In the studies on the Spanish Perfect it has been postulated the existence of a sort of "aoristic drift" (though not always called like this, for the term was first introduced for the Romance languages by Squartini & Bertinetto in 2000) in certain areas of European Spanish: Alicante (according to Schwenter 1994), Madrid (Serrano 1994, DeMello 1994 and Kempas 2006), Valencia (Howe 2013). According to these studies, the compound form is displacing the simple one in colloquial discourse, first in hodiernal contexts, where the temporal continuity of time and/or event prevails, and then in the prehodiernal ones, especially with temporal adverbials which do not suggest a temporal continuity to the present. In the last years, we have been searching for the same phenomenon in the colloquial speech of Salamanca, a city whose geographical proximity to Madrid could reinforce the idea of a Central Peninsular changing area (Azpiazu 2012). However, detailed analysis of this variety and the conditions under which the replacement of the simple form by the Perfect is taking place prevent us even to speak of a consolidated phenomenon. In our opinion, for it being a real "aoristicization" process, it is necessary for the compound form to abandon any (temporary or aspectual) reference to the present, and to neutralize its function with the simple form, which is the most basic expression of anteriority. In this paper we postulate that this is not happening in the European Spanish Perfect, because its mere presence always presupposes the reference to some kind of temporal simultaneity in connection with the speech act. It is, indeed, a "subjective" simultaneity whose boundaries are set backwards by the speaker, but it may be favoured by certain contextual elements. There is not, therefore, an actual "aoristic drift" in European Spanish Perfect, but an extension of the simultaneity meaning linked to the Perfect that allows it to operate in new linguistic and discursive contexts.

References:


