The realization of the perfect aspect associated with the present tense in New Zealand English

A realização do aspecto perfect associado ao tempo presente no inglês neozelandês

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ABSTRACT

In this research, we intend to contribute to the understanding of the perfect aspect. More precisely, it is aimed at investigating the verbal forms that express said aspect, when associated with the present tense, in New Zealand English, in order to present evidence that advocates in favor of the proposed classification of Iatridou; Anagnostopoulou; Izvorski (2003), which divides this aspect into two types: universal perfect (UP) and existential perfect (EP). We also intend to show evidence in favor of Nespoli's (2018) proposal for two syntactic projections, one related to each type of the perfect aspect (UPerfP and EPerfP). The main difference between both types of the perfect aspect would be related to the relationship between reference time and event time, with UP being when event time extends until reference time, including it, while EP being when event time finishes before reference time, although there is a repercussion of the event in the latter. This research is based on the hypothesis that there are verb forms that realize UP and not EP, associated with the present tense in New Zealand English and vice-versa. To test this hypothesis, an excerpt from ICE-NZ, a *corpus* with speech transcriptions, was analyzed and two types of tests were applied to native speakers: a cloze test and a multiple-choice test. With this study, we intend to identify the verbal forms used by native speakers of New Zealand English to express the two types of the perfect aspect.

KEYWORDS: Aspect. Perfect. New Zealand English. Verbal forms.

RESUMO

Nesta pesquisa, pretende-se contribuir para o entendimento do aspecto *perfect*. Mais precisamente, pretende-se investigar as formas verbais que expressam esse aspecto, quando associado ao tempo presente, no inglês neozelandês, visando apresentar evidências que advoguem a favor da proposta de classificação de Iatridou; Anagnostopoulou; Izvorski (2003), que divide esse aspecto em dois tipos, a saber: *perfect* universal (PU) e *perfect* existencial (PE). Pretende-se, também, mostrar evidências a favor da proposta de Nespoli (2018) para duas projeções sintáticas do aspecto *perfect* (UPerfP e EPerfP). A principal diferença entre os dois tipos do aspecto *perfect* seria a relação entre o momento de referência e o momento do evento, sendo PU quando o momento do evento se estende até o momento de referência, incluindo-o, e sendo PE quando o momento

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do evento é finalizado antes do momento de referência, ainda que haja repercussão do evento no momento presente. Esta pesquisa parte da hipótese de que existem formas verbais que realizam PU e não PE, associados ao tempo presente no inglês neozelandês e vice-versa. Para testar essa hipótese, foi analisado um recorte do ICE-NZ, um *corpus* com transcrições de fala e foram aplicados dois tipos de testes a indivíduos falantes nativos: um teste de preenchimento de lacunas e um teste de decisão. Com isso, pretende-se identificar as estruturas verbais utilizadas pelos falantes nativos do inglês neozelandês para a realização dos dois tipos do aspecto *perfect*.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Aspecto. *Perfect*. Inglês neozelandês. Formas verbais.

1. Introduction[4]

Considering the theoretical framework of Generative Grammar, which assumes the existence of linguistic universals, mental representation could be inferred and analyzed by the observation of language production, as projections and features would be universal, and variations would be restricted to how each language expresses these categories. Therefore, the main goal of this research is to contribute to the understanding of aspect, more specifically, it is intended to investigate the verbal forms that express the perfect aspect.

Comrie (1976) defines aspect as a linguistic category that shows information about the internal temporal constitution of a situation. The perfect aspect can be defined as a type of grammatical aspect that highlights a time span between event time and reference time and it can be associated with present, past or future tenses (Pancheva, 2003). In this work, the focus is on the association between the perfect aspect and the present tense[5].

Many studies have been performed on the perfect aspect and different proposals of classification have been made. This research is based on the two-fold classification (McCawley, 1981; Iatridou; Anagnostopoulou; Izvorski, 2003), which divides the perfect aspect into two types: universal perfect (UP) and existential perfect (EP). The main difference between both types would be related to the relationship between reference time and event time – when event time extends until reference time, including it, it is an UP, whereas when event time finishes before reference time, although there is a repercussion of the event in the latter, it is an EP. Previous research has shown that different languages seem to use similar choices of verbal forms to express each of the two types of the perfect aspect, which may support the binary classification (Nespoli, 2018).

