NOBODY'S PERFECT

ANNE BERTRAND, BRUNO ANDREOTTI, HEATHER BURGE, SIHWEI CHEN, JOASH GAMBARAGE, ERIN A. GUNTLY, THOMAS J. HEINS, MARIANNE HUIJSMANS, KALIM KASSAM, LISA MATTHEWSON, ELISE K. McCAY, DANIEL REISINGER, HOTZE RULLMANN, RAIANE SALLES, MICHAEL DAVID SCHWAN AND JOZINA VAN DER KLOK

THE SEMANTICS OF VERBAL MORPHOLOGY IN UNDER-DESCRIBED LANGUAGES, GOTHENBURG, JUNE 2017
INTRODUCTION
SOME VERY GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PERFECT

- What is it/How should it be defined?
  - Semantic/pragmatic criteria?
  - Morphosyntactic criteria?

- Universal?

- Prototypical?

- One perfect?
  - experiential perfects
  - resultative perfects
  - both?
PREVIOUS STUDIES OF THE PERFECT

- **Formal semantic studies**
  - Usually focus on English and its nearest relatives
  - Try to explain the various readings/uses of the perfect in a compositional manner

- **Typological studies**
  - For example, Dahl (1985), Bybee et al. (1994), Dahl & Velupillai (2011)
  - Include a large sample of languages
  - Based on existing grammars and/or large-scale surveys
THE MIDDLE WAY

‘The proposed change is a so-called “middle way” that would allow the comparison of a relatively small, intelligently selected sample of languages, using deeper structural analyses than is currently possible with large-scale sampling methods.’

Polinsky & Kluender (2007)

‘We suggest that there is a “Middle Way” which will shed light on the crucial underlying issues. This Middle Way style of research would look at fewer languages than a typical typological study does, but at more languages than a typical generative study does.’

OUR PROJECT

A middle way

- Smaller, but genetically and typologically diverse set of languages
- Data based on intensive fieldwork with native-speaker consultants, and/or our own intuitions as native-speaker/linguists
- Use of consistent criteria and methods across the different languages (for example, storyboards)

Goal

- Develop and test (formal) analyses of the perfect in a larger and more diverse set of languages than has typically been done so far.
OUR PROJECT

Indo-European:
- English (eng)
- Dutch (nld)
- German (deu)
- Québec French (fr-QC)
- Brazilian Portuguese (pt-BR)

Austronesian:
- Niuean (niu)
- Javanese (jav)
- Atayal (tay)
OUR PROJECT

Sino-Tibetan:
Taiwan Mandarin (cmn)

Bantu:
Swahili (swa)

Tsimshianic:
Gitksan (git)

Ktunaxa (kut)

Na-Dene:
Tlingit (tli)

Salish:
St’at’imcets (Lillooet) (lil)
OUTLINE

1. Properties of the English perfect
2. Methodology and overview of results
3. A “non-perfect”: The general-purpose past perfective
4. Three strategies for expressing perfect-type interpretations
5. Discussion and open questions
PROPERTIES OF THE ENGLISH PERFECT
PROPERTIES OF THE ENGLISH PERFECT

4 readings/uses (Comrie 1976, McCawley 1971, McCoard 1978, among many others):

- Experiential
  (1)Pat has climbed Mount Everest. (at least once in a certain timespan)

- Result state
  (2)Pat has passed out.

- Recent past
  (3)Tough luck, the train has left.

- Continuous
  (Universal perfect, perfect of persistent situation, continuative)
  (4)Pat has lived in Vancouver since 2015.
PROPERTIES OF THE ENGLISH PERFECT

4 Limitations

- No “dead” subjects (lifetime effects) (5) # David Bowie has lived in London

- No cancellation of result state (6) # I've lost my keys, but then I found them again.

- No narrative progression (7) # This morning, Pat has woken up, and then he has gotten dressed.

- No definite time adverbials (8) # Pat has climbed Mount Everest last year.
METHODOLOGY AND OVERVIEW OF RESULTS
RESTATING THE RESEARCH QUESTION

- How do languages express meanings which, in English, are expressed with the present perfect?

