IMPERFECTO AND INDEFINIDO IN SPANISH: WHAT, WHERE AND HOW[*]

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ABSTRACT. This article aims to providing the reader with an overview of the main facts and analyses about the syntax and semantics of imperfecto and indefinido in Spanish. §1 presents the main views of the nature of tense in natural language; §2 introduces the main distinctions and classifications of tense in Spanish, from a descriptive perspective; §3 does the same with aspect. §4, the core of the article, reviews the facts and the analyses about the famous *imperfecto ~ indefinido* distinction in the Spanish temporoaspectual domain. §5 takes stock of the facts in Spanish, and outlines some conclusions.

Keywords: imperfecto; indefinido; aspect; tense; coreference; (im)perfectivity; narrative

RESUMEN. El objetivo de este artículo es proporcionar al lector una revisión de los contrastes empíricos y análisis principales sobre el contraste entre imperfecto e indefinido en español. §1 presenta, como trasfondo, los hechos más relevantes sobre el análisis del tiempo en el lenguaje natural; §2 se dedica a las clases de tiempo en español y al fenómeno de la consecutio temporum; §3 presenta el trasfondo relevante sobre el aspecto. La sección §4 es la central del artículo, y presenta los contrastes empíricos a los que dan lugar imperfecto e indefinido, junto con las tres teorías principales que los han analizado. §5 presenta conclusiones y problemas pendientes.

Palabras clave: imperfecto; indefinido; aspecto; tiempo; correferencia; (im)perfectividad; narrativa

1. The nature of temporoaspectual relations

This article discusses the empirical facts and analytic proposals about the contrasts produced by the tenses called *imperfecto* (also, pretérito imperfecto de indicativo: *cantaba*) and indefinido (also, pretérito perfecto simple, aoristo: *cantó*). We will see that there are three main approaches to this contrast: one based on a distinction between how each tense identifies the past temporal interval that they refer to (temporal view), one based on an external aspect distinction related to (im)perfectivity (aspectual view) and a textual one based on the contribution that each one of the forms does to a narrative (narrative view). For this reason, and even though this article is primarily interested on the analysis of this constraint, the first three sections are devoted to providing the reader with a general overview of the notions that lie behind those analyses,

such as the nature of tense, the role of tense in indirect speech contexts and the analysis of aspect in natural languages.

This first section introduces the basic notions and concepts used in the analysis of natural language tense.

1.1. The classic approach to temporal relations: tense as operator

The approach that was considered classic with respect to how tense morphology should be formalised in semantics is the one due to Prior (1957, 1967, 1969). His proposal is, in essence, that tense morphemes semantically correspond to operators whose role is to shift the time period in which the proposition has to be evaluated.

There are four tense operators in Prior's analysis; the first two have an existential force and are known as the weak tense operators; the last two are the strong tense operators, and have a universal force.

(1)   a. P: It has at some point be the case that...
         b. F: It will at some point be the case that...
         c. H: It has always been the case that...
         d. G: It will always be the case that...

Tense operators can combine with each other to produce more complex tense forms:

(2)   a. PP: It had been the case that...
         b. PF: It would be the case that...
         c. PFP: It would have been the case that...

Thus, in formal semantic terms, one has to assume the existence of a set of time periods (call that set I) whose members are totally ordered through relations of precedence (that is, where for all time periods i and i' that belong to I it is true that either i precedes i' or i' precedes i).

Assume then, as it is standardly done in formal semantics, that a predicate is indexed (among other notions) for a particular time whose value is one of the parameters used to define whether the event denoted by it is true or not (in order to simplify, we abstract away from the assignment function g to the individuals involved in the event and from the world index):

(3) $[[\text{cry}]]^t = \lambda x.x$ is crying at t

What Prior's tense operators do is to quantify over time periods and shift the value of that time period used to evaluate whether the event denoted by the verb takes place or not.

The past operator shifts from t to a t' that precedes t, essentially saying that the sentence is true provided that in a period previous to now it is true that there was an event of crying (involving some individual, etc.). In (4), ϕ stands for the proposition, and '$<$' is to be understood as the relation 'precedes'.

