speaking time (Comrie 1976).

Finally, the perfective is used to describe a situation viewed as a simple whole in the past, and is unconnected to the present tense, as in (4). It is generally referred to as “aorist”, “preterit” and “simple past” (Comrie 1976:12).

(4) Yesterday I bought a car.

In peninsular Spanish, haber + PP has proceeded along the resultative to perfect to perfective path, therefore showing uses all along this continuum. On the other hand, tener + PP is located on the resultative end of the spectrum. However, two investigations outlined in the following section, while lacking naturalistic data, lend support to the idea that tener + PP may be acquiring perfect functions.
4 Previous Research on tener + PP

While there have been two studies that examine tener + PP, their conclusions are contradictory. In the first, Harre (1991) concludes that tener + PP appears to be used mainly as a copular construction, as in (5a), conveying that a noun is maintained in a particular state, or simply as a resultative (5b). She makes no mention of this construction extending to perfect uses. Nonetheless in her data, based on a grammaticality judgment task, some of her participants accepted sentences with intransitive verbs containing the adverb mucho ‘a lot’ and the adverbial phrase muchas veces ‘many times’, as in (5c). These adverbs indicate an iterative action, and thus, their co-occurrence with tener + PP shows one of the uses of the perfect. Despite this, Harre does not attribute perfect functions to this construction, presumably because her participants do not consistently accept these sentences as grammatical, and due to the fact that all of her informants rejected sentences with the motion verb ir, even when appearing with muchas veces (5d).

(5) a. Tengo la casa barrida. (Harre 1991: 74)  
‘I keep the house swept.’

b. Tengo rota la pierna. (Harre 1991: 52)  
‘My left is broken/I have broken my leg.’

c. Tienen viajado mucho por el extranjero. (Harre 1991: 72)  
‘They have traveled abroad a lot.’

d. Tienen ido muchas veces a Madrid. (Harre 1991: 72)  
‘They have gone to Madrid many times.’

In a subsequent study, Kato (1993) claims that tener + PP ranges in use from a construction similar to tener + noun + adjective, such as (6a), to one closer in meaning and form to haber + PP (6b). This encompasses functions that are resultant states on one end, which are the precursors to resultative uses, and perfect functions on the other end. He states that this difference in meaning is brought about by fixing the position of the PP to the right of tener, making the subject of the PP agree with that of tener, as well as extending the range of verb types with which it may be employed to include stative and motion verbs. Consequently, he contends that tener is beginning to behave as an auxiliary verb like haber. Yet, it may only fully become an auxiliary once the agreement between the DO and the participle is lost, consequently allowing it to be used with all verb types, which, according to him, has not yet occurred. Nevertheless, in the present study, examples of non-agreeing PPs were found, such as (6c-d).

(6) a. Tengo la casa limpia. (Kato 1993: 133)  
‘I keep the house clean.’

b. Ya te tengo dicho que no hagas eso. (Kato 1993: 142)  
‘I’ve already told you not to do that.’

c. Porque a mí me tiene escrito cartas. (CREA)  
‘Because he has written letters to me.’

d. Tengo aquí preparado una de de la televisión. (CREA)  
‘We have prepared one from the television here.’

These studies provide important insights into the tener + PP and haber + PP constructions, yet their conclusions are not based on naturalistic data. Rather, Harre (1991) obtains her data from twelve native speakers of peninsular Spanish through grammaticality judgments of sentences featuring tener + PP, while Kato (1993) bases his conclusions on descriptive intuitions of handpicked tokens of tener + PP extracted from various written texts. However, written texts and grammaticality judgment tasks often do not correspond to actual language use.

5 Method

5.1 Variationist Methodology
Variationist methodology is employed in the current investigation, which involves the coding of a large amount of tokens extracted from actual speech samples for certain factors that denote specific functions. Thus, if a variant (e.g. tener + PP) has acquired a particular function (e.g. perfect), it should tend to co-occur with elements that indicate said function. This methodology has been employed in previous studies on aspect in Spanish with regards to haber + PP (Schwenter 1994, Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2008, Howe and Schwenter 2008). Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos showed that in peninsular Spanish, haber + PP is constrained by certain linguistic factors related to the four primary uses of the perfect, despite having obtained perceptive uses as well. Thus, if tener + PP has acquired perfect functions, it should be able to co-occur with these same factors, though seemingly at a lesser rate.

