

A cross-regional study on the recognition of dialectal diversity in the uses of Spanish past tenses in L2 Spanish textbooks

Um estudo inter-regional sobre o reconhecimento da diversidade dialetal nos usos dos pretéritos espanhóis nos livros didáticos de espanhol L2

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ABSTRACT: This analysis continues the examination of the acknowledgement of dialectal variation in L2 Spanish textbooks initiated by Hernández Cubo (2019) and compares its findings with those from that previous study by focusing on the same linguistic aspect: the difference in the uses and semantic scopes of two past tenses – *Pretérito Perfecto Compuesto* and *Pretérito Indefinido* – in the Peninsular and Hispanic American macro-varieties. As the study by Hernández Cubo (2019) only examines textbooks produced in Spain, this investigation proposes a cross-regional comparison by evaluating materials from other world regions. Therefore, this research contributes to the investigation of language variation in L2 Spanish instruction by proposing a cross-regional analysis, which shows that the recognition of dialectal diversity within the uses of the aforementioned tenses is not a priority among textbook authors. Works from the USA, France, Germany and Italy present certain levels of dialectal acknowledgement, while the ones from Brazil and the UK constitute the most significantly dialectally sensitive materials regarding the treatment of Spanish past tenses.

KEYWORDS: L2 Spanish textbooks; dialectal variation; standard language ideology; past tense; *Pretérito Perfecto Compuesto*; *Pretérito Indefinido*;

RESUMO: Esta análise continua a examinar a constatação da variação dialetal em livros didáticos de espanhol L2 por Hernández Cubo (2019) e compara as novas conclusões com as do estudo precedente enfocando o mesmo aspecto linguístico: a diferença nos usos e âmbito semântico dos dois pretéritos – o Pretérito Perfeito Composto e o Pretérito Indefinido – nas macro-variantes peninsular e hispano-americana. Como o anterior estudo de Hernández Cubo (2019) examina apenas livros didáticos produzidos em Espanha, a presente investigação propõe uma comparação inter-regional, avaliando materiais de outras regiões do globo. Assim, este estudo amplia a investigação da variação linguística no ensino do espanhol L2 através de uma análise inter-regional, que revela que o reconhecimento da diversidade dialetal nos usos dos tempos mencionados não é prioritário para os autores desses livros. Livros escolares dos EUA, França, Alemanha e Itália apresentam certos níveis de reconhecimento, enquanto os do Brasil e do Reino Unido constituem os materiais mais sintonizados com a variação dialetal quanto ao tratamento dos pretéritos em espanhol.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: livros didáticos de Espanhol L2; variação dialetal; ideologia linguística padrão; pretérito; *Pretérito Perfecto Compuesto*; *Pretérito Indefinido*



1 Introduction

Whether consciously or inadvertently, the authors of L2 Spanish textbooks make choices when designing their works, including which variety of Spanish functions as the reference in their pedagogic materials. Choosing one specific variety inevitably leaves the others out, a decision which may be ideological (Beaven; Garrido, 2000, p. 182). In any case, this choice is somehow unavoidable. Furthermore, it could also be argued that for practical reasons choosing either one's own variety or that which is predominant in a pertinent context may be a legitimate choice. Therefore, the ideological stance in this decision may be more predominantly noticeable in the attitude towards the varieties which are initially excluded. Whether these are also acknowledged and the nature of this recognition may elucidate the attitude towards dialectal diversity on the part of textbook authors.

Standard language ideology promotes the consideration of one particular variety as the ideal vernacular and the stigmatisation of other dialects as non-prestigious (Paffey, 2012, p. 47). In Spanish, the dialect from Spain (henceforth referred to as Peninsular) has at times been considered the prestigious variety (Bugel; Santos, 2010, p. 151; Del Valle, 2007, p. 247; 2014, p. 360), a stance promoted by the prescribing role that some institutions have had in the configuration of such an attitude, like the *Real Academia Española* (RAE, Spanish Royal Academy of Language) (Del Valle, 2007, p. 249). Although in the last decades the RAE has shifted its position to a pan-hispanic description of the language, some scholars still assign a hegemonic role to this institution (Del Valle, 2007, p. 258).

Other regulating bodies of the language are likewise subject to sustaining ideological stances towards dialectal diversity. Del Valle (2014, p. 363) highlights that the *Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes* (Curriculum Plan of Instituto Cervantes, hereinafter PCIC) proposes a Eurocentric approach to describe the Spanish language by choosing the Peninsular vernacular as its reference. The PCIC plays a significant role in the production of L2 Spanish materials, as it constitutes the main work describing each of the levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) in the Spanish language.

L2 Spanish textbooks are not free from the constraints of these ideological positions, as their authors make choices regarding which language variety they present as the reference and how they treat the others. Textbooks may be considered to be ideologically mediated artefacts, for their authors hold beliefs and ideas which are likely reflected in their works (Apple, 1985, p. 153; Apple; Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 1; Rosana Gazali, 2014, p. 49). The consideration of these texts by their readers as a trustworthy source of knowledge often inhibits the realisation of their ideological dimension (López García, 2010, p. 91; Meyer; Rosenblatt, 1987, p. 247). Language textbooks may therefore influence the process of language learning in an ideological manner by legitimising certain positions and stigmatising others (Curd-Christiansen; Weninger, 2015, p. 1, 3).

In a previous study, I analysed the attitude of L2 Spanish textbook authors from Spain towards the presentation of dialectal differences in the uses and semantic spectra of two past tenses in Spanish (Hernández Cubo, 2019). These were *Pretérito Perfecto Compuesto* (subsequently abbreviated PPC) – as in “*He estado muchas veces en España*” [I’ve been to Spain many times]¹ – and *Pretérito Indefinido* (from here onwards PI) – as in “*El año pasado fui a España*” [Last year I went to Spain]. I chose this specific opposition

¹ All translations are mine.

of tenses to focus on an aspect that has traditionally been regarded as one that generally distinguishes the Peninsular and Hispanic American macro-varieties (Bravo García, 2004, p. 95-96). In general terms, it is considered that speakers of the Peninsular dialect use PI to refer to actions that happened in a concluded period of the past – as in “*Ayer vi a Juan*” [Yesterday I saw Juan] –, whereas they use PPC to convey an action that did take place in the past but within a time frame that is seen as unfinished – as in “*Hoy he visto a Juan*” [literally, I’ve seen Juan today] (Butt; Benjamin, 2004, p. 226-228; Harris, 1982, p. 53; Howe; Schwenter, 2003, p. 62-63). In the Hispanic American variety, regardless of how concluded or unconcluded the time frame of a verb action is, PI is usually the dominant tense to convey past meaning, whereas PPC is not so frequently used (Berschin, 1976, p. 35; Butt; Benjamin, 2004, p. 226-227, 230; Gutiérrez Araus, 1995, p. 26; Lapesa, 1981, p. 589-590; Moreno de Alba, 1988, p. 180). Therefore, both “*Ayer vi a Juan*” [Yesterday I saw Juan] and “*Hoy vi a Juan*” [Today I saw Juan] are plausible utterances in the Hispanic American variety.