(4) $[[P\phi]]^t = \exists t'$ such that $t' < t$ & $[[\phi]]^{t'}$

Or, in prose, if someone utters a verb with a past morpheme in time t (now), it is meant that at a time t' before now, the proposition denoted by the sentence happened. (5) shows, for illustration, the denotation of the weak future operator:

(5) $[[P\phi]]^t = \exists t'$ such that $t < t'$ & $[[\phi]]^{t'}$

The treatment of tense as operators shifting the time of evaluation of the expressed proposition was extremely influential, and became known as Tense Logic (cf. Kamp 1968, Segerberg 1970, Hamblin 1971, Rescher & Urquhart 1971, Burgess 1979, van Benthem 1983, among others). Sound as the system is from the perspective of its internal consistency, however, relatively soon a problem was found that made researchers begin to question that Temporal Logic was an adequate framework to capture the semantics of tense in natural languages.

1.2. Problems with the approach
Partee (1973) used the sentence in (6) (Partee 1973: 602, ex. 3) to show that a view of tense as temporal operators would not capture the semantics of tense in natural language.

(6)   I didn't turn off the stove.

Assume, for the sake of the argument, that the past tense morpheme here is indeed a past operator P. One property of operators in syntax and semantics is that they have a scope, and interact in their scope with other operators in the same syntactic structure, creating ambiguities. In that sentence, there is a second element, negation, which is generally assumed to be an operator. Thus, we expect in principle two different scope relations.

(7)   a. (P (Neg (φ)))
        b. (Neg (P (φ)))

In (7a) negation is under the scope of Past: the sentence should mean 'It has at some point been the case that I did not turn off the stove'. This does not capture the meaning of (6) in natural language: in that reading, the sentence should be true if I turned off the stove at the relevant time period, just because there are plenty of temporal intervals previous to now where I was doing something that did not involve turning off the stove. If this was the semantics of a sentence in the past, I could utter (8) even when I just shot John simply because there is at least a previous time where I had not shot John.

(8)   I didn't shoot John.

But this is not the normal meaning intuition about (8), or (6).
(7b) shows the past tense under the scope of the negation. Then, the sentence would mean 'It has not been the case at any point that I turned off the stove'. But then (6) should be false if I have turned off the stove at least once in my life. I would be lying when I say (9) if at least once in my life I made lunch, but that is clearly not what we mean by that sentence.

(9)   I didn't make lunch.

Partee (1973) shows, then, that treating tense as an operator makes predictions that do not correspond to what the sentence means in natural language.

1.3. Tense as pronouns

Once the status of tenses as operators was put into doubt, several alternative views were proposed. The first one was advanced by Partee (1973) herself: treating tenses as referential objects, similar to pronouns, which make reference to (specific) particular times. In (6), the speaker does not intend to make a general statement about all previous past intervals, but rather he or she is speaking with a specific past time interval in mind.

To support this view, she starts by showing some parallelisms between tenses and pronouns. Some tenses seem to act like deictic expressions in that they refer to entities whose identity becomes clear once the context of utterance is known. The present tense, according to Partee (1973), is like a deictic pronoun *I* in that in a given context it always has one unambiguous referent, the speaker or the time interval including the moment when the sentence is uttered.

(10)   I am sick.

Past tenses are less unambiguous, like nonspecific deictics (Partee 1973: 603), and similar to pronouns like they in (11), where the referent of the pronoun is not generic and is not obtained anaphorically, but does not have the kind of unambiguous reference as the first person singular one.

(11)   They haven't installed my telephone yet.

In (11) the subject is interpreted as whoever, in the context, was expected to install the speaker's phone. Similarly, when producing a sentence in the past, the speaker generally has a particular time-period in mind, but its reference is not unambiguous: simplifying things a bit, the time interval is a relevant one for the context of utterance:

(12)   John went to a private school.

Pronouns can also be anaphoric when they pick an antecedent that has been explicitly introduced in the utterance, as in (13; Partee 1973: 605).

(13)   Sam took the car$_i$ yesterday and Sheila took it$_i$ today.

Similarly, Partee notes, there are uses of tenses that can be called 'anaphoric', in the sense that the reference of the tense is specified in one clause and a subsequent clause refers back to that same time period (*got* in 14).

(14)   Sheila had a party last Friday and Sam got drunk.

Interestingly, anaphoric tenses can be contained in main clauses with their antecedents inside a temporal subordinate clause, in an interesting parallelism with donkey-anaphoras (15).