5.2 Corpus and Data Extraction

Tokens were extracted from oral speech samples within the Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual (CREA). All 527 occurrences of tener + PP found in spoken peninsular Spanish were extracted from the entire corpus (1975-2004), while 1078 occurrences of haber + PP were extracted from the year 1995. The data were coded for the independent variables outlined below and were then statistically analyzed using Goldvarb X.

6 Independent Variables

6.1 Verb Type

As Bybee et al. (1994) state, resultatives are primarily constrained by verb type, only occurring with change-of-state verbs, while a construction obtains perfect functions as it begins to be used with dynamic verbs of all types, including motion verbs as well as stative verbs. Mitchell (1985) considers this evolution an example of semantic bleaching, accompanied by a widening of the linguistic contexts in which the construction could occur. Consequently, one would expect verb type to constrain the use of tener + PP, with this form occurring significantly less frequently than haber + PP with stative verbs, such as psychological verbs, verbs of perception, copular verbs, etc., and with motion verbs. However, any presence of tener + PP with these verbs types, even if they are found to be disfavorable contexts, would show an extension of its use to include these verb types, indicating functions that are not purely resultative. There is reason to believe that tener + PP may be extending to these contexts given the two previously cited studies (Harre 1991, Kato 1993).

Additionally, it may prove relevant to determine with which stative verbs in particular tener + PP occurs, since it is not expected that its use with stative and motion verbs will be frequent. Specifically by studying the stative verbs with which tener + PP occurs, a snapshot can be obtained of the first steps of a resultative construction acquiring perfect uses. According to prevailing opinion in Latin and Romance linguistics (Pinkster 1987, Vincent 1982, Benveniste 1968), the resultative to perfect shift for habeo perfects first took place in constructions with knowledge acquisition verbs and mental activity verbs. Carey (1994, 1995) shows that over 50% of the examples from early Old English of habban + PP, a construction parallel to the Romance habeo perfect, occurred with mental state verbs, communication verbs or perception verbs, but does not mention motion verbs or other statives. According to Sweetser (1990), verbs denoting physical perception often have secondary metaphorical uses of mental perception, and therefore, commonly co-occur with the concepts of knowledge and knowledge acquisition, such as in (7).

\(7\) I see (understand) what you mean.

As a result, statives were divided into the following categories: copula, volitional, psychological, perceptional, existential, emotive, possession, and other statives. Dynamic verbs were divided into four categories: motion, communicative, non-motion, and process. Finally, three verbs were coded separately due to an observed high frequency with tener + PP: entender, prever, pensar.

6.2 Temporal Reference
This variable has been used to test for perfect functions in previous studies (Schwenter 1994, Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2008, Howe and Schwenter 2008), and as such, the four prototypical uses tend to co-occur more frequently with some temporal adverbials than with others. First, perfects of result should co-occur with the adverb ya ‘already’, which highlights that the past situation occurred before the time of the utterance (Koike 1996). Secondly, forms with an experiential perfect interpretation commonly appear with adverbs of frequency and duration, since experiential perfects denote events that can be repeated (Dahl and Hedin 2000). Likewise, experiential perfects refer to past situations without specifying the occasion on which they occurred (Lindstedt 2000), and adverbs meaning ‘not yet’, such as no todavía, also correspond to the experiential perfect. Thirdly, perfects of persisting situation often combine with temporal expressions denoting extended periods of time. Lastly, Dahl (1984: 114) claims that the perfect of recent past may indicate a more general dichotomy between “CURRENT UNIT OF TIME”-“PRE-CURRENT UNIT OF TIME”. A current unit of time would be hodiernal adverbs, such as hoy ‘today’, as well as proximate adverbs, such as esta semana ‘this week’, este mes ‘this month’, and este año ‘this year’, as long as the unit of time extends to the present.