- Whatever strategies are used, are they subject to the same restrictions as the English present perfect?
METHODOLOGY

- Fieldwork with native speaker consultants.
  - Storyboard methodology
    - Miss Smith's Bad Day
  - Elicitation
    - Elicit negative data
    - Test other forms in the same contexts

3. One of the children, Tom, is naughty and is already pulling Mary's hair.

4. Miss Smith asks the kids "Who has ever climbed a mountain?"
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READINGS and limitations</th>
<th>eng</th>
<th>eng</th>
<th>nl</th>
<th>deu</th>
<th>fr-QC</th>
<th>pr-Bt</th>
<th>tli</th>
<th>kut</th>
<th>man</th>
<th>tay</th>
<th>jav</th>
<th>swa</th>
<th>niu</th>
<th>lil</th>
<th>man</th>
<th>tay</th>
<th>pt-BR</th>
<th>git</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>have + participle</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple past</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPERIMENTAL</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead subjects possible</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULT STATE (POSSIBLE)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result state cancellable</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>(✓)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECENT PAST</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTINUOUS</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative progression possible</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>♤</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>(✓)</td>
<td>(✓)</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite time adverbial allowed</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A “NON-PERFECT”:
THE GENERAL-PURPOSE PAST PERFECTIVE
GENERAL-PURPOSE PAST PERFECTIVE

Positive results to all the tests
- Québec French passé composé
- Brazilian Portuguese pretérito perfeito (simples) (excludes pretérito perfeito composto - ter + participle)
- German (and to a lesser extent Dutch) perfect (have/be + past participle)
- Ktunaxa past marker ma
- Tlingit ÿa-
- English simple past

General-purpose past perfectives
- refer to past events in a wide range of situations
  - including “perfect” contexts
    - may require additional material or support from the context
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READINGS and limitations</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Perfect</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Dutch</th>
<th>German</th>
<th>Q. French</th>
<th>Br. Portuguese</th>
<th>Tlingit</th>
<th>Ktunaxa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXPERIENTIAL</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead subjects possible</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULT STATE (POSSIBLE)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result state cancellable</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECENT PAST</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTINUOUS</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓ (✓)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative progression possible</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite time adverbial allowed</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GENERAL-PURPOSE PAST PERFECTIVE

Properties these forms share:
- Experiential contexts, but no lifetime effects
- Result state may hold at utterance time, but this is not required
- Recent past possible
- Definite time adverbials allowed
- Narrative progression allowed (with the exception of Dutch)

Properties on which they differ:
- Continuous reading (often the simple present is used instead)
GENERAL-PURPOSE PAST PERFECTIVE - QUÉBEC FRENCH

Experiential

Qui a déjà monté une montagne?
Who has already climbed a mountain?
‘Who has ever climbed a mountain?’

Moi j’ai monté une montagne
Me I have climbed a mountain?
‘Me, I have climbed a mountain.’

- Needs support from the co-text or the addition of an adverb
- Déjà in French is not used exclusively for experiential readings
Result state

Context 1: John heard a big noise in the living room, he peeks to see what happened, Marie is on the ground, unconscious, and Paul says:

Context 2: John heard a big noise in the living room, he peeks to see what happened, Marie’s slowly getting up from the floor, and Paul says:

Marie a perdu consciousness

Marie has\textsubscript{aux} lost\textsubscript{v} consciousness

‘Mary fainted.’
Recent past possible
Context: Albert runs into John on the street and asks him about his wife Marie. John says:

Marie est tombé malade

‘Marie has fallen ill.’

Definite time adverbials

Marie est tombé malade hier

Marie is\textsubscript{aux} fallen ill\textsubscript{v} yeterday

‘Marie has fallen ill yesterday.’
GENERAL-PURPOSE PAST PERFECTIVE - QUÉBEC FRENCH

Narrative progression

Marie est tombé malade
Marie is fallen ill
‘Marie got ill.’