Although normative grammar describes the periphrasis "have" + past participle (the present perfect form) as the verbal form used to express the perfect aspect (Quirk *et al*., 1985; Downing; Locke, 2006), the investigation of some varieties of English, such as American, British and Canadian (Lopes (2016), Jesus (2016), Machado; Martins (2020), Lopes; Martins (2023)) have shown that there are other possible verbal forms to realize this aspect associated with the present and that, other than the present perfect form, the choices used to express UP are not used to express EP, and those used to express EP are not used to express UP.

[5] For further information on the expression of the perfect aspect associated with the past and future tenses, see Machado (2022).

Assuming the relevance of analyzing less studied varieties of English, the specific objective of this ongoing study is to investigate the verbal forms that express UP and EP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English. The hypothesis formulated for this study is that there are verbal forms that realize UP and not EP or vice-versa when associated with the present tense in this language. In order to test this hypothesis, a *corpus* analysis was made, and two linguistic experiments were developed and applied to native speakers of New Zealand English.

In the next section of this paper, we present the theoretical background of this study. After that, we describe the methodology used in this research. Then, we present and analyze the results. And finally, we make our final considerations.

2. Theoretical background

In this section, theoretical information about the perfect aspect, the proposal of a syntactic representation of said aspect that is used in this study and the realizations of the perfect aspect associated with the present tense in different varieties of English will be addressed.

2.1. The perfect aspect

As defined by Comrie (1976), aspect informs us about the internal temporal constitution of a situation. When the aspectual information can be expressed through verbal inflection, it is considered a grammatical aspect. The author states that there are two main grammatical aspects in languages, namely perfective – an aspect that conveys the idea of a situation seen as a whole – and imperfective – an aspect that conveys the idea of a situation seen through its internal phases. However, a third type of grammatical aspect is also mentioned, which is the perfect aspect, the subject of this study.

Differently from the perfective and imperfective aspects, the perfect aspect can be defined as an aspect that highlights a time span between event time and reference time (Pancheva, 2003), and it can be associated with the past, present and future tenses. Being an aspect with distinctive inherent characteristics, different classifications of its types were proposed[6]. This study assumes a binary classification, which divides the perfect aspect into UP and EP (McCawley, 1981; Iatridou; Anagnostopoulou; Izvorski, 2003). The authors, who analyzed the perfect aspect associated with the present, explain that UP is characterized by a situation in which event time extends until reference time, including it, as we can see in example (1). On the other hand, EP is characterized by a situation in which event time finishes before reference time, but there is a repercussion of the event in the latter, as observed in example (2). In both examples, the perfect aspect is expressed by the present perfect form ("have" + past participle of the main verb). In the following section, other verbal forms will be presented as possible linguistic devices to convey this aspect[7].

(1)   I **have lived** in Rio since 2010.

(2)   I **have** already **done** my homework.

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[6] For further information on other proposals of classification of the perfect aspect, see Comrie (1976) and Pancheva (2003).

[7] In this work, it is not considered the interaction between the perfect aspect and the *Aktionsart*.

Having the definitions of UP and EP in mind, it is possible to explain the examples above. In example (1), the event of living in Rio started in 2010 and it continues until the present moment. In example (2), the event of doing the homework happened at some point in the past and the result of this event – the homework is done – is still perceived in the present moment.

Studies such as Nespoli (2018) and Nespoli; Martins (2018) present evidence in favor of this two-fold classification, once their data show that different languages tend to use similar verbal forms and similar adverbials to express each type of the perfect aspect. In fact, some adverbial expressions seem to contribute directly to the expression of the perfect aspect. These are called adverbs of perfect level (Iatridou; Anagnostopoulou; Izvorski, 2003) and some have been described by Nespoli (2018) as related to each of the two types of the perfect aspect, with "since X time" and "lately" associated with UP, and "already" and "not yet" associated with EP, for instance.

2.2. Realizations of the perfect aspect associated with the present tense in English

Investigating the perfect aspect associated with the present, Lopes (2016) analyzed British English, Jesus (2016) and Machado; Martins (2020) analyzed American English, and Lopes; Martins (2023) analyzed Canadian English. The verbal forms expressing UP and EP in these varieties of English can be seen in table 1, and examples of these verbal forms can be found in table 2.

Table 1: Verbal forms used to express the perfect aspect.