Additionally, adverbs meaning ‘now’, such as ahora and ahora ya, and ‘still’, such as todavía and aún, indicate resultative functions, since these adverbs anchor the event to the present. At the same time, temporal reference that is not expected to occur with tener + PP include connective adverbials, as they anchor the current event to another event in the past, as well as specific times. Both of these adverbs correspond to perfective interpretations.

6.3 Grammatical Person

Subjectivization, according to Traugott (1995), is a process by which meanings come to be based on the speaker’s attitude or beliefs towards an expressed event. As previously mentioned, current relevance is one of the defining characteristics of the perfect, which Carey (1995) contends is an inherently subjective notion: the link between the past event and the current situation is dependent on the attitude or judgment of the speaker. Dahl and Hedin (2000) also describe current relevance as a graded concept, asserting that several criteria, which are dependent on the discourse, determine whether an event is currently relevant. Thus, speakers frame a past event and its subsequent result as significant to what they are presently communicating. Given that speakers may perceive events in which they participated as having more current relevance, verbs in the 1st and 2nd person should favor the perfect most, while 3rd person animate subjects should favor this form less, and inanimate subjects even less so.

6.4 Presence of a DO

Since tener + PP is primarily a resultative construction, it is expected to occur frequently with expressed DOs related to the transitive use of tener. However, uses of this form without a DO, and consequently, with intransitive verbs, would suggest a perfect function. Additionally, the use of certain types of DOs, such as infinitives, as in (8a), or clauses, as in (8b), would also demonstrate a perfect meaning of tener + PP.

(8) a. ¿Y tienen pensado evolucionar, hacer otro número? (CREA)
   ‘And have you all thought about changing, doing something else?’
   b. Les tiene prohibido que estudien esto porque es un arte. (CREA)
   ‘You have forbidden them from studying this because it’s an art.’

6.5 Polarity and Sentence Type

Lindstedt (2000) states that negated assertions and questions are typical contexts for the experiential perfect. Negation also yields a continuative meaning consistent with the perfect of persisting situation (Squartini and Bertinetto 2000). Since one would be more likely to assert that a present state is a result of a previous action, rather than the opposite, negatives should be less frequent with resultative constructions. Thus, sentence type and polarity were examined together, with the following four combinations: affirmative declarative, negative declarative, affirmative interrogative...
tive, and negative interrogative. It is supposed that if tener + PP occurs with interrogatives and negative declaratives, this form would show more of a perfect meaning.

6.6 Presence of a Demonstrative Adjective, Pronoun, or Adverb

Resultative constructions denoting that an object is maintained in a certain state tend to refer to an object that is physically present at the moment of utterance. If the object of discussion is physically present, as indicated by the use of a demonstrative adjective, pronoun, or adverb, the event involving the object is fixed in the present, which is a major feature of resultative constructions. Therefore, it is hypothesized that the occurrence of a demonstrative will favor tener + PP.

6.7 Other Preverbal Elements

When tener + PP occurs with non-direct object preverbal elements, such as indirect object clitics, passive, pronominal, and middle voice pronouns, the position of the participle is fixed immediately following the conjugated verb tener. In this way, tener + PP is more similar in form to haber + PP, and is one of the contexts in which it may lend itself to more perfect uses. Additionally, as mentioned in the section on previous research, it is claimed that the difference in meaning between resultative and perfect occurs when the position of the PP is fixed to the right of tener, making the subject of the PP agree with that of tener (Kato 1993).

6.8 Clause Type

Clause type was considered in order to determine any type of effect in the use of these constructions, though specific hypotheses were not formulated due to lack of previous research on this factor.

7 Results

7.1 Exclusions

Of the 1605 tokens extracted for this study, 1062 were used in the final statistical analysis: 510 of tener + PP (48%) and 552 of haber + PP (52%). The other 543 occurrences were not considered due to categorical or near categorical uses with either variant, meaning that no variation was found in these contexts.