(15)   a. When Susan walked in, Peter left.
           b. If a farmer has a donkey, he beats it.

Finally, pronouns can be bound, in which case their reference is not specified, but depends on the reference of another expression; the value of the two pronominal expressions vary accordingly. (16) illustrates this bound meaning in the reading 'John is the only x that is unfaithful to x's wife' (meaning that, for instance, Peter is not unfaithful to Peter's wife, Alfred is not unfaithful to Alfred's wife, etc.); compare it to the deictic reading where the pronoun has a fixed reference meaning 'John's' (so if John's wife happens to be called Alice, the sentence would mean roughly the same as *Only John is unfaithful to Alice*, and nobody else is unfaithful to Alice):

(16)   Only John is unfaithful to his wife.

Similarly, in (17), the time interval that the main clause refers to is not necessarily the moment of utterance, or for that matter any other time interval: the sentence precisely states that the state of affairs of John leaving would take place at the time interval that Susan comes in, no matter when, no matter how many times. If Susan never comes in, that time interval will not exist. The reference of both time intervals would covary in the same way that in the bound reading of (17) the reference of *his* would vary depending on the reference of the subject.

(17)   Whenever Susan comes in, John leaves immediately.

1.4. The relational theory of tense: the Reichenbachian proposal

The view of tense that is considered standard now is the one that comes from Reichenbach (1947), which is compatible with a view where tense refers to time periods in the same way as pronouns refer to individuals. The system that we want to present is sometimes called 'the relational approach to tense', as the different tense values denote different relations between three time intervals (expressed as arguments of different categories). In this view, tense is the result of the interaction between a set of relational predicates and a set of pronoun-like time arguments. As we will see, this theory has the additional merit that it can provide a common view for grammatical aspect (external aspect) and tense.

Let us start from the beginning. Reichenbach (1947: 287-298) proposed that three tense arguments have to be differentiated:

a) The time of utterance, that refers to the time period where the sentences is produced by the speaker
b) The time of the event, that refers to the time period associated to the eventuality denoted by the predicate
c) The time of reference, that refers to a time period that is relevant to locate the event

While (a) and (b) were assumed to exist, in one form or the other, Reichenbach's main innovation is to propose that the relation between the time of utterance and the event is not direct, but is intermediated by an additional time period, which is the one that is identified by the temporal modifier in (18).

(18)   Juan había llegado ya a las tres.
        Juan had arrived already at the three
        'By three o'clock, Juan had already arrived'

In (18), *a las tres* does not tell us when the event took place: in its normal interpretation, (18) says that the event of arriving had already taken place at three. It obviously does not tell us, either, at what time uttering (18) takes place. What it gives us is a time interval that, intuitively, is the one that the sentence is about. In fact, Klein (1994) used the more transparent notion of 'Topic Time' to describe the time of reference: it is the time period that the sentence is about, in the sense that the sentence is intended as making a claim about the state of affairs at that particular time period. What we want to say in (18) is that it is true of the time period 'at three o'clock' that Juan had already arrived.

The three 'times' of Reichenbach are normally represented with the initials U (for utterance time), R (for reference time) and E (for event time). Given this, the different relations between these three times produce a variety of tenses. Let us use '<' for 'precedes' and a simple colon ',' when there is coincidence between the two temporal points.

Present would correspond to (19), a situation where the time of the event, the reference time and the event time coincide:

(19)   a. U,R,E
        b. Juan canta (ahora).
           Juan sings now
        [Roughly: 'Talking about a time period that coincides with the utterance time, the event takes place in that time period']

A simple past is a situation where the event precedes both the reference time and the utterance time, which do not show any ordering between them:

(20)   a. E, R < U
        b. Juan cantó (ayer).
           Juan sang yesterday
        [Roughly: 'Talking about a time period that precedes the utterance time, the event takes place in that time period']

A simple future is the inverse situation:

(21)   a. U < R,E
        b. Juan cantará (mañana).
           Juan will-sing tomorrow
        [Roughly: 'Talking about a time period that follows the utterance time, the event takes place in that time period']

In all these cases, the reference time and the event time coincide, which have driven some researchers (eg., Comrie 1981) to the claim that for simple present, simple past and simple future it is not necessary to postulate a reference time. In fact, according to these theories, the difference between simple tenses and other more complex tenses is precisely that in the first case the reference time category is not present in the structure, at semantics, at syntax or both. Notice what happens when we start making the reference time not coextensive with the event time:

(22)   a. E < R < U
        a. Juan había llegado.
          Juan had arrived
        [Roughly: 'Talking about a time period that precedes the utterance time, the event takes place in a time period preceding that one']
(23)   a. U < E < R
        b. Juan habrá llegado.
          Juan will-have arrived
        [Roughly: 'Talking about a time period that follows the utterance time, the event takes place in a time period preceding that one']
(24)   a. E < U, R
        b. Juan ha llegado.
          Juan has arrived
         [Roughly: 'Talking about a time period that coincides with the utterance time, the event takes place before that time period']

Note that whenever the event time precedes the reference time, we have to use a complex form of the verb, involving *haber* 'have' as an auxiliary. In the next set of forms, the event follows the reference time.

(25)   a. R < U < E
        b. (Pedro dijo ayer que) Juan llegaría al día siguiente.
          Pedro said yesterday that Juan would-arrive the next day
        [Roughly: 'Talking about a time period that precedes the utterance time, the event would take place after the utterance time]
(26)   a. U, R < E
        b. Pedro va a llegar.
          Pedro is going to arrive
         [Roughly: 'Talking about a time period that coincides with the utterance time, the event will follow that time period']

1.5. Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria's Neo-Reichenbachian system

Before we move to the shortcomings of Reichenbach's system, there are a few things to note. One crucial aspect is that the tenses are defined with respect to whether the three temporal points follow, precede or coincide to each other. This has been expressed syntactically in several works, but most famously in Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria (2000, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2008, among others). These are the main ingredients of Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria's Neo-Reichenbachian theory:

a) In contrast to Reichenbach's original proposal, temporal objects are not defined as relations between temporal points, but as relations between temporal intervals. As we will see later, this move is crucial in avoiding a problem that Reichenbach's system has, with respect to the contrast between imperfecto and indefinido.

b) The relations of ordering between temporal intervals are expressed syntactically through two heads, T and Asp. These heads are taken to be relational elements, along the lines of Hale & Keyser (2002) –see also Klein (1994)–, which take two arguments and denote a locative-temporal relation between them, starting from three primitives, WITHIN, BEFORE, and AFTER

c) The arguments taken by these relational heads, the temporal intervals, act like quasi-nominal expressions that can be coindexed to each other.

In (27), note two of the ingredients of this syntax of tense: a set of relational heads (T / Asp), which can be understood as prepositions of sorts, and a set of time arguments expressed as Zeit Phrases, whose interpretation as time of utterance, time of event, etc. depends on the projection where they are introduced:

(27)

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                        TP
            ┌───────────┴───────────┐
        ZeitP                       T
        U-time          ┌───────────┴───────────┐
                        T                       AspP
              within / after / before    ┌───────┴───────┐
                                       ZeitP            Asp
                                       Ast-T      ┌──────┴──────┐
                                                Asp            VP
                                       within / after / before ┌────┴────┐
                                                             ZeitP      VP
                                                             E-T
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Note that from this perspective, Tense is a category whose role is to define the ordering between the time of utterance and the reference time, here represented as Ast-T (Assertion Time). That is, the reference time is interpreted as external aspect, following among other things the observation that whenever the ordering between reference time and event time is 'marked', additional aspectual auxiliaries are necessary. In other words: External Aspect (AspP) is understood as the relation between the reference / topic / assertion time and the event time (E-T), more specifically. Note, furthermore, that ontologically tense and aspect are identical: they are relational heads expressing coincidence (*within*), precedence (*before*) or subsequence (*after*) between the time periods referred to by the time pronouns, ZeitPs. Thus, external aspect can be expressed also through the same relations of coincidence, subsequence and precedence used for tense.

(28) a. Tense: ZeitP {within / after / before} ZeitP
      b. External aspect: ZeitP {within / after / before} ZeitP

1.6. An antecedent of Reichenbach's model: Bello

Even before Reichenbach's model, there were proposals where the different tenses were expressed following this structure, and where the co-reference or disjoint reference of the time periods denoted by each temporal argument determined part of the distribution of the morphological tenses. Bello (1847) famously developed a system with these properties. Adapted from García Fernández (2000: 26-27), here is the correspondence between the terminology used by Bello and the representation in terms of Reichenbachian structure:

Table 1. *Bello's terminology and Reichenbach's structure*

Bello	Reichenbach	Traditional terminology
Presente 'present'	U,R,E	Presente *canto*
Pretérito 'preterite'	E,R < U	Pretérito perfecto simple *canté*
Copretérito 'copreterite'	??	Imperfecto *cantaba*
Futuro 'future'	U < R,E	Futuro simple *cantaré*
Pospretérito 'postpreterite'	R < E < U R < U, E	Condicional *cantaría*
Antepresente 'antepresent'	E < U, R	Perfecto compuesto *he cantado*
Antepretérito 'antepreterite'	E < R < U	Pretérito anterior *hube cantado*
Antecopretérito 'antecopreterite'	??	Pluscuamperfecto *había cantado*
Antefuturo 'antefuture'	U < E < R U, E < R E < U < R	Futuro perfecto *habré cantado*
Antepospretérito 'antepostpreterite'	??	Condicional perfecto *habría cantado*

Note that from this perspective, the difference between the perfecto (E < R, U) and the indefinido (E, R < U) is whether the time of reference is aligned with the time of utterance or precedes it. In other words, in the perfecto we make a claim about the present (R coincides with the utterance time), while in the indefinido we make a claim about the past (R precedes the utterance time).

1.7. The shortcomings of Reichenbachian models

This is a good moment to start discussing the shortcomings of the Reichenbachian system. In this critique we follow closely García Fernández (2000: 29-41).

One first property that becomes obvious from the table is that some of the temporoaspectual contrasts made by natural languages, specifically by Spanish, do not have a very clear translation in terms of ordering relations in a Reichenbachian model. Most significantly, it is unclear how to differentiate between the indefinido and the imperfecto in terms of these ordering relations, as both seem to correspond to situations where the time of utterance and the time of reference coincide (given the absence of auxiliaries) and the event precedes both.

(29) a. Juan estaba enfermo ayer.
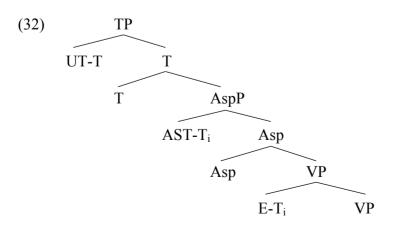   Juan was.impf sick yesterday
      b. Juan estuvo enfermo ayer.
       Juan was.indf sick yersterday

The problem extends to the distinction, among the complex forms, between the pretérito anterior and the pluscuamperfecto, which is also morphologically manifested with what seems to be a distinction between indefinido (*hube*) and imperfecto (*había*).

(30) a. Después de que hubo llegado, vio el problema.
       after of that he.had arrived, he.saw the problem
      b. Después de que había llegado, vio el problema.
       after of that he.had arrived, he.saw the problem
      'After he had arrived, he saw the problem'

Note that this is not a problem in Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria's Neo-Reichenbachian approach, whose main publications where not published at the time that García Fernández (2000) presented these critiques to the Reichenbachian approach. Cricually, in Reichenbach (1947) the temporal objects that get ordered are points, but in the Neo-Reichenbachian approach they are intervals. Reichenbach (1947: 290-291) was forced to propose that the temporal point corresponding to the event was 'extended' in the imperfecto, or in the progressive periphrasis, as in (31):

(31)   ---------●--------|-----
                E,R   U

Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria, however, do not need to say this. In their approach, to begin with, any temporal argument is an interval, so they can capture elegantly a difference between presenting the Assertion Time within the Event Time (imperfecto) or totally identifying both so that the boundaries of the event time coincide with the boundaries of the assertion time (perfective, indefinido). This second reading is obtained, precisely, when the argument AST-T is coindexed with the argument E-T, as in (32) (Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria 2002). This is an ingredient of Neo-Reichenbachian approaches that was not present in the original.