	British English (Lopes, 2016)	**American English** (Jesus, 2016; Machado; Martins, 2020)	**Canadian English** (Lopes; Martins, 2023)
UP	Present perfect Present perfect continuous Present continuous	Present perfect Present continuous Simple present	Present perfect Present perfect continuous Present continuous Simple present
EP	Present perfect Simple past	Present perfect (with or without auxiliary verb "have") Simple past	Present perfect Simple past Transitive be perfect (be + participle + NP)

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The realization of the perfect aspect associated with the present tense in New Zealand English

Table 2: Examples with verbal forms used to express the perfect aspect.

UP	a. I'**ve been** a popstar since I was 16. (Present perfect; British English) b. They'**ve been doing** it for 9 years. (Present perfect continuous; British English) c. I think that I... I'**m enjoying making** the films. (Present continuous; British English) d. He still **lives** at home? (Simple present; American English)
EP	a. One of the greatest artists the world **has** ever **known**. (Present perfect; British English) b. I **went** there before, it was fine. (Simple past; American English) c. I **broken** actually tons (of bones). (Present perfect without the auxiliary verb "have"; American English) d. Let me just dry my hands because I **am done** the dishes. (Transitive be perfect; Canadian English)

Source: Lopes (2016); Machado; Martins (2020); Lopes; Martins (2023).

Observing the data from the three above-mentioned varieties of English, we can see that the present perfect form (formed by the auxiliary verb "have" and the past participle of the main verb) is the only verb form that can express both UP and EP. Apart from this structure, the other verbal forms used, according to table 1, can express either UP or EP, but not both.

Most of the verbal forms described are shared among these varieties, such as the simple past form to express EP and continuous forms (present continuous, present perfect continuous) and the simple present form to express UP. The verbal form know as transitive be perfect (formed by the auxiliary verb "be", the past participle of the verbs "do", "finish" or "start" and a noun phrase) is the only structure described in these studies presented here that does not seem to be acceptable in other varieties of English[8]. It is important to mention that the use of the simple past form in "I went there before, it was fine" is considered as a device to express the perfect aspect, since the adverb "before" establishes a time interval between past and present. Furthermore, according to Machado; Martins (2020), the context in which the sentence was produced allows the reading of a situation that ended in the past and its effects are perceived in the present moment.

When analyzing New Zealand English, Chapman (2019) describes that, in this variety of English, the simple past form could be interpreted as realizing the idea of the connection of two points in time, in which a time interval is produced. That is the concept of the expression of the perfect aspect also addressed by Comrie (1976). Therefore, the simple past form would encompass a wider range of uses (expressing both perfective and perfect aspects), whereas the present perfect form would only be used to express the perfect aspect. This follows what has been observed in British, American and Canadian English.

The verbal forms used to express UP that are not used to express EP and vice-versa in different languages may show relevant information related to the underlying features of the perfect aspect and its mental representation, which will be discussed below.

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[8] Yearastov (2012, 2015) affirms that the transitive be perfect structure has a marginal use in American English, while being widespread in Canadian English.

2.3. Mental representation of the perfect aspect

Iatridou; Anagnostopoulou; Izvorski (2003) assume, in their study of the perfect aspect, the existence of one projection for the syntactic representation of the perfect aspect. Analyzing the distinctive characteristics of UP and EP, observed by investigating the morphosyntactic characteristics of the realization of the perfect aspect associated with the present tense in Romance languages such as Portuguese (both European and Brazilian varieties), Spanish, French and Italian, Nespoli (2018) described the underlying features of each type of the perfect aspect as follows.

Table 3: Underlying features of the perfect aspect.

UP	[-bounded] [+resultative] [+continuative][9]
EP	[+bounded] [+resultative] [-continuative]

Source: Adapted from Nespoli (2018).

The underlying difference between UP and EP, in terms of features and grammatical forms used in the languages studied, was the basis for the proposal of the split of the projection of the perfect aspect (Nespoli; Martins, 2018), and the proposal of two different projections, UPerfP and EPerfP (Nespoli, 2018). According to Nespoli (2018), the differentiation of UP and EP would occur by the specification of the [±bounded] in AspP, the [±continuative] in UPerf, both being characterized by the feature [+resultative] in the EPerfP.