Elle est allée chez le médecin
Elle is gone to the doctor
‘She went to the doctor.’

Marie is aux fallen ill
Marie is aux gone to the doctor

Elle a reçu une ordonnance.
Elle has received a prescription

Marie has aux received a prescription
‘Marie got a prescription.’
INTERIM CONCLUSION

- General past perfectives
  - can be used in lieu of the perfect
  - may even be cognate with the English perfect (e.g., German, Dutch, French).

- The perfect is defined by the restrictions on its use (the crosses in the table)
  - General purpose past perfective is not a perfect

- Methodological remark:
  - Targeting the perfect through its contexts of use does not guarantee a perfect form
THREE STRATEGIES FOR EXPRESSING PERFECT-TYPE INTERPRETATIONS
How do languages express meanings which, in English, are expressed with the present perfect?

- General past perfectives
- What else?

Whatever strategies are used, are they subject to the same restrictions as the English present perfect?

- General past perfective has NO restrictions
THREE STRATEGIES

- Three types of strategies (bound morphemes, constructions, particles) for expressing perfect-type interpretations:
  - Criteria: semantic/pragmatic

- Type A: Experiential strategies
- Type B: Resultative strategies
- Type C: Hybrid strategies
TYPE A: EXPERIENTIAL STRATEGIES

Includes:
- Atayal -in-,
- Javanese tau
- Mandarin -guo 过/過

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READINGS and limitations</th>
<th>English Present perfect</th>
<th>Mandarin -guo</th>
<th>Atayal -in-</th>
<th>Javanese tau</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXPERIENTIAL</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead subjects possible</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULT STATE (POSSIBLE)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result state cancellable</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECENT PAST</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>(x)</td>
<td>(x)</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTINUOUS</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative progression possible</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite time adverbial allowed</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ remote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TYPE A: EXPERIENTIAL STRATEGIES

Definitional properties:
- Experiential reading possible
- Result state reading not possible

Other shared properties (for the 3 languages in our sample):
- Dead subjects possible (no lifetime effects)
- Recent past possible
- Continuous reading not possible
- Definite time adverbials possible
- Narrative progression not possible
TYPE A: EXPERIENTIAL STRATEGIES - ATAYAL

Experiential reading

q<m<n>alup mit (sraral) hiya’
hunt<av<pst> goat before 3s.n

‘He has hunted goats before.’

No lifetime effects (dead subjects possible)

Context: Talking about who wrote an Atayal dictionary, the speaker is reminded of Egerod (1923-1995):

m<in>iru’ khu’ biru’ na’ tayal qu Egerod qasa ma.

AV<PST>write depot book GEN Atayal ABS Egerod that EVID

‘It is said that Egerod wrote an Atayal dictionary.’
TYPE A: EXPERIENTIAL STRATEGIES - ATAYAL

Result state reading not possible
Context: You couldn’t find your watch.

# m<in>gzyuwaw tuki=maku’
AV<PST>lost watch=1S.GEN

Intended for ‘My watch has got lost.’

Definite time adverbials possible

aw’=saku’ k<in>t-an shira’ rwa!
aw’=1S.ABS see<PST>LV yesterday PRT

‘Didn’t you see me yesterday?’
Recent past possible (with cessation of result state)

Context: (Right before dinner) Mother asks if you wash the kid’s hands because she sees the kid’s hands are dirty. You reply:

$m<\text{in}>\text{pm-an=maku’ la.}$

$\text{AV}<\text{PST}>\text{wash-LV=1S.ERG PRT}$

‘I washed him.’ (Why do his hands get dirty again.)
NARRATIVE PROGRESSION NOT POSSIBLE

# m-zyup ngasal qu Tali’, m<in>nbuw qwaw hiya’

AV-enter house ABS Tali’ AV<PST>drink wine 3S.N

‘Tali came into the house. He drank wine.’