As I pointed out in my previous study, this distinction in the uses of PPC and PI on both sides of the Atlantic constitutes the general assumption on how these tenses are deployed by the speakers of the Peninsular and Hispanic American varieties; yet, at the same time, this proposes a reductionist view on how these tenses are actually used, as it fails to acknowledge the variation existent within these two macro-varieties (Hernández Cubo, 2019, p. 111). In parts of Spain – namely the Canary Islands, Asturias and Galicia – the PPC/PI opposition occurs in the way I have described for the Hispanic American macro-variety (Berschin, 1976, p. 35; Butt; Benjamin, 2004, p. 226-227, 229; Harris, 1982, p. 53; Lapesa, 1981, p. 589). In Madrid, on the other hand, the semantic scope of PPC is supplanting that of PI, as PPC can be deployed to refer to actions that, for instance, happened yesterday – as in “*Ayer he visto a Juan*” [literally, Yesterday I have seen Juan] (Berschin, 1976, p. 35; Butt; Benjamin, 2004, p. 226; Howe; Schwenter, 2003, p. 64-65). Moreover, the PPC/PI contrast manifests in some Hispanic American regions as per the manner in which it occurs in the Peninsular variety, namely in coastal areas of Peru, Andean regions of Bolivia and Colombia as well as in northwestern Argentina (Aleza Izquierdo; Enguita Utrilla, 2010, p. 150; De La Torre García, 2005, p. 300; Duarte; Coan; Pontes, 2016, p. 97-98; Howe; Schwenter, 2003, p. 6). In spite of this level of variation, which certainly shows that PPC is used in Hispanic America, PI appears to be the dominant tense to convey past meaning (Duarte; Coan; Pontes, 2016, p. 97-98).

In my prior investigation – and as highlighted by scholars (Harris, 1982, P. 54-55; Seco, 1998, p. 357) – I acknowledged that the choice for either PPC and PI may also be dependent on each speaker’s own perceptions and decisions (Hernández Cubo, 2019, p. 110). Therefore, studying how the PPC/PI contrast is presented by L2 Spanish materials also allows us to analyse whether textbooks used in language instruction promote the learners’ agency in making subjective decisions.

Considering the above, it seems that it is not possible to establish well-demarcated boundaries to delineate the semantic and pragmatic spectra of PPC and PI in Spanish. Whether this vagueness was conveyed by L2 Spanish materials produced in Spain was a key objective underpinning my prior analysis of the subject matter (Hernández Cubo, 2019). In this previous examination, I concluded that variation was generally not acknowledged by the 114 works under research, for only 25.43% of the textbooks mentioned dialectal diversity within the PPC/PI opposition and barely 2.63% referred to the speaker’s (and therefore the learner’s) subjectivity to choose which tense to deploy. 96.49% of the textbooks under examination presented the uses of PPC and PI as per the way they manifest in the Peninsular variety, which allowed me to conclude that textbook authors from Spain obviously choose their own dialect as the reference to present this linguistic aspect.

In that study, I also split the corpus in two in order to examine how dialectal recognition of the PPC/PI contrast occurred before and after 2007, given that it was from this year that textbooks began to acknowledge the framework provided by the PCIC. I found this distinction relevant after analysing the presentation of the uses of PPC and PI in this document, for I concluded that the PCIC followed a standard language ideology that conceived the Peninsular uses as the default ones which should be presented when introducing these tenses at the early stages of the learning process (Instituto Cervantes, 2006a, p. 130-131). Conversely, the Hispanic American uses were suggested to be introduced later (when reaching a C1 level of the language) (Instituto Cervantes, 2006b, p. 78). The findings demonstrated an eclectic approach on the part of textbook authors following the PCIC guidelines. Out of the 17 textbooks designed according to the PCIC, six of them recognised dialectal diversity when presenting the PPC/PI contrast, showing a certain level of agency to deviate from the guidelines of the PCIC. The pre- and post-2007 distinction also allowed me to analyse how the acknowledgement of dialectal variation had evolved over time. Among the materials published before 2007, 22.22% recognised dialectal diversity within the PPC/PI contrast, whereas this percentage rose to 29.41% in the post-2007 corpus, which demonstrates that dialectal awareness is timidly but progressively growing among L2 Spanish textbook authors from Spain.

2 Aim of the study

This investigation complements my previous analysis (Hernández Cubo, 2019) and addresses one of its main limitations. Both my prior study and others alike (Barbieri Durão; Góes De Andrade, 2004; De La Torre García, 2005; García Fernández, 2010; Grande Alija, 2000; López García, 2010; Sánchez Avendaño, 2004) focus on how L2 Spanish textbooks deal with dialectal diversity by examining materials produced only in one country. If geographical variation constitutes a key aspect of these studies, it should also be incorporated as a variable present in the choice of materials under study. Analysing how textbooks published in different world regions address dialectal diversity may offer enlightening information on which ones present more significant levels of dialectal sensitivity towards the treatment of language variation. Hence, I propose a cross-regional comparison of the data and – in order to establish a comparative analysis – I suggest that a model applied to study the materials from one specific country be replicated to examine those published in others. Therefore, this investigation studies the way in which L2 Spanish materials produced outside Spain present dialectal diversity in the uses of PPC and PI and it investigates the subject matter by applying the same methodology used in my study on L2 Spanish textbooks published in Spain (Hernández Cubo, 2019). The novelty of my study resides in proposing an analysis of a multi-regional corpus in order to draw cross-regional conclusions on how regional diversity is reflected by materials from different areas of the world.

3 Methodology

The materials under research have been analysed through an Excel data base according to parameters such as whether a given textbook follows the PCIC or the CEFR, which dialect the textbook chooses to introduce the opposition between PPC and PI, whether other regional varieties are identified, or whether the speaker's subjectivity is promoted.

This study answers the same research questions raised in my prior investigation on L2 Spanish textbooks from Spain (Hernández Cubo, 2019, p. 113), and it examines how these can be addressed when the corpus under research consists of works published outside this country. The research questions are therefore the following:

- a. To what extent and how is dialectal variation acknowledged by L2 Spanish materials published outside Spain when presenting the semantic contrast between PPC and PI?
- b. Which variety is chosen as the reference to introduce the uses of PPC and PI?
- c. Is the subjectivity of the speaker (and by extension that of the learner) presented as a possible factor in making choices regarding when to use PPC or PI?
- d. Do the guidelines of the PCIC influence the decisions taken by textbook authors with regard to the recognition of regional variation in the uses of PPC and PI?

The corpus of materials under research excludes works designed for the study of L1 Spanish and focuses on textbooks produced in Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, the UK and the USA. I examined a total of 217 books published between 1946 and 2021; yet, for the purpose of data analysis – and as I did in my previous study – I considered volumes of the same work as one single item and therefore reduced the total number of works to 192.