3. Methodology

The main objective of this study is to contribute to the investigation of the perfect aspect and the specific objective is to investigate the verbal forms that express UP and EP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English. The hypothesis of this study is that there are verbal forms that realize UP and not EP or vice-versa associated with the present tense in this language. If a verbal form is found to be exclusively used for expressing one of the types of the perfect aspect, at least, it means that evidence would be offered in favor of Nespoli (2018)'s proposal of two different projections for the perfect aspect in the syntactic representation.

In order to verify the hypothesis of this study, two different methodological approaches were taken. Firstly, four hours and six minutes of the New Zealand Component of the International *Corpus*

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[9] It is important to mention that the apparent correlation between [-bounded] and [+continuative], on the one hand, and [-bounded] and [+continuative], on the other, does not mean [bounded] and [continuative] should be taken as the same feature. Iatridou; Anagnostopoulou; Izvorski (2003) assume [bounded] as a feature related to the derivation of sentences in the perfective/imperfective aspects, independently if the perfect aspect is also conveyed or not, while Nespoli (2018) assumes [continuative] as a feature related to the expression of UP, in the sense that a time interval between the event moment and the reference moment is established. Thus, it is clear that both features ([bounded] and [continuative]) are related to different linguistic categories, although they are relevant to the derivation of sentences in the perfect aspect. In the case of the [resultative] feature, it is assumed, according to Nespoli; Martins (2018), that its positive specification is necessarily related to the perfect aspect expression, whether it is UP or EP.

of English (ICE-NZ) were analyzed. ICE-NZ (Vine, 1999) is a collection of spoken text produced through recordings and transcripts of conversations of native speakers of New Zealand English and its access was granted by the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies from Victoria University of Wellington. In the selected part of the *corpus* analyzed in this study, the participants were between 19 and 79 years of age[10].

The criteria used for the *corpus* analysis were as follows: at first, the search for adverbial forms that are said to express the perfect aspect, such as "just", "already", "lately" and "before" (Nespoli, 2018; Machado, 2022) was performed, in order to verify which verbal forms were connected to them and, in this case, were also expressing the perfect aspect. The presence of those adverbial forms was taken as an important linguistic piece of evidence of the expression of the perfect aspect. Then, the analysis of the *corpus*, line by line, was performed, in order to verify other possible verbal forms in the context of expression of the perfect aspect.

Secondly, two linguistic experiments[11] were taken by the total of 10 participants, native speakers of New Zealand English, between 18 and 59 years of age. The tests were available on the internet through the Google Forms platform.

The first experiment was a cloze test, which was designed in order to show four small texts, placed in four different sections, to all participants, with gaps to be filled using the verbs and extra information provided in brackets. In this test, there were 10 target gaps and 20 distractor gaps. The objective of this test was to identify the preferred verbal forms that express each type of the perfect aspect. An example of a task from the cloze test can be seen below.

Image 1: Example of a task taken from the cloze test.

Story 1

"Today **[1]** ____ **(be)** my first day of college. I still can't believe this country is where I live now. It's hard being an immigrant, you know? **[2]** ____ **(get/ not)** me wrong, I'm extremely happy to be here, but I miss so many things back home. I miss the food, which is much more flavorful than anything **[3]** ____ **(eat)** lately. I miss **[4]** ____ **(drive)**! I **[5]** ____ **(have/ not)** a local license, so I **[6]** ____ **(drive/ not)** since I got here. Most of all, I miss my family and friends. I **[7]** ____ **(write)** them every day for the past three weeks, but it's not the same. Hopefully they **[8]** ____ **(come)** visit soon."

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

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[10] A detailed analysis of linguistic behavior by age group, although relevant for a sociolinguistic description of the phenomenon, is not within the scope of this investigation.

[11] The linguistic experiments were submitted and approved by the Ethics Committee of Federal University of Rio de Janeiro – Institute of Studies and Collective Health. Protocol number 79696624.9.0000.5286.

The verbs given in brackets in the cloze test were irregular. That means these verbs show different verbal inflections for the simple past and past participle forms. This specific characteristic of this linguistic experiment may be justified by the fact that, by using this kind of irregular verbs, verbal forms chosen by the participants would not be interpreted as ambiguous. For example, the irregular verb "break" in the simple past form is "broke" and in the past participle form is "broken". So, this verb in particular was one of the verbs chosen to be used by the participants in the target gaps of this linguistic experiment.