CONTINUOUS READING NOT POSSIBLE

# m<in>qilang krayryax qu Tali’.

AV<PST>lazy every.day ABS Tali’

Intended for ‘Tali’ has always been lazy.’
TYPE A: EXPERIENTIAL STRATEGIES

Formalization
Existential past tense (Chen, Vander Klok, Matthewson and Rullmann 2017)
Schematic representation:  \( \exists e \ [ e < t_0 \ & \ P(e) ] \)

Visualization:  \[
\begin{array}{c}
\exists \\
\downarrow \\
\hline
e \quad t_0 \quad \rightarrow
\end{array}
\]
### TYPE B: RESULTATIVE STRATEGIES

Includes:
- Mandarin final particle 了
- Atayal wal
- Gitksan hlaa
- Brazilian Portuguese ter + participle
  (aka préterito perfeito composto)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READINGS and limitations</th>
<th>English Present Perfect</th>
<th>Mandarin Final particle</th>
<th>Atayal</th>
<th>Gitksan</th>
<th>pt-BR ter + participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXPERIENTIAL</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead subjects possible</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULT STATE (POSSIBLE)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result state cancellable</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>(✓) w/ adv</td>
<td>??</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECENT PAST</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTINUOUS</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative progression possible</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>(✓)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite time adverbial allowed</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TYPE B: RESULTATIVE STRATEGIES

Definitional properties:
- Result state reading possible
- Experiential reading not possible

Properties on which the languages differ:
- Cancellability of the result state
- Recent past
- Continuous reading
- Narrative progression
- Definite time adverbial
TYPE B: RESULTATIVE STRATEGIES - MANDARIN

Result state reading possible

wǒ nòngdiū nà-bǎ yàoshí le
I lose that-CL key LE

‘I lost that key.’

Experiential reading not possible

# wǒ pá shān le.
I climb mountain le.

Intended: ‘I have climbed a mountain.’

Translation: ‘I already climbed a mountain.’
## TYPE C: HYBRID STRATEGIES

Includes:
- English *have* + past participle
- Niuean *kua*
- Swahili *me-*
- St’at’imcets *plan*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READINGS and limitations</th>
<th>English <em>have</em> + participle</th>
<th>Swahili <em>me-</em></th>
<th>Niuean <em>kua</em></th>
<th>St’at’imcets <em>plan</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXPERIENTIAL</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead subjects possible</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULT STATE (POSSIBLE)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result state cancellable</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECENT PAST</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTINUOUS</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative progression possible</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite time adverbial allowed</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TYPE C: HYBRID STRATEGIES

Definitional properties:
- Experiential reading possible
- Result state reading possible
- But not a general past perfective (i.e., some restrictions apply)

Other shared properties (for the 4 languages in our sample):
- Dead subjects not possible (for the experiential reading)
- Result state not cancellable (for the result state reading)
- Recent past possible

Properties on which the languages differ:
- Definite time adverbial
- Narrative progression
- Continuous reading
Experiential reading possible

(Ko e) mena kua mohe nakai a koe he kelekele?
KO ABS thing PRF sleep Q ABS 2SG LOC ground

‘Have you ever in fact slept on the ground?’ (Seiter 1980:128)

Context: Who has ever climbed a mountain?

Ko au, ko au! Kua toli e au e mouga.
KO 1SG KO 1SG PRF climb ERG 1SSG ABS mountain

‘Me, me! I have climbed a mountain.’ (‘Miss Smith’s Bad Day’ storyboard)
Result state reading (result state not cancellable):

Context: *Telling your friend why you were late. You say ‘I lost my keys, but I found them.’*

# Kua galo (tei) e tau ki haaku, ka kua moua tei.

PRF lose (recent) ABS PL key 1SG.POSS but PRF find recent

‘I have lost my keys, but I found them.’

(Na) galo e tau ki haaku, ka kua moua tei.