As investigating regional differences in the treatment of language variation is the goal of this study, I have divided the corpus in three regional partitions. Considering that the two macro-geopolitical varieties in which the semantic properties of PPC and PI differ are the Peninsular and the Hispanic American dialects – and that I have already analysed materials produced in Spain (Hernández Cubo, 2019) –, I will firstly distinguish a Hispanic American section in which I will report the findings of my examination of textbooks published in Argentina and Mexico. Secondly, I will conduct a study of the research questions applied to textbooks published in non-Spanish speaking countries (*i.e.* Brazil, France, Germany, Italy and the UK). This enables an evaluation of how countries external to the Spanish-speaking sphere perceive the Spanish language and if the nature of latent standard language ideologies sustaining such perceptions differs from those potentially present in the works written in Spanish-speaking countries. I address the case of the USA in a separate section, given the particular nature of this country regarding its relation to the Spanish

language. With one of the largest Spanish-speaking populations in the world and having a powerful industry of L2 Spanish materials, it seems appropriate to create a specific section to study the case of the USA.²

Following the procedure to report the data of my previous study, I will outline simple percentage comparisons of the following nominal variables in each of the three regional partitions:

- The Peninsular variety is used to present the PPC/PI contrast
- The Hispanic American variety is used to present the PPC/PI contrast
- Dialectal variation in the uses of PPC and PI is acknowledged
- The speaker's subjectivity vis-à-vis the semantic scopes of PPC and PI is acknowledged

In the materials from non-Spanish-speaking countries, I will also report whether they establish comparisons with the uses of past tenses in their national languages, given that this has been observed as a relatively common trait in some books. Further to this quantitative analysis, I will also provide qualitative evaluations of aspects relevant to the investigation and will highlight remarks made by the textbooks which I find pertinent to point out.

4 Analysis of textbooks published in Hispanic America

The first observation to make about L2 Spanish textbooks published in Hispanic America is related to their limited number and accessibility in contrast with the abundant availability of materials from countries such as Spain and the USA, both in and outside their borders. This could be testimony to the magnitude of the L2 Spanish industries of these two countries by comparison with those in Hispanic America. This difference in the range and power of L2 Spanish industries has been addressed in relation to the teaching of Spanish in Brazil. Del Valle and Villa (2006, p. 375) highlighted the rapid spread of L2 Spanish teaching policies from Spain in Brazil as opposed to the less powerful influence of Brazil's Spanish-speaking neighbouring countries. Bugel and Santos (2010, p. 145-148) draw a parallel between Spain's economic interests in Brazil and the boom of its L2 Spanish industry in this country. They also point at the geopolitical fragility of other Latin American countries as a factor that may prevent some of them from developing stronger L2 Spanish industries (Bugel; Santos, 2010, p. 150). Even some textbooks mention this circumstance. In 2004, the prologue of *Aula Latina* highlighted the scarcity of L2 Spanish materials in Mexico and the need to address this issue³ (Arévalo; Bautista; Corpas; García *et al.*, 2004, p. 4). The publication of the textbooks analysed

² Not only would the high number of Spanish speakers in the USA allow for this country to be included as part of Hispanic America, but also the fact that the presence of Spanish speakers predates that of English speakers in many areas which are part of the USA nowadays. Nonetheless, given that Spanish is not the majority language in the USA and because its abundant production of L2 Spanish materials greatly surpasses that of any other country in the region, this country has been allocated a specific section.

³ *Aula Latina* is a work which adapts the Peninsular version of the Aula textbook to the Hispanic American variety. As this adaptation was published in Spain by the same publishing company (Difusión), I analysed it in my previous article on materials produced in Spain (Hernández Cubo, 2019).

in this section demonstrates that this scarcity has been addressed and the Hispanic American publishing industry of L2 Spanish textbooks is becoming a reality, although there is still a gap when compared with the magnitude and influence of that of Spain and the USA.

4.1 Quantitative evaluation

Thirteen books published in Hispanic America were located and examined. As some of them constituted different levels of the same works, the corpus was reduced to a total of nine items for the analysis: six from Mexico and three from Argentina.

Table 1 – Outline of the questions under study in the corpus of works published in Hispanic America

Items in the corpus	Argentina	Mexico
	3	6
The Peninsular variety is used to present the PPC/PI contrast	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
The Hispanic American variety is used to present the PPC/PI contrast	3 (100%)	6 (100%)
Dialectal variation in the uses of PPC and PI is acknowledged	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
The speaker's subjectivity vis-à-vis the semantic scopes of PPC and PI is acknowledged	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The six Mexican materials were published between 2004 and 2014. All of them present the uses of the past tenses following the Mexican variety. They do not acknowledge the Peninsular contrast between PPC and PI nor dialectal variations of these tenses in other parts of Hispanic America. Verb paradigms do not include the form for *vosotros*, used only by Peninsular speakers. Three of these textbooks follow the CEFR and there is no explicit mention to the PCIC in any of the materials.

Three Argentinian materials published between 2003 and 2007 were analysed: *¡Che! Buenos Aires*, *Voces del Sur* and *Aula del Sur*, the latter being an adaptation of the textbook from Spain *Aula* to the Rioplatense variety.⁴ *¡Che! Buenos Aires* and *Voces del Sur* present the Hispanic American uses of past tense, to the extent that, regarding the two tenses under study, they focus entirely on PI and seem to neglect PPC. Verb paradigms include both the form for *vos* (distinctive of the Rioplatense dialect) and *tú* (used by the rest of Spanish speakers). Whereas *Voces del Sur* excludes the Peninsular form for *vosotros*, *¡Che! Buenos Aires* has a less stable criterion to address this, as it presents it in some verb paradigms and omits it in others (and although it clarifies that it is not used in Argentina, it does not state that it is exclusively used in Spain).

⁴ As *Aula del Sur* is published in Buenos Aires, I have included it among the materials published in Hispanic America, as opposed to the version of *Aula Latina*, which – as explained in footnote 3 – was published in Spain.

4.2 Qualitative remarks

The prologue of *Voces del Sur* deserves further attention. Unlike the prefaces of other L2 Spanish textbooks, which usually introduce their structure or their pedagogic approach, the authors of this material put forward a reflection on standard language ideology. Firstly, they state that the variety chosen as the reference for their work is the one spoken in Argentina and recognise the effort to incorporate features of other Hispanic American varieties (Autieri; Gassó; Malamud; Mosconi *et al.*, 2007, p. 3). Nevertheless, the diverse uses of PPC in Hispanic America are not reflected by this work. Given that PPC is used in northwest Argentina in similar ways as it is in the Peninsular variety (Howe; Schwenner, 2003, p. 61), it could be argued that the dialect of the capital is favoured as opposed to that of peripheral regions of Argentina, an approach which can also be considered as hegemonic.