(32)   TP
          /   \
       UT-T   T
              /   \
            T   AspP
                   /   \
              AST-T$_i$ Asp
                         /   \
                       Asp   VP
                              /   \
                           E-T$_i$ VP

The second critique to the Neo-Reichenbachian approach is that sometimes the same form seems to be expressing two or more ordering relations; take for instance the *futuro perfecto*. There are three orderings that this tense can be representing, according to the internal rules of the system:

(33)   a. $U < E < R$
      [Roughly: 'Talking about a time period, both the event and the utterance time precede that time period, but the event follows the utterance time']
      b. $U, E < R$
      [Roughly: 'Talking about a time period that follows the utterance time, the event takes place at the same time period as the utterance time']
      c. $E < U < R$
      [Roughly: 'Talking about a time period following the utterance time, the event has taken place before the utterance time']

This captures the intuition that (34) can be true in three situations, all of them implying that the reference time follows the utterance time and the event has taken place before that reference time (Friday, in 34): John arrives after Mary said (34) but before Friday (33a), John was actually arriving while Mary was saying (34) (33b), and in fact John had arrived before Mary said (34) (33c):

(34)   María dice que Juan habrá llegado para el viernes.
       María says that Juan will.have arrived for Friday

But do we know of any language that distinguishes with different temporoaspectual markers, or that disambiguates grammatically, between the three readings in (33)? It does not seem clear that it is the case. The inescapable conclusion is that the existence of these primitives and ordering relations are generating forms that, while semantically distinct, are morphologised in the same way once and again in the different languages of the world. In other words: many of the potential temporal relations that the system can generate are systematically syncretised, with the same morphological make-up covering several of them, across languages. This has the flavour of a missing generalisation, unless –crucially– one could find independent semantic or structural reasons to force an underspecification of some of these primitives. This critique, at least in the sense that in many cases the same morphology will spell out different configurations, can be extended to Neo-Reichenbachian approaches (see §3.1.6).

Another case of a single form that corresponds to several temporal orderings is the pluscuamperfecto, where two readings correspond to the same structure in terms of ordering. Intutively, and as shown by (35) and (36), the pluscuamperfecto can be seen as a 'past' form of the indefinido (35) or as a part form of the perfecto (36).

(35)   a. Juan dijo ayer: Llegué el martes.
        Juan said yesterday: I arrived on Tuesday
     b. Juan dijo ayer que había llegado el martes.
        Juan said yesterday that he.had arrived on Tuesday
(36)   a. Juan dijo ayer: He vivido aquí desde 2007.
        Juan said yesterday: I.have lived here since 2007

b. Juan dijo ayer que había vivido aquí desde 2007.
   Juan said yesterday that he.had lived here since 2007

That pluscuamperfecto can in fact have a perfect or an indefinite interpretation has been shown by García Fernández (2000): for instance, (37) can be interpreted as telling us that the event finished at three o'clock (as an indefinite) or that at three o'clock the subsequent state of John having arrived was already true (as a perfect). *Ya* 'already' is only compatible with the second reading.

(35)   Juan había llegado a las tres.
        Juan had arrived at the three
        a.   Juan's arrival took place at three.
        b.   At three, Juan was already here.
(36)   Juan ya había llegado a las tres.
        Juan already had arrived at the three
        a. *Juan's arrival took place at three.
        b. Already at three, Juan was here.

But both readings receive the same structure: (37) represents, respectively, the preterite and the perfect.

(37)   a. E, R < U
        b. E < R, U

To add a 'past' tense meaning to this, in the one case, the reference time follows the event time, and in the other the reference time precedes the utterance time, but both end up as (38):

(38)   E < R < U

This problem, namely that the available primitives seem to predict more structures than documented with distinct forms, has of course been noted in the literature, and is one of the main issues in Hornstein (1990; see specially chapter 2). What Hornstein (1990: 50-51) proposes is that out of the three conceivable ordering relations that Reichenbach's system allows only two become relevant for the semantic interpretation: U / R (S / R in his notation) and R / E. The interpretation of the ordering between U and E is not specified semantically, then. The effect is that the three conceivable ordering relations in (39) are semantically equivalent:

(39)   a. E < U < R
        b. U < E < R
        c. U, E < R

These three relations keep the information that U precedes R and that E precedes R, and differ with respect to whether E precedes, follows or coincides with U. Hornstein (1990) is neutral with respect to whether the three representations in (39) are distinct syntactically or not, but he is committed to

the claim that by the time they get interpreted at the semantic interface, they are equivalent because the ordering between E and U is not relevant.