If regular verbs were offered instead, the simple past form and the present perfect form without the auxiliary verb ("have") could be mistaken during our analysis of the linguistic data, since the simple past form and past participle forms of regular structures are formed in the same way, with the addition of the suffix "-ed". For example, the regular verb "play", in the simple past and past participle forms, shows the same structure, which is "played".

Furthermore, irregular verbs that show the same structure for both simple past and past participle forms were not considered. For example, the irregular verb "think", in the simple past and past participle forms, shows the same structure, which is "thought". In summary, regular[12] or irregular verbs that show the same inflection for both the simple past form and past participle forms were not used in the target gaps of this linguistic experiment.

The second experiment was a multiple-choice test, which was designed to show contextualized groups of sentences to the participants, each one with a related set of 6 options/sentences to be chosen from, in which participants could choose one or more options. In this test, there were 8 target sentences and 16 distractors. The choice of verbal forms that appear in the target sentences are based on previous studies such as Lopes (2016), Machado; Martins (2020) and Lopes; Martins (2023). An example of a task from the multiple-choice test can be seen below.

Image 2: Example of a task taken from the multiple-choice test.

3- Considering that my parents are pilots and it's holiday season... *

☐ They've flown a lot.

☐ They're flown a lot.

☐ They've been flying a lot.

☐ They're flying a lot.

☐ They fly a lot.

☐ They flown a lot.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

[12] In task 1, an exception was taken with the verb "finish", that is a regular verb said to be an option used in the transitive be perfect form, along with the verbs "start" and "do". This verbal form was found expressing EP in Canadian English in the studies of Lopes; Martins (2023). The verb was used in one gap in order to check if the participants of the task would use the mentioned verbal form.

In the next section, the results from the methodological procedures taken in this study will be presented and properly discussed.

4. Results and analysis

In this section, the results obtained through the *corpus* analysis and the application of the linguistic experiments will be exposed. They will be divided in UP and EP occurrences. Then, the results will be summarized and properly discussed.

4.1. Results of the *corpus*

There were 181 occurrences of the perfect aspect associated with the present tense in the ICE-NZ *corpus*[13]. First of all, there were 33 UP occurrences associated with the present tense: 19 (57,6%) realizations of UP through the present perfect form, 13 (39,4%) through the present perfect continuous form and 1 (3,0%) through the present perfect form without its auxiliary verb ("have"). The last verbal form found is not considered ambiguous, since the irregular verb "be", that shows different inflections for the simple past ("was/were") and past participle ("been") forms, was found to be a part of the present perfect form in this context. One example of each structure found in the *corpus* expressing UP can be seen below. It is considered that these examples convey UP because a situation that started in the past and persists in the present can be noticed.

(3)   Present perfect form
"Well, it**'s been** a long week."

(4)   Present perfect continuous form
"My mother**'s been trying** to feed him indefinitely."

(5)   Present perfect form without auxiliary verb ("have")
"**Been** busy writing out cheques."

Second of all, there were 148 EP occurrences associated with the present tense: 141 (95,3%) realizations of EP through the present perfect form, 6 (4,1%) through the simple past form and 1 (0,7%) through the present perfect form without its auxiliary verb ("have"). One example of each structure found in the *corpus* expressing EP and the charts related to the UP and EP occurrences found in the *corpus* can be seen below. It is considered that these examples convey EP because a situation that ended in the past and has its effects in the present can be noticed.

(6)   Present perfect form
"Michael**'s come** home, we need a peanut sauce recipe."

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[13] More information on the criteria used for analyzing the *corpus* can be seen in section 3 of this work.

(7)   Simple past form

"We **went** there once."

(8)   Present perfect form without auxiliary verb ("have")

"(...) and I says 'oh you **done** the reading, man' and he says 'yes'."