The fact that a specific dialect is explicitly chosen as the variety of the textbook is regarded as an inevitable first step to address the question of dialectal diversity, because the so-called “neutral Spanish” is regarded as non-existent: “En *Voces del Sur* encontrará solamente formas del español hablado actualmente. No se inventaron diálogos o ejemplos en busca de un español neutro inexistente. Aquí se encuentran los modos de hablar de gente concreta, que en este ‘aquí y ahora’ suelen ser argentinos del Río de la Plata”⁵ (Autieri; Gassó; Malamud; Mosconi *et al.*, 2007, p. 3, emphasis in the original). This justification supports the desire to present a language which is actually used, rather than an artificial construct. Students of *Voces del Sur* learn the language spoken “here and now”, a perspective which keeps being developed by the authors as follows:

La decisión de presentar un español realmente existente tiene una base teórica según la cual el acceso a la lengua no puede darse sin la apropiación de los usos sociales de la misma. En otras palabras, los usos son usos situados, es decir, tienen lugar en cierto espacio y tiempo y son obra de determinados grupos sociales y culturales. Desde esta perspectiva, el hablante (o candidato a serlo) siempre tiene que adaptar los recursos de los que dispone a los usos sociales de la comunidad de habla en la que quiere participar.⁶ (Autieri; Gassó; Malamud; Mosconi *et al.*, 2007, p. 3)

Instead of attempting to choose a pan-Hispanic variety to target a wider market, *Voces del Sur* advises their learners that a language cannot be learnt as an abstract entity unattached to any specific regional or temporal contexts and that speakers should adapt their linguistic resources in order to interact with the members of a particular language community, a stance also suggested by Flórez Márquez (2000, p. 313). This attempt to raise awareness among learners about their agency to deal with variation avoids presenting dialectal diversity as something problematic. Nonetheless, despite a prologue sensitive to language variation, *Voces del Sur* lacks the explanations related to regional diversity present in other materials when introducing certain content.

⁵ In *Voces del Sur* you will only find forms of the Spanish spoken at present. No dialogues or examples were made up in search of a non-existent neutral Spanish. Here you will find the ways in which specific people speak, who in this “here and now” are Argentinians from Rio de la Plata.

⁶ The decision to present a Spanish which actually exists has a theoretical basis, according to which accessing the language cannot occur without acquiring its social uses as well. In other words, uses are situated, *i.e.* they take place in a certain space and time and are the product of specific social and cultural groups. From this perspective, the speaker (or the speaker-to-be) always has to adapt the available resources to the social uses of the linguistic community in which s/he wants to take part.

As an adaptation of the Spanish textbook *Aula*, *Aula del Sur* follows the guidelines of the CEFR and adapts the content of the Peninsular version to the Rioplatense variety. As opposed to *Voces del Sur* (published by the same company), *Aula del Sur* addresses the forms and uses of PPC and actually presents this tense before PI, an uncommon option among the materials which follow a Hispanic American variety. It could be argued that this is influenced by the original textbook from Spain on which it is based, where PPC appears before PI.

The authors of the Rioplatense adaptation have reflected on this adjustment process. When designing the textbook, Tonnelier and Kosel (2009, p. 4) admit that they were tempted to eliminate the unit on PPC, carried away by some sort of “inertia” present among L2 Spanish specialists, who unanimously seem to agree that this tense is not used in Hispanic America. However, before making such decision, they decided to listen to people on the streets as well as the media and, by doing this, came to realise that, although PI is more commonly used, PPC is not absent in the spoken language and is also present in the written registers (Tonnelier; Kosel, 2009, p. 4). The occurrence of this tense in the northern and western dialects of Argentina is furthermore widely recognised (Tonnelier; Kosel, 2009, p. 4). Therefore, the authors decided to keep the unit on PPC and adapt it to the Rioplatense variety, thus eliminating the Peninsular uses present in the original version of *Aula* (Tonnelier; Kosel, 2009, p. 5).

The authors’ comments provide an insight on the importance of reflection when making pedagogic decisions. The inertia to which Tonnelier and Kosel refer can lead textbook authors and teachers to perpetuate traditional habits if these are not contested. Instead, the authors of *Aula del Sur* suggest that reflection, questioning and attention to real-life language are necessary for making pedagogic decisions in a sensitive manner.

While it seems that peripheral dialects of Argentina were taken into account when making decisions about the inclusion of PPC in the textbook, in the end it is in fact the variety from Buenos Aires which was chosen as the reference “due to space reasons and in order not to confuse students”⁷ (Tonnelier; Kosel, 2009, p. 3). It is inevitable to seek some uniformity for pedagogic purposes and this has traditionally involved choosing the variety spoken by the region holding the geopolitical power of the linguistic community (Buenos Aires in this case), but other varieties seem to have played a role in the composition of *Aula del Sur*, which makes it – at least theoretically – a dialectally sensitive work. Notwithstanding, the expression of regional variation in the occurrence of PPC within several Argentinian areas is not explicitly mentioned.

To summarise, the materials published in Hispanic America follow their local Hispanic American varieties and do not acknowledge the Peninsular dialect. There is no mention of the PCIC, but the latest textbooks follow the level structure of the CEFR. The authors of *Voces del Sur* and *Aula del Sur* reflect on the importance of being aware of language variation, although these reflections do not appear to be addressed within the explanations of the grammatical contents.

⁷ In the original: “por cuestiones de espacio y por no desconcertar al estudiante” (Tonnelier; Kosel, 2009, p.3).

5 Analysis of textbooks published in non-Spanish-speaking countries

Besides the textbooks from the USA – analysed in a different section –, the corpus of works from non-Spanish speaking countries comprises materials from Brazil, France, Germany, Italy and the UK, published between 1959 and 2011.

5.1 Quantitative evaluation

The table below summarises my examination of these textbooks:

Table 2 – Outline of the questions under study in the corpus of works published in non-Spanish-speaking countries

	Brazil	France	Germany	Italy	UK
Items in the corpus	14	13	32	14	32
The Peninsular variety is used to present the PPC/PI contrast	11 (78.57%)	6 (46.15%)	28 (87.50%)	14 (100%)	11 (34.37%)
The Hispanic American variety is used to present the PPC/PI contrast	3 (21.42%)	7 (53.84%)	4 (12.50%)	0 (0%)	21 (65.62%)
Analogies with the national language of the country are established to present the uses of PPC and PI	2 (14.28%)	9 (69.23%)	0 (0%)	4 (28.57%)	20 (62.50%)
Dialectal variation in the uses of PPC and PI is acknowledged	6 (42.85%)	3 (23.07%)	9 (28.12%)	3 (21.42%)	15 (46.87%)
The speaker's subjectivity vis-à-vis the semantic scopes of PPC and PI is acknowledged	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (9.37%)	1 (7.14%)	1 (3.12%)

Among the four European countries, the majority of the textbooks in two of them (France and the UK) favours the presentation of Hispanic American uses of PPC and PI, whereas the ones in the other two (Germany and Italy) prefer to choose the Peninsular variety. This suggests that geographical proximity to a specific variety does not necessarily involve the choice of that dialect as the reference to present the target language. This is also the case with the Brazilian textbooks; 11 out of 14 (78.57%) present the Peninsular contrast between PPC and PI, despite Brazil's proximity to the Hispanic American varieties of Spanish. As highlighted before, the influence and prestige of Peninsular Spanish in Brazil has already been attested by prior research (Bugel; Santos, 2010; Del Valle; Villa, 2006).