(PST) lose ABS PL key 1SG.POSS but PRF find recent

‘I lost my keys, but I found them.’
TYPE C: HYBRID STRATEGIES - NIUEAN

Dead subjects not possible (for the experiential reading)

Context: You are teaching a history lesson. You tell the kids:

a. Ne kitia mua e Columbus a Amelika
   PST first sight ERG Columbus ABS America
   ‘Columbus discovered America.’

b. # Kua kitia mua e Columbus a Amelika
   PRF first sight ERG Columbus ABS America
   ‘Columbus has discovered America.’
TYPE C: HYBRID STRATEGIES - NIUEAN

Recent past possible

kua faka-me’a tei e au e motoku’a haau

PRF CAUS-clean recent ERG 1SG ABS car 2SG.POSS

‘I’ve cleaned your car.’
SUMMARY

- Perfects “strategies” are defined by
  - The type of meaning they convey
  - The restrictions on their use

- 3 types of perfect strategies
  - Experiential
  - Resultative
  - Hybrid

- The properties of the experiential strategy are remarkably consistent for the 3 languages in our sample.
- Resultative and hybrid strategies are more variable cross-linguistically.
DISCUSSION AND OPEN QUESTIONS
“STRATEGIES” = ASPECTUAL CATEGORIES?

- Perfect “Strategies”
  - Have specialized readings
  - Are restricted to these uses

- So are they aspectual markers?

- Brazilian Portuguese and Québec French’s use of já/déjà for experientials

  Moi  j’ai  déjà  monté  une  montagne
  Me  I have\text{aux}  already  climbed\text{v}  a  mountain?

  ‘Me, I have climbed a mountain.’
“STRATEGIES” = ASPECTUAL CATEGORIES?

- Are já/déjà aspectual markers?
  - Dahl & Vellupillai (2011) consider that some language build the perfect with ‘already’.
  - Do they instantiate an aspectual category?
    - Brazilian Portuguese and Québec French tense and aspectual systems
      - Verbal morphology
      - Should it include adverbs?

- Are já/déjà experientials pragmatically equivalent to the experiential strategies without instantiating aspectual categories?
“STRATEGIES” = ASPECTUAL CATEGORIES?

- Morphosyntactic criteria must be language specific
  - Cf. Portner (2011) who defines the perfect as “a grammatical construction which is built from a participial verb phrase and an auxiliary ...”.
  - Restricting the perfect to its morphosyntactic form in English makes the wrong predictions
    - General purpose past perfectives
      - Québec French passé composé, Brazilian Portuguese preterito perfeito, Dutch/German have + past participle
    - Hybrid perfect
      - Niuean particle, Swahili prefix mɛ-, St’at’imcets particle plan
“STRATEGIES” = ASPECTUAL CATEGORIES?

- Necessity to use language specific criteria for the form and categorization
  - Tense and aspect markers form paradigms
    - Semantics
    - Morphosyntax
IS THERE SUCH A THING AS “THE PERFECT”?

- Is there one perfect, or are there many different types of perfect?
- What’s special about the specific combination of the experiential and resultative perfects?

Future research
  - Deconstructing the perfect (more)
    - Derive perfect-type meanings from more basic aspectual components.

We hope that the current project is a first step toward this goal.

Thank you!
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our consultants:

- Violet Birdstone (Ktunaxa). Hu sukiłquknąłani!
- Carl Alexander, the late Beverley Frank, the late Gertrude Ned, Laura Thevarge, and the late Rose Agnes Whitley (St’át’imcets). Kukwstum’ckál’ap!
- Barbara Sennott, Vincent Gogag, Hector Hill and Ray Jones (Gitksan). Ha’miyaa!
- TiCs SubekC, Fina Aksanah, Bahrul Ulum, Nasrullah, LijaCs Hakim (Paciran Javanese)
- Wuri SayekC, Ahlis Ahwan (Semarang Javanese)
- Heytay Payan, Buya’ Bawnay, Maray Pasan (Squliq Atayal)
- Linsey Tagali (Niuean)

Our funding:

- SSHRC grant #435-2016-0381 (P.I. Lisa Matthewson, Co-PI Hotze Rullmann), SSHRC grant #430-2016-00220 (PI Jozina Vander Klok) and the Jacobs Research Fund.
REFERENCES


REFERENCES