Chart 1: *Corpus* analysis - Verbal forms that express UP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English.
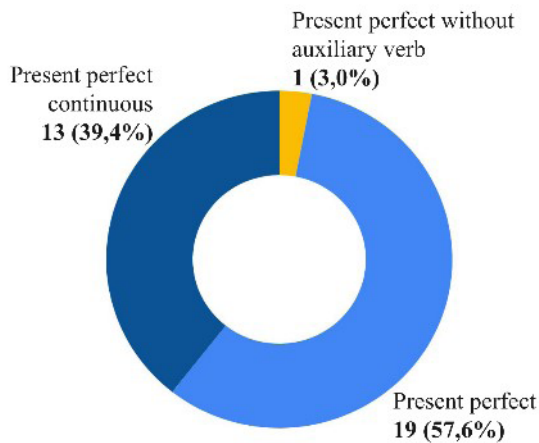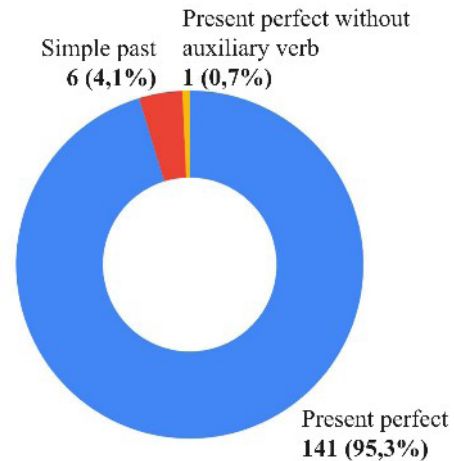
Chart 2: *Corpus* analysis - Verbal forms that express EP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

4.2. Results of the linguistic experiments

A total of 52 occurrences of the perfect aspect associated with the present tense was obtained with the cloze test. There were 30 occurrences of UP associated with the present tense: 26 (86,6%) realizations of UP through the present perfect form, 2 (6,7%) through the present perfect continuous form and 2 (6,7%) through the simple present form. An example of a sentence found in the cloze test with a gap that was filled by the participants with the previously mentioned verbal forms can be seen below. In example (9), the verb "write" was used by the participants to complete the gap in the following ways: "have written" (present perfect form), "have been writing" (present perfect continuous) and "write" (simple present form).

(9)   Sentence with a gap in the context of UP realization in the cloze test

"I _____ (write) them every day for the past three weeks, but it's not the same."

Also in the results of the cloze test, 23 occurrences of EP associated with the present tense were obtained: 16 (69,6%) realizations of EP through the simple past form, 6 (26,1%) through the present perfect form and 1 (4,3%) through the present perfect form without its auxiliary verb ("have"). An example of a sentence found in the cloze test with a gap that was filled by the participants with the

previously mentioned verbal forms and the charts related to the UP and EP occurrences found in the cloze test can be seen below. In example (10), the verb "break" was used by the participants to complete the gap in the following ways: "broke" (simple past form), "have broken" (present perfect form) and "broken" (present perfect form without the auxiliary verb "have").

(10)   Sentence with a gap in the context of EP realization in the cloze test
          "I _____ (break) the window and the glass is cracked."

Chart 3: Cloze test - Verbal forms that express UP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English.
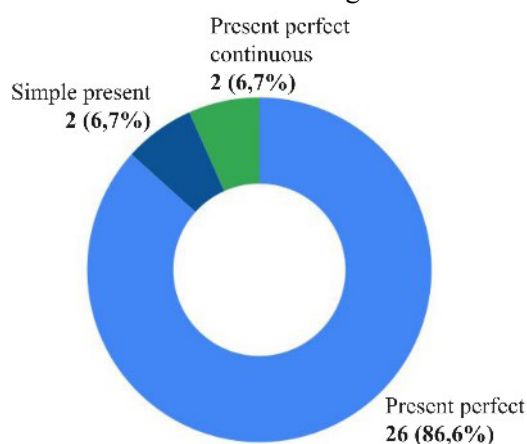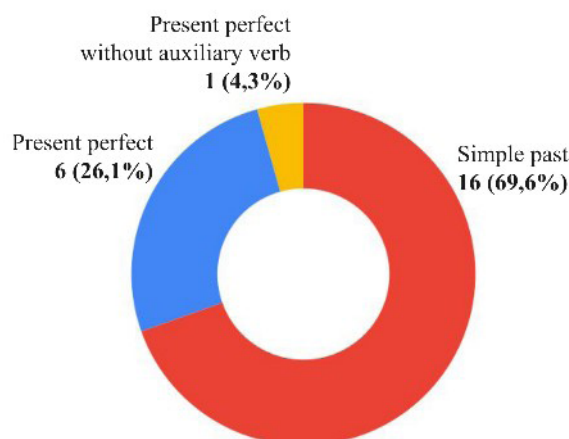
Present perfect continuous
2 (6,7%)

Simple present
2 (6,7%)

Present perfect
26 (86,6%)

Chart 4: Cloze test - Verbal forms that express EP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English.