The high proportion (20 out of 32) of UK textbooks presenting the Hispanic American uses of PPC and PI may be an effect of the pedagogic approach taken by many of these works, as they introduce these tenses by comparing them with their English equivalents. They may provide English translations of the examples to illustrate their semantic properties (thus implicitly equating PPC with the English present perfect and PI with the English simple past) or may explicitly state this equivalence.

Similarly, resorting to the learners' first languages in order to introduce the contrast between PPC and PI appears at different levels in the textbooks from other countries. The French, Italian, Portuguese and German languages have compound and simple past tenses, yet their uses are not analogous to the ones in Spanish (Schaden, 2009; Schmitt, 2001). Interestingly, whereas 9 out of 13 (69.23%) of the French textbooks establish some sort of comparison with the French *passé composé* and *passé simple*, none of the works in the German corpus delves into the analogy with the German *Perfekt* and *Präteritum*.

The textbooks from the UK and Brazil are the ones which more frequently acknowledge regional diversity in the uses of PPC and PI, with those from France, Germany and Italy presenting similar ratios to the ones I found in textbooks published in Spain (Hernández Cubo, 2019, p. 117). The importance of the speaker's subjectivity to choose one or other tense is rarely addressed.

The CEFR is recognised by textbooks from France, Germany and Italy. This acknowledgement starts in 2003 and becomes more frequent with later publications. None of the textbooks from the UK mentions the CEFR. The contents of these materials are therefore sequenced either according to the authors' criteria or by attending to the guidelines of British curricula such as the required at GCSE or A level courses. Nonetheless, there is an implicit acknowledgement of the CEFR in the UK corpus, as one of its textbooks, *Así Me Gusta*, recognises the PCIC. Among the materials from non-Spanish-speaking countries, only this work and one from Brazil, *Español Ahora*, take the criteria of the PCIC into account. In both cases, regional variation of the uses of PPC and PI is addressed. The authors of the Brazilian work state that the recommendations of the PCIC, along with the *Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais* – the official curricula of the Brazilian Ministry of Education – have encouraged them to address dialectal diversity (Briones; Flaviano; Fernández, 2004, p. 4).

5.2 Qualitative remarks

Several textbooks provide detailed explanations on the uses of PPC and PI. Some consider this contrast clear and easy to learn, such as the German textbook *Español Actual: Lehrbuch 1*, which states that there is a clear difference between PPC and PI (Peleteiro Rueda, 2004, p. 167). The UK work *Practice in Spanish Grammar* shares the same unequivocal view on the contrast between PPC and PI, as affirmed by its statement "You should have no difficulty in deciding when to use the Present Perfect" (Cholij, 1996, p. 80). This approach might ease the potential student's anxiety towards the ambivalent meaning of PPC, but it does not reflect the actual lack of homogenous use across the Spanish-speaking world.

Other materials prefer to recognise this semantic instability. The German textbook *Eurolingua Español 1B* regards the PPC/PI contraposition as "not always unequivocal"⁸ (Malinowski; Pellicer Palacín; Finster, 1999, p. 49). The solution adopted by this work to address this unsteadiness consists of presenting

⁸ In the original: "nicht immer eindeutig" (Malinowski; Pellicer Palacín; Finster, 1999, p. 49).

two options: firstly, the learners must be aware that at times the use of either tense is possible; secondly, they should take into account that the speaker's subjective view on the closeness of the past event might influence the choice of tenses (Malinowski; Pellicer Palacín; Finster, 1999, p. 49). This perspective gives the student less straightforward ways to decide which tense to utilise and responds more genuinely to the never unambiguous nature of the second language learning process.

The type of recognition conveyed by those works which acknowledge regional variation in the PPC/PI contrast is similar to the one presented by textbooks from other regions, *i.e.* the Peninsular and Hispanic American varieties are the two macro-dialects regarded as the reference to establish the dichotomy. If more specific details are provided, it is generally to mention the regions in Spain which do not follow the Peninsular variety, as it happens in the German works *Spanische Grammatik*, *Español Actual: Lehrbuch 1*, *OKiDOKi: Die Lernhilfe* or in the British textbook *Camino al Español*. Some textbooks specify dialectal characteristics of certain regions within Hispanic America. The Brazilian work *Espanhol: Gramática Prática* mentions that PPC is used in Buenos Aires only in written or formal registers (Valmaseda Regueiro; Aparicio Burgos, 1998, p. 170); the Italian *Gramática Práctica del Español* highlights that Argentina, Chile and Uruguay are the main Hispanic American regions where PI is widely spread (Fernández Loya; Jetti; Manganaro; Mendo, 2005, p. 168); and in the British *Modern Spanish Grammar* Kattán-Ibarra and Pountain (2003) address the specific uses of these tenses in Bolivia and Peru (p. 415) as well as in Madrid (p. 418).

The Italian study of Spanish verbs *Spagnolo: Verbi* provides students with an explanation which satisfactorily addresses the frequently oversimplified difference between PPC and PI. According to this work, in order to understand the choice for one or the other tense, students must bear in mind “psychological factors”⁹, which determine to which extent the speaker perceives the past event connected with the present, and “regional factors”¹⁰, as PI is favoured in Hispanic America and northern regions of Spain and PPC is preferred in Madrid (Santos López, 2004, p. 48). This pedagogic approach acknowledges the two factors which determine variation within the semantic scope of PPC and PI (Harris, 1982, p. 53-55). *Spagnolo: Verbi* also highlights “factors related to sector-specific language”¹¹, for according to this work PPC is preferred in the language of journalism to connect the news with the present time (Santos López, 2004, p. 48). This claim is not supported by research, nor is it made in any of the other works in the sample. Research exists that actually demonstrates the opposite: a preference for PI in the media (Francescutti, 2009, p. 248-249; Hurtado González, 1998, p. 59-60).

The prologues in a few textbooks contain some interesting reflections about standard language ideology and regional variation as well as their pedagogic implications. The Brazilian textbook *¡Arriba!* states its intention to address the regional diversity of the Spanish language; yet, for pedagogic purposes, this linguistic variation is introduced at more advanced levels in order to ensure that students at beginners' stages solidly acquire the “standard language” (Rinaldi; Vasques Callegari, 2005, p. 3). The allusion to the concept of “standard” implies a choice from the authors of the semantic scope of this notion, which they define as “a linguistic variety which can be understood in most Spanish-speaking countries”¹² (Rinaldi; Vasques

⁹ In the original: “fattori psicologici” (Santos López, 2004, p. 48).

¹⁰ In the original: “fattori regionali” (Santos López, 2004, p. 48).

¹¹ In the original: “fattori legati ai linguaggi settoriali” (Santos López, 2004, p. 48).