Finally, the last problem is the opposite of the previous one, namely that in other cases we seem to be lacking enough primitives and relations to express some of the tenses; this is the case of the condicional perfecto. (40) is the past tense version of the sentence in (32):

(40)   María dijo que Juan habría llegado para el viernes.
         María said that Juan would.have arrived for the Friday
         'María said that Juan would have arrived by Friday'

If we want to capture that (40) is the past tense version of (34), we need to start from the ordering necessary for (34) and change the ordering of two of the time arguments, so that there is a precedence relation. We have three to choose (33), but two of them are already completely ordered; the only one with two arguments in a coincidence relation is $U,E < R$, the one when Juan was in fact arriving as María was uttering the sentence. But if we try any ordering, we obtain problematic results:

(41) $E < U < R$

(41) would imply that (40) says that by the time of utterance, Juan would have already arrived, but this does not follow. María could have said the sentence on Monday, someone repeats it on Tuesday (40) and Juan arrives on Wednesday; that is, I can be uttering (40) before the event happens, against (41). The intuition is that the three readings available with (34) are still available with (40), so we do not want to restrict them in a way that only one of them would survive. The interpretation of (40), thus, seems not to be expressible with three elements only; what one would be tempted to do is to introduce a fourth time and order the structures in (33) before that fourth element, but this is not allowed in the system, and moreover would have serious predictions with respect to how many other temporal relations would be expected to take place.

In any case, currently the most standard theory about tense is the one that uses relational heads and temporal arguments which can be coindexed, with the potential addition of operators to express more fine-grained aspectual classes.

The goal of this article is not to solve these issues, however, but to provide an overview of the available theories about the contrast between imperfecto and indefinido, and their relation to other tense forms. For this reason, in what follows we will topic only in one of the problems noted here, specifically how it is possible to differentiate between these two tenses, something that, as we have said, does not have an obvious answer in a Reinchenbachian system. But first, we need to introduce some distinctions about types of tense and types of aspect.

2.   Some basic distinctions inside tense

Before discussing the details of how imperfecto and indefinido have been differentiated in Spanish grammar, we need to introduce some distinctions between tenses and aspects, given that there are proposals that use these distinctions to account for the contrasts between imperfecto and indefinido.

This section discusses the available contrasts in the tense domain, while the following section discusses the contrasts in the external aspect domain.

2.1. Anaphoric and deictic tense

The analogy between pronouns and tense markers is reflected in the classification of tenses in the form of the anaphoric / deictic contrast.

The notion of deixis is well-known: a deictic expression is an expression whose invariable semantic content relies on the (extralinguistic) context in order to identify the entity it refers to (Fillmore 1971). A pronoun like *I* is deictic to the extent that its meaning, 'person who is producing this sentence', is not enough to identify per se the entity that it refers to: one needs to analyse the context where the sentence is being uttered in order to identify who *I* refers to. Deictic expressions, then, have a reference that varies with the circumstances of the context where the utterance is produced, as for instance the reference of the first person pronoun will change many times during a normal conversation depending on, at each point, which one of the participants produces that utterance.

Anaphora, by opposition, is a term that simply groups together the expressions whose reference is not set by looking at the extralinguistic context; the extralinguistic information is irrelevant in order to identify the reference of an anaphoric expression, as they have an antecedent in the linguistic structure with which they corefer. A typical example is an expression like *the previous sentence*: what sentence that nominal expression refers to does not change depending on where, when and by whom this text is read or written. Its reference depends only on the information provided inside the text itself.

Deixis can take place in the temporal domain, as it is the case with the following adverbial expressions:

(42)   ahora, mañana, hoy, ayer, anoche
          now, tomorrow, today, yesterday, yesterday-night

Clearly, these expressions are deictic because the semantic information they provide is incomplete, and needs to be combined with the extralinguistic context where they are uttered. *Today* does not mean 'the tenth of July of 2015', except when it is used in an utterance that is produced on the tenth of July of 2015. The claim is that some tense forms in natural language are also deictic, in the sense that the time period they refer to has to be evaluated against the time of utterance, that is, the here and now where the utterance is produced. Deictic tenses are also known as absolute tenses. Here are some relatively uncontroversial cases where tense is used deictically.