Present perfect without auxiliary verb
1 (4,3%)

Present perfect
6 (26,1%)

Simple past
16 (69,6%)

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

With reference to the results of the multiple-choice test, a total of 28 occurrences of the perfect aspect associated with the present tense was collected. There were 15 occurrences of UP associated with the present tense: 9 (60,0%) realizations of UP through the present perfect continuous form, 4 (26,7%) through the present perfect form, 1 (6,7%) through the present continuous form and 1 (6,7%) through the simple present form. An example of a task from the multiple-choice test, exactly how it was presented to the participants, can be seen below.

(11)   Task in the context of UP realization in the multiple-choice test
          "Considering that my parents are pilots and it's holiday season…"
          (   ) They've been flying a lot.
          (   ) They've flown a lot.
          (   ) They fly a lot.
          (   ) They are flying a lot.
          (   ) They flown a lot.

Also in the results of the multiple-choice test, 13 occurrences of EP associated with the present tense were found: 11 (84,6%) realizations of EP through the present perfect form and 2 (15,4%) through the simple past form. An example of a task from the multiple-choice test, exactly how it was presented to the participants, and the charts related to the UP and EP occurrences found in the multiple-choice test can be seen below.

(12)   Task in the context of EP realization in the multiple-choice test
        "Considering that my homework is ready…"
        (   ) I've done the homework.
        (   ) I did the homework.
        (   ) I'll do the homework.
        (   ) I've been doing the homework.
        (   ) I'm done the homework.
        (   ) I done the homework.

Chart 5: Multiple-choice test - Verbal forms that express UP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English.
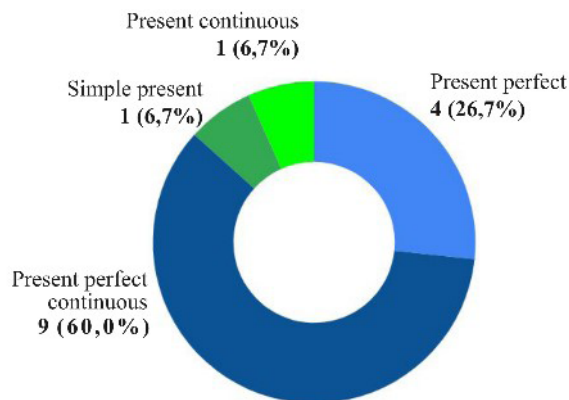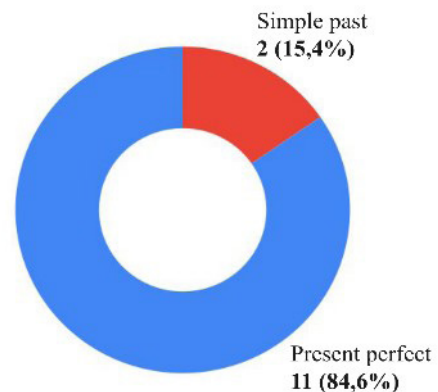
Chart 6: Multiple-choice test - Verbal forms that express EP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

In summary, there were 261 occurrences of the perfect aspect associated with the present tense in the methodological procedures performed in this study. In regard to the occurrences of UP associated with the present tense, there were 78 in total through different verbal forms: 49 (62,82%) occurrences of UP were realized through the present perfect form, 24 (30,77%) through the present perfect continuous form, 3 (3,85%) through the simple present form, 1 (1,28%) through the present continuous form and 1 (1,28%) through the present perfect form without its auxiliary verb ("have").

Also, in regard to the occurrences of EP associated with the present tense, there were 183 in total through different verbal forms: 158 (86,34%) occurrences of EP were realized through the

present perfect form, 24 (13,11%) through the simple past form and 1 (0,55%) through the present perfect form without its auxiliary verb ("have"). The charts related to the summary of UP and EP occurrences found in the methodological procedures performed in this study can be seen below.

Chart 7: Verbal forms that express UP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English found in different methodological procedures.

Chart 8: Verbal forms that express EP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English found in different methodological procedures.