¹² In the original: “una variante lingüística que pueda ser comprendida en la mayoría de los países hispanohablantes” (Rinaldi; Vasques Callegari, 2005, p. 3).

Callegari, 2005, p. 3). This definition does not seem to favour any dialect, but a pan-Hispanic version of the language. Given this statement, it is interesting to examine how the uses of PPC and PI are addressed in this work. *¡Arriba! 2*, the second level of this textbook, presents the uses of PPC and PI by means of its Peninsular occurrence (Rinaldi; Vasques Callegari, 2005, p. 91). No regional variation is acknowledged, a decision which abides by the pedagogic methodology initially stated in the prologue. However, at the same time the authors are identifying the Peninsular variety with the pan-Hispanic uses of PPC and PI, a position which could be seen as a consequence of a standard language ideology which favours the dialect from Spain as the model. In general, the presentation of the contrast of these two tenses through their uses in the Peninsular dialect is the majority stance observed in Brazilian textbooks (11 out of 14).

The British textbook *Eso Es 2* recommends that students at a beginners' level adopt one particular view of the PPC/PI contrast; however, this suggestion is opposite to the one proposed by *¡Arriba! 2*, inasmuch as it advises learners to avoid the Peninsular uses (Hakanson; Masoliver; Beeck; Rouve, 1977, p. 77). Considering that this textbook resorts to analogies with the English language, the choice of avoiding the Peninsular spectrum of PPC is consistent with this approach (as this aligns with the way that the Hispanic American usage of PPC is similar to the one of the English present perfect).

The examples of *Eso Es 2* and *¡Arriba! 2* suggest that the teaching methodologies embraced by a textbook or the inertia that causes authors to present certain concepts as they have traditionally been presented in certain regions may influence the way regional variation is addressed, even if there has been an explicit statement of intentions to take account of them.

While most textbooks do not explicitly mention that they have chosen one or another variety as their reference, there are, nevertheless, some exceptions. One example is the Italian textbook *¡A Mí Me Gusta! 1*, which states its choice of the Peninsular variety as the model as well as its intention to later introduce some Hispanic American features in the second level (Jiménez; Fernández, 2006, p. v). The second volume of this textbook, however, does not revisit the past tenses introduced in the first part, which means that students using this work will only be exposed to the Peninsular contrast of PPC and PI.

The reflection made by the author of the British work *¡En Marcha!* is even more interesting. García Del Río (2005, p. 2) affirms that she is from Spain and that her linguistic origin is going to affect the Spanish used in her work. Nevertheless, she also claims that she is going to attend to the Hispanic American varieties in order to reflect the diversity within the Spanish-speaking world: "The Spanish of Spain is no better or worse than that of Mexico, Chile, Guatemala or Cuba, for example. Spaniards, Mexicans, Chileans understand one another and the learner will be able to understand and be understood by all Spanish speakers, regardless of where they come from." (García Del Río, 2005, p. 2). This perspective is coherent with the allusion to regional variation within the uses of PPC and PI presented by *¡En Marcha!*. Even though other L2 Spanish textbook authors do not explicitly provide such reflection, perhaps it can be stated that many of those who also acknowledge dialectal variation probably have an attitude to standard language ideology similar to the one conveyed by García del Río, *i.e.* they inevitably resort to their own variety in order to construct the linguistic input of their works, while they are aware that this dialect is neither better nor worse than others and that some degree of diversity should be acknowledged. The authors' knowledge, their sensitivity and awareness are likely to be paramount in the recognition of regional variation in L2 Spanish materials. The remarks in *¡En Marcha!* highlight what probably should be the goal of second language instruction: to provide the learners not just with the tools to communicate in one or other variety, but with strategies which make them competent enough to adapt to any linguistic context of the target language (Flórez Márquez, 2000, p. 313).

6 Analysis of textbooks published in the USA

The large Spanish-speaking community in the USA makes the teaching and learning of Spanish an important activity in this country. As a result, the US publishing industry of L2 Spanish materials is notably large, a likely reason why 86 textbooks from the USA were easily accessible for inclusion in this study.

6.1 Quantitative evaluation

After merging multi-volume books into one work, the sample size of US materials for my analysis consists of 78 items published between 1946 and 2021. The table below shows how these textbooks recognise dialectal variation in the uses of PPC and PI:

Table 3 – Outline of the questions under study in the corpus of works published in the USA

Items in the corpus	78
The Peninsular variety is used to present the PPC/PI contrast	5 (6.41%)
The Hispanic American variety is used to present the PPC/PI contrast	73 (93.58%)
Textbooks establish analogies with english to present the uses of ppc and pi	75 (96.15%)
Dialectal variation in the uses of PPC and PI is acknowledged	12 (15.38%)
The speaker's subjectivity vis-à-vis the semantic scopes of PPC and PI is acknowledged	6 (7.69%)

The presentation of the Hispanic American uses of the tenses under study is clearly predominant in the US textbooks, as it is the approach adopted by 73 of them (93.58%). Only 12 of the 78 works (15.38%) recognise regional variation and six (7.69%) stress the relevance of the speaker's subjective perspective on how connected with the present an event related in PPC is. *Spanish for Oral and Written Review* is an example of this: "When deciding whether to use the preterite or the perfect construction, everything depends on how close to the present the completed action is perceived or sensed to be" (Iglesias; Meiden, 1995, p. 175). The six textbooks which address this question were published in 1984, 1995, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2012. This chronological distribution does not show a prominent increment in the consideration of this factor as one regarded by textbooks as pertinent enough to explain the PPC/PI opposition.

The cross-linguistic comparison between English and Spanish seems to be a preferred methodology in textbooks published in English-speaking countries, as my analysis of the British corpus had shown, although this appears to be more clearly prevalent in works from the USA.

None of the materials refer to the PCIC or the CEFR. Given that British textbooks do not recognise these either, it seems that L2 Spanish teaching and learning in the English-speaking world does not observe the guidelines of these frameworks. The way of sequencing the contents in US textbooks follows its own patterns (*e.g.* the criteria of the authors, publishing companies, curriculum developers, etc.). In many cases, these works seem to abide by similar sequencing structures, which makes the notion of a “US university standard”, to which Leeman and Martínez (2007, p. 54) refer, a plausible factor for explaining a certain degree of uniformity, considering that most of the textbooks accessed were designed for tertiary education.

Regarding the two tenses being examined, PI is usually the first past tense presented, whereas PPC is often backgrounded and explained after the rest of simple tenses of the indicative – and even the subjunctive – mood have been introduced. This may give learners the impression that PPC is not considered to be as relevant as PI, probably as a consequence of its lower occurrence in the Hispanic American varieties, the ones more relevant to the US context.