The factor group with the most exclusions was verb type, given that tener + PP was not employed with several different types of statives: existential (20 haber), volitional (2 haber), emotive (8 haber), other statives (4 tener, 92 haber), possession (1 tener, 35 haber), and copula (123 haber).

Since temporal reference also demonstrates similar constraints with the use of tener + PP, the following adverbs were excluded: nunca (13 haber), adverbs of duration (33 haber), specific times (2 haber), more than one adverb (1 tener, 15 haber). Passive verbs (72 tokens) were excluded altogether for two reasons. First, they were difficult to classify in terms of grammatical person, since the grammatical subject and conceptual subject are not the same, and also because only certain verb types can be made passive, which caused interactions. Regarding preverbal elements, reflexive/pronominal clitics (2 tener, 112 haber), passive clitics (4 tener, 49 haber), and the no-fault se construction for unplanned events (12 haber) were eliminated because they rarely occurred with tener + PP. Lastly, when there was more than one type of demonstrative, the token was removed because it was difficult to determine the source of any potential effect.

7.2 Goldvarb Analysis

Table 1 presents the results of the statistical analysis. All factors were significant, except for other preverbal elements, where no effect was observed in the use of tener + PP and haber + PP. Only significant factors are shown and will be discussed. Weights above 0.50 indicate that a factor favors tener + PP, whereas weights below 0.50 favor haber + PP.
7.2.1 Verb Type

This variable has the highest magnitude of effect (range = 86), demonstrating that tener + PP is highly constrained by the verb type with which it co-occurs. This observation is supported by the numerous exclusions within verb type outlined in section 7.1: existential, volition, emotive, possessive, copula, and other stative verbs. Another important comment to be made is that this construction is highly lexicalized with three particular verbs, entender, pensar, and prever, since 90% of all tokens of these verbs occur with tener + PP. These results could be an indication that the use of tener + PP with these verbs constitutes a prefab or collocation. Psychological verbs, such as (9a), also favor tener + PP. This increase in use with psychological verbs could demonstrate perfect uses of this construction, or could be a semantic extension from the highly lexicalized occurrences of entender, pensar, and prever. In any case, it appears that this construction is, to some extent, used with verbs that generally do not appear with purely resultative constructions. It is logical that the most common non-dynamic verb type in this study would be psychological verbs, given previous research on perfect constructions in Latin and Romance (Benveniste 1968, Vincent 1982, Pinkster 1987) and Old English (Carey 1994, 1995), which indicates that the extension into perfect uses first occurred with knowledge acquisition and mental activity verbs. Also notable is that tener + PP occurs with verbs expressing perception and communication, as in (9b), though it is highly disfavored by these verb types. As stated in section 6.1, verbs of perception constitute a logical step, after psychological verbs, in the semantic extension of a perfect form (Sweetser 1990). Thus, the evidence resulting from this study demonstrates that tener + PP is following the same stages as early haber + PP and the Old English perfect form. This similarity between three emerging perfect constructions across a millennium is noteworthy, as it may reveal a more detailed cross-linguistic resultative to perfect to perfective path of grammaticalization than was previously thought.

(9) a. Yo ya tengo sabido que tres intentos necesito siempre. (CREA)
   ‘I already know that I always need to try three times.’
 b. No la conocía, no la tengo vista. (CREA)
   ‘I did not know her, I have not seen her.’

7.2.2 Presence of a DO

This factor group presented the 2nd highest magnitude of effect (range = 65). The majority of the occurrences of tener + PP appear with a DO, though 17 tokens did not, 10 of which co-occurred with entender. This leaves 7 tokens that occurred without a DO, constituting a small percentage of the data. Nevertheless, these examples show that it is possible for tener + PP not to take a complement, which would be impossible with a purely resultative construction with possessive meaning, the original use of tener + PP. Additionally, 52 tokens contained infinitives or que clauses as DOs. These types of DOs offer a perfect interpretation, given that exclusively resultative constructions do not have abstract DOs.