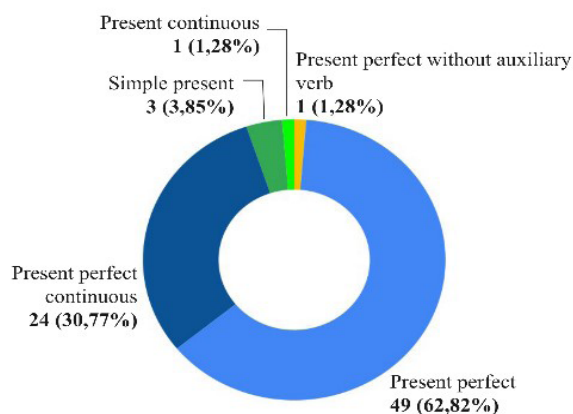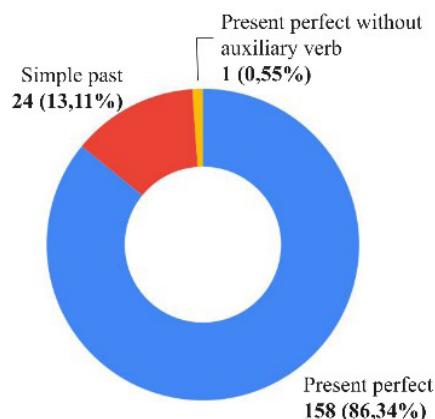

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

4.3. Analysis of the results

As previously seen, the present perfect form is the most used form to express both UP and EP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English. Apart from the present perfect structure, the verbal forms used to express UP and EP are distinct, as shown in other varieties of English previously analyzed. They can be seen in the table below.

Table 4: Summary of common and distinct verbal forms expressing UP and EP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English.

UP	Present perfect (with or without auxiliary verb "have") Present perfect continuous Simple present Present continuous
EP	Present perfect (with or without auxiliary verb "have") Simple past

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

When visualizing table 4 and contrasting the verbal forms that express the perfect aspect in different varieties of English, we conclude that the verbal forms found expressing UP in New Zealand English are the same as the ones found expressing UP in Canadian English. Although the simple present form was not found expressing UP in British English and the present perfect continuous

form was not found expressing UP in American English in the studies of Lopes (2016) and Jesus (2016), we understand that they are possible verbal forms to be used to express the perfect aspect in those varieties of English. In terms of EP realizations, the verbal forms found expressing EP in New Zealand English are the same as the ones found expressing EP in British, American and Canadian English, except for the transitive be perfect form, only found in Canadian English.

Considering the verbal forms found in this study, except for the present perfect form, it is noted that there is a systematic distinction between the verb forms that express UP and EP. The distinctive UP forms (present perfect continuous, simple present and present continuous forms) are imperfective and convey [+continuity], while the distinctive EP form (simple past form) is perfective and convey [+resultativity], which sustains the approach followed by Nespoli (2018).

Finally, in the *corpus*, there were found many occurrences of the "have/has got" structure purely expressing the present tense. In the example below, taken from ICE-NZ, it is possible to interpret the clause "it**'s got** carpet and a desk" as a description of said place, which means the verbal structure, that could be classified as the present perfect form, since it shows the auxiliary "have" connected with the past participle of the verb "get", is not expressing the perfect aspect: it is expressing the present tense. In this case, all the entries of "has/have got" that were interpreted as not expressing the perfect aspect were discarded.

(13)   *Corpus'* sentence with "have/has got" structure
       "When you walk in it, it looks pretty high class, it**'s got** carpet and a desk."

5. Final considerations

The main objective of this study was to contribute to the investigation of the perfect aspect and the specific objective was to investigate the verbal forms that express UP and EP associated with the present tense in New Zealand English. The hypothesis of this study, that there are verbal forms that realize UP and not EP or vice-versa associated with the present tense in New Zealand English, was not refuted.

 It is believed that the objectives of this study were accomplished, once the exclusive verbal forms found expressing UP (present perfect continuous, simple present and present continuous forms) and EP (simple past form), associated with the present tense in New Zealand English, as shown in other varieties of English previously analyzed, are considered evidence in favor of Nespoli (2018)'s proposal for two syntactic projections of the perfect aspect (UPerfP and EPerfP), regarding the assumption that different grammatical forms may support the idea of different linguistic representations.

Since this is an ongoing study, we intend to analyze varieties of English that are considered less privileged in order to help describe their syntactic properties related to the perfect aspect. That way, the contribution to the investigation of the realizations of the perfect aspect in the English language will be greater.

The realization of the perfect aspect associated with the present tense in New Zealand English

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