When analysing materials from Spain in my prior study, 2007 was chosen as the year to divide the corpus in two so as to examine the evolution of dialectal acknowledgement and as a way to reflect the influence of the PCIC, considering that this was the year when textbooks began to abide by this framework (Hernández Cubo, 2019). As mentioned above, US textbooks do not follow the guidelines of the PCIC nor the CEFR, so splitting the sample at the year 2007 may be seen as an arbitrary decision. Nonetheless, I have considered it interesting to establish the same partition used to examine the materials from Spain in order to evaluate how the level of dialectal recognition has evolved in US textbooks over the last years, considering that these two are the main producers of L2 Spanish materials and therefore this division allows for a comparison.¹³

The table below outlines the evolution of the nominal features in the US textbooks after dividing the sample in two:

Table 4 – Pre- and post-2007 partition of the US corpus

Items in the corpus	Materials published before 2007	Materials published in and after 2007
	53	25
The Peninsular variety is used to present the PPC/PI contrast	4 (7.54%)	1 (1.28%)
The Hispanic American variety is used to present the PPC/PI contrast	49 (92.45%)	24 (96%)
Textbooks establish analogies with English to present the uses of PPC and PI	51 (96.22%)	24 (96%)
Dialectal variation in the uses of PPC and PI is acknowledged	3 (5.66%)	9 (36%)
The speaker's subjectivity vis-à-vis the semantic scopes of PPC and PI is acknowledged	4 (7.54%)	2 (8%)

¹³ The approach to divide the corpus in two has not been applied to textbooks published in other regions because their sample sizes are comparatively much smaller and, as stated above, I considered it interesting to establish this comparison mainly between the two most important producers of L2 Spanish materials.

The data suggest a change in the tendency to recognise dialectal diversity in recent years. Among the 53 textbooks published between 1946 and 2006, only three (5.66%) mention dialectal differences in the contrast between PPC and PI; whereas in the sample of 25 materials published after 2007 this number rises to nine (36%). This correlates with an increase in the ratio of dialectal recognition in works from Spain: from 22.22% before 2007 to 29.41% after (Hernández Cubo, 2019, p. 118). While US textbooks hardly acknowledged dialectal diversity prior to 2007, the consolidation of this tendency is however manifesting slightly stronger when compared with the Spanish market. In both cases, the type of dialectal acknowledgement mostly makes reference to the dichotomy of Hispanic American versus Peninsular varieties, without delving into further explanations on the intrinsic linguistic diversity within these two regions.

6.2 Qualitative remarks

As the Hispanic American varieties are much more present in the USA than the Peninsular dialect, the uses of PPC and PI in Hispanic American Spanish are the ones which prevail in US textbooks, as the tables above show. Considering that the target learners of US textbooks are identified as English speakers, English is usually the language of instruction in these materials and the authors frequently resort to analogies between Spanish and English. For example, *Así Lo Veo* affirms the following: “The meaning and use of the present perfect in Spanish is similar to the meaning and use of the present perfect in English. For example, *he cambiado* translated into English means *I have changed*.” (Leeser; Vanpatten; Keating, 2011, p. 59, emphasis in the original). The authors of *Dos Mundos* point out that establishing this equivalence between both languages involves choosing the Hispanic American variety as the one to be presented, because the uses of PPC in this dialect are the ones which show similarities with the English present perfect (Terrell; Andrade; Egasse; Muñoz, 2010, p. 366).

From a pedagogic perspective, this cross-linguistic pedagogic approach may give a straightforward explanation to L2 Spanish learners with an English-speaking background in order to rapidly grasp how to use these tenses in Spanish, but from a dialectal point of view it is somehow reductionist, not just because the uses of PPC are not homogenous in the Spanish-speaking world, but also because the semantic and pragmatic scope of the present perfect in English is subject to regional variation too (Yao, 2014; Yao; Collins, 2012).

The analogy between English and Spanish is questioned by some works which do not acknowledge a clear parallel between both languages, such as *Motivos de Conversación*: “The present perfect does not always have an exact equivalent with the English present perfect. Sometimes it is used for the simple past” (Nicholas; Dominici; Neale-Silva, 1988, p. 204). Other materials question this equivalence by recognising regional variation or the speaker’s subjectivity as factors which can determine the tense to use.

Sol y Viento goes a step further in this cross-linguistic methodology, as it contrasts PPC and PI not only in English and Spanish, but also with reference to French and Italian (Vanpatten; Leeser; Keating, 2008, p. 205, 341). Regional variation between the Peninsular and Hispanic American uses of these tenses is addressed too. *Sol y Viento* mentions that “in Spain, the present perfect is often used as a substitute for the preterite” (Vanpatten; Leeser; Keating, 2008, p. 341). The wording of this sentence can be compared to that used by the PCIC when presenting the PPC/PI contrast in the description of the C1 level of the

CEFR, for this document presents PI as the tense which Hispanic Americans use “‘en lugar de’ [instead of] PPC” (Instituto Cervantes, 2006b, p. 78). In both cases, one variety is implicitly presented as the one which deviates from the reference, although, as opposed to the PCIC, *Sol y Viento* seemingly identifies the Peninsular dialect as the deviation.

Repase y Escriba also recognises the differences in the Hispanic American and Peninsular dialects. It is also the only textbook of the US corpus that makes reference to the broadening of the semantic scope of PPC in Madrid, where “the present perfect is used in cases where the preterite has traditionally been regarded as the correct form; for example: *El sábado pasado la hemos visto*¹⁴ instead of *El sábado pasado la vimos*¹⁵” (Canteli Dominicis, 2014, p. 8, emphasis in the original). The use of the word “correct” to describe the use of PI to refer to events which occurred last Saturday suggests that the linguistic phenomenon in Madrid is “incorrect”. Resorting to the dichotomy correct/incorrect to refer to dialectal differences may be seen as an effect of standard language ideology. In this case, the variety of Madrid seems to be the one characterised as inaccurate. On the other hand, this work also labels the PPC/PI contrast in Hispanic America as untraditional, entangling with this assumption what variety is considered to be the “traditional” one: “The opposite phenomenon also occurs in certain areas of Spain and in most of Spanish America: the preterite is frequently found in cases where the present perfect would be more usual according to traditional usage” (Canteli Dominicis, 2014, p. 8). Assigning to the Peninsular uses the value of “traditional” can also be regarded as effects of – perhaps unconscious – standard language ideologies.

It seems logical to assume that authors whose mother tongue is Spanish resort to their own varieties as their main linguistic reference to design their works. This is, however, not always the case. *¡Con Brío!* does not present the Peninsular uses of PPC, a feature which would not make it any different from many other US textbooks, yet the linguistic origin of one of its authors is Peninsular Spanish, as her biography on the textbook explains (Lucas Murillo; Dawson, 2008, p. vii). The reasons for the absence of this dialectal acknowledgement can be multiple. Has her own idiolect changed? Or do authors sometimes simply follow the inertia of the prior tradition established by the L2 Spanish materials published in their regions, as Tonnelier and Kosel (2009) suggest? Are these decisions consciously made or do they respond to ingrained assumptions? While it is beyond the scope of this study to provide answers to these questions, this reflection opens up interesting areas for further research.