7.2.3 Temporal reference

The results for temporal reference demonstrate uses of tener + PP as a resultative, as well as a perfect of result, due to the fact that ya (10a), ahora (10b), ahora ya, todavía and aún favor this variant. Moreover, there are several indications that tener + PP is in the process of acquiring experiential perfect functions, since this variant is favored by no todavía. The fact that tener + PP occurs with frequency and non-specific adverbs supports this idea, although said adverbials disfavor this form. Finally, tener + PP does not appear to have attained perfect of recent past or perfective meanings.

(10) a. Mi opinión sobre el coche ya la tengo formada. (CREA)
   ‘I have already formed my opinion about the car.’
 b. Bueno, ahora tenéis preparada una canción, ¿no? (CREA)
   ‘So, now you (all) have prepared a song, right?’
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<th>%T</th>
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<td>0.60</td>
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<td>All 2(^{nd}) person</td>
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<td>0.58</td>
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<tr>
<td>1(^{st}) person plural</td>
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<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>2(^{nd}) pers. plural, official people</td>
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<tr>
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*p < 0.05, Total N: 510/1062, Total chi-squared= 629.5487
χ2/cell= 1.1702, Log likelihood= -538.334
Input= 0.44 (48%)

Table 1: Factors affecting the use of *tener + PP* vs. *haber + PP*.

### 7.2.4 Presence of a Demonstrative

Demonstrative adverbs, *aquí* ‘here’ and *allí* ‘there’ favor the use of *tener + PP* (11a). As outlined in 6.6, this shows that the form is largely still resultative. Demonstrative adjectives, on the other hand, disfavor. It is not necessarily expected that they would favor, because, unlike demonstrative adverbs, which most often occur with objects found in the current surroundings, they can refer to items that are both physically present and not physically present (11b).

(11) a. *Y lo tengo aquí apuntado* en la mano. (CREA)
‘And I have made a note of it here on my hand.’

b. ¿Es capaz de recordar ese momento o lo tiene completamente borrado? (CREA)
‘Are you capable of remembering that moment or have you completely erased it?’

7.2.5 Grammatical Person

First and second person are shown to favor tener + PP, which could be due to its potential use as a form entailing current relevance. This idea is supported by the results, which demonstrate that all inanimate and all 3rd person animate objects disfavor the use of tener + PP. As noted in 6.3, this finding is consistent with a developing perfect form.

7.2.6 Polarity and Sentence Type

Results for polarity substantiate the idea that tener + PP is only beginning to extend into the perfect, but chiefly remains a resultative construction, since it is disfavored in negative contexts.

8 Conclusion and Future Research

This study demonstrates several characteristics about the tener + PP construction. First, there are various indications that this form is still principally used with resultative functions. For example, temporal reference related to the present tense (ahora, ahora ya, todavía, and aún) and demonstrative adverbs (aquí and allí) favor this form, whereas negative polarity and the lack of a DO disfavor it. Nevertheless, the data suggests that this construction is acquiring perfect uses. This claim is strongly supported by verb type. Tener + PP is following the same path as haber + PP and the Old English perfect form, which began to extend first to psychological verbs, and then to perception and communication verbs. Similarly, tener + PP is favored by a temporal adverbial (no todavía) that denotes the experiential perfect, one of the first stages on the perfect to perfective continuum. Moreover, the absence of a DO in some instances, as well as co-occurring DOs that are clausal or abstract, would not occur with an exclusively resultative form. Finally, the higher use of tener + PP with first and second person is compatible with an emerging perfect structure. This dual functionality between resultative and perfect uses of a linguistic form is expected with a construction at an intermediate stage on the resultative to perfect to perfective pathway of grammaticalization (Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2008). Future research should seek to corroborate these findings through a diachronic study of the use of tener + PP. Consequently, further evidence would be provided for the renewal and the universality of the evolution from resultative to perfect.

References


Real Academia Española: Database (CREA) [online]. *Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual*. <http://www.rae.es> [April 8, 2011]