7 Conclusion

This study has examined the manner in which L2 Spanish textbooks published outside Spain recognise dialectal diversity when presenting a language feature of Spanish utilised differently on both sides of the Atlantic: the PPC/PI opposition. It investigated if textbook authors also acknowledge the role of the speaker’s subjectivity to choose between these two tenses and how influenced they might be by documents such as the PCIC when addressing the contrast between PPC and PI. This research has followed the same methodological design as a prior investigation which examined L2 Spanish materials from Spain (Hernández

¹⁴ Last Saturday we have seen her.

¹⁵ Last Saturday we saw her.

Cubo, 2019) so as to establish comparisons between the findings in different world regions. The cross-regional nature of this comparison is especially relevant in an investigation that focuses on how regional diversity is reflected. Therefore, and drawing on the findings obtained in both studies, I will next outline the similarities and differences in the answers to the research questions depending on the geographical origins of the textbooks.

7.1 Varieties chosen as the reference

The findings in this study corroborate my previous conclusions regarding which variety is preferentially chosen by L2 Spanish textbook authors (Hernández Cubo, 2019, p. 124): that which is the most accessible to them (*i.e.* the local variety or the authors' own variety). If L2 Spanish textbooks produced in Spain are mainly based on the Peninsular dialect to present the PPC/PI opposition (Hernández Cubo, 2019, p. 119, 124), the ones published in Hispanic America reflect the Hispanic American variety. Given the predominance of the latter in the USA, it is likewise consistent that textbooks published in that country present the Hispanic American contrast between PPC and PI. Textbooks from Germany, Italy and Brazil preferentially select the Peninsular uses of PPC and PI, whereas works from France and the UK present the Hispanic American ones.

In the case of materials from the USA and the UK, it is not easy to clarify whether the prevalent pedagogic strategy to use the English language to establish analogies with Spanish has played a more decisive role than the conscious choice of a variety. Nonetheless, the research suggests that geographical proximity to Spain or Hispanic America does not necessarily involve a reflection of the uses in the geographically closest variety, as exemplified by the Brazilian and French textbooks. Likewise, the different occurrence of the simple and compound forms of past tenses in Portuguese and French has not prevented authors from choosing the Peninsular and Hispanic American varieties in Brazil and France respectively.

7.2 Recognition of dialectal variation

The Hispanic American textbooks examined do not address regional variation regarding the semantic spectra of PPC and PI. Although the authors of *Aula del Sur* designed this work bearing in mind dialectal variation of the PPC/PI contrast within Argentina (Tonnelier; Kosel, 2009, p. 4-5), this is not explicitly conveyed when these tenses are presented in this work.

In the case of the L2 Spanish materials published in non-Spanish-speaking countries, the dialectal awareness is relatively higher (over 40%) in textbooks from the UK and Brazil. The works from Germany, France and Italy present approximately similar levels of dialectal recognition to the ones from the USA. These levels also align with the ones present in materials from Spain, as per the findings of my previous study (Hernández Cubo, 2019, p. 117).

Those materials adding a brief note to acknowledge regional variation of the PPC/PI contrast recognise this variation at a macro-geopolitical level (*i.e.* by distinguishing the Peninsular and Hispanic American varieties). Most of the materials analysed do not tend to recognise, for example, the dialectal variation of the PPC/PI opposition in different Hispanic American regions.

7.3. Acknowledgement of the speaker's subjectivity

As with the textbooks published in Spain (Hernández Cubo, 2019, p. 117, 125), the recognition of the speaker's subjectivity as a factor to decide which past tense to use is very rare in the materials investigated in this study. This allows us to hypothesise that textbooks in general conceive languages as relatively enclosed systems regulated by rules and language teaching as the process by means of which these norms are presented and acquired. While rules are an important and inevitable component of language teaching, more emphasis should be put into promoting the learners' agency to make decisions when utilising their linguistic repertoires, especially given that native speakers enjoy a higher degree of agency.

7.4. The role of the *Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes*

As opposed to the works published in Spain, among which there is a noticeable tendency to follow the PCIC (Hernández Cubo, 2019, p. 117, 126), references to this document in the textbooks analysed in this study are absent (except for one work in the UK and another in Brazil). The reasons for this lack of acknowledgement are unclear and we can only speculate about why this is the case. Whether it is due to authors ignoring the existence of this work, or reflects a preference to abide by other or one's own curriculum plans, or is a conscious reaction to a document produced in the former metropole of the Spanish empire could be the focus of future research. Although there may not be explicit references to the PCIC, the textbooks that have been produced over the last years in most of the European and Hispanic American countries represented in this study increasingly follow the CEFR. Whether they use the mediation of the PCIC to approach the CEFR is unknown (or at least not explicitly mentioned). This does not allow us to draw any conclusions regarding the influence of the manner in which the PPC/PI contrast is presented in the PCIC and we can potentially attest that there is probably none.

7.5. Final remarks

The findings of this investigation align with the conclusions of my previous study (Hernández Cubo, 2019) and others alike (García Fernández, 2010; López García, 2010; Sánchez Avendaño, 2004) regarding how eclectic the recognition of dialectal variation in L2 Spanish materials is. The acknowledgement of regional diversity is not prioritised by most textbooks. In the case of the specific linguistic aspect that I have investigated in this and my prior study, materials published in Spain, the USA and some countries outside the Hispanic world are progressively addressing the dialectal diversity of the uses of PPC and PI. Further research should elucidate whether this tendency will keep manifesting in the future. Furthermore, whether and how Hispanic American textbooks, which appear to mostly focus on the local variety and neglect the Peninsular one, will acknowledge this variety are also questions for future research. Whether the Hispanic American industry of L2 Spanish materials will grow so as to compete with the Spanish and US markets is a further area worth of attention in the years to come.

Further investigation should attempt to examine potential explanations of the causes for the choices made by language textbook authors. Are the target learners, the tendencies in the country of publication, the publishing companies or the effects of the more dominant varieties in that particular context playing a decisive role? Aiming at providing possible answers to these questions could point at interesting research pathways. The reflections made by Tonnelier and Kosel (2009) suggest some possible reasons for the different attitudes towards dialectal recognition in textbooks. Tonnelier and Kosel (2009, p. 4) use the word “inercia” [inertia] to refer to the force under which L2 Spanish specialists are initially influenced to not implement changes which concern dialectal awareness. Reflection and observation are outlined as factors to counterbalance the initial inertia which could prevent authors from innovating (Tonnelier; Kosel, 2009, p. 4). Tonnelier and Kosel (2009, p. 5) also suggest encouraging agency of teachers so they can deal with the matter of regional variation depending on their contexts and the needs of their students. Conceiving the language teaching practice as being always intrinsically influenced by its context as well as by students’ needs and objectives is a principle which should permeate what happens in the classroom (Grande Alija, 2000, p. 396). Additionally, it should guide the selection of pertinent textbooks and the choices made by their authors. Both this and my previous study aim at raising awareness on the importance of showing sensitivity towards the recognition of dialectal variation in L2 Spanish instruction.

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