(43)   ¿Qué haces?
           what you-do?
          'What are you doing?'
(44)   Saldré de viaje.
          Will-go of journey
          'I will go on a trip'
(45)   He visto a María.
          have seen A María
          'I have seen María'

In order to evaluate (43), that is, to understand which time period the speaker is asking about, it seems that we just need to consider the relation between the tense used and the moment of utterance: as the tense is present, we understand that the speaker wants us to explain what we are doing now. The time of the event coincides with the time of utterance. The time of reference coincides also with the time of utterance (in a strictly Reichenbachian system), or alternatively, does not need to be taken into account for this form (as in the proposal by Comrie discussed before). Similarly, in (44) we understand that the time period where the event will take place follows the time of utterance, and, in (45) we understand that the time period precedes the time of utterance.

In contrast, anaphoric tenses (also known as relative tenses) are tense forms whose reference is never evaluated against the context of utterance. Two uncontroversial instances of this type of tense are the following:

(46)   Juan dijo que María <u>había llegado</u> ya.
        Juan said that María had arrived already
(47)   Juan dijo que María <u>llegaría</u> el viernes.
        Juan said that María would-arrive on Friday

In the previous examples, it is clear that it would be insufficient to say whether the underlined temporal forms follow, precede or coincide with the time of utterance. Intuitively, in order to evaluate these forms we have to assess them relative to the tense reference of the main predicate, which here is deictic. (46) refers to a time period that precedes the time of the event associated to *dijo*, which is previous to the time of utterance: that is, the event of arriving takes place at a time period that precedes the time period refered to by *dijo*, which in turn precedes the time of utterance. That time period, then, is identified relative to the time period that we identify for *dijo*: if the time period of *dijo* happens to be yesterday at 16:00, then we know that the time period of *había llegado* has to be before yesterday at 16:00. In (47), we know that the time period identified by *llegaría* has to follow the time period identified by *dijo*, which in turn is previous to the time of utterance. Note that, if we follow a Reichenbachian analysis, it seems that the reference time of the underlined form has to correfer with the time of event associated to the main verb *decir*.

(48)   Juan dijo que María había llegado ya.
            $E_i, R < U$ $E < R_i < U$

One of the controversies with respect to the proper treatment of the indefinido / imperfecto contrast is whether it can be reduced to a contrast between deictic and anaphoric tenses. We will go back to this in §4.2.

2.2. Consecutio Temporum and Double access readings
The phenomenon whereby the reference of a tense form embedded under a subordinate clause depends on the interpretation of the main verb (as in 49) is known as Consecutio Temporum or Sequence of Tenses (Comrie 1986; Enç 1987; Abusch 1988, 1994; Carrasco & García Fernández 1994; Cowper 1996; Carrasco 1999; Giorgi & Pianesi 2001). We will see in §4 that part of the puzzling behaviour of imperfecto is in fact connected to contexts where it is

used as a form inside indirect speech, and for this reason we need to use some time to present the background about those contexts.

That Consecutio Temporum is directly related to the notion of anaphoric tenses can be shown by the fact that some forms, considered deictic, are very difficult to embed under a main verb in the past:

(49)   %Juan dijo que María llegó ya.
             Juan said that María arrived already

This is similar to the difficulty of introducing some temporal deictic constituents inside a subordinate clause of the same characteristics (note that (50) should be interpretable: Juan could say at 15:00 that María arrived that day at 14:00, and (50) could be uttered at 23:00):

(50)   ??Juan dijo que María había llegado hoy.
             Juan said that María had arrived today

To the extent that sentences like (49) are possible, they are instances of the so-called Double-Access reading (Ogihara 1995, 1999; Schlenker 2004), whereby the time refered to by the subordinate verb is evaluated both with respect to the time of utterance and with respect to the time of event of the main verb. (51a) has a double access reading, while (51b) does not.

(51)   a. Juan dijo que María está enferma.
                 Juan said that Maria is sick
            b. Juan dijo que María estaba enferma.
                 Juan said that María was.impf sick

In (51a), with double access, we interpret that the time during which María was sick coincides with the time of utterance, but also with the time at which Juan said that. In other words: María was sick when Juan said it, and it is still sick now when I utter this sentence. In (51b), without double access, we only evaluate the time during which María was sick with respect to the time at which Juan said so: María was sick when Juan said it, but we do not know if she is still sick now or not. A typical example that is offered in this context is (52), which is out due to world knowledge: as a human pregnancy takes 9 months, a double access reading is impossible because María cannot be pregnant of her only child both in 2003 and 2015.

(52)   #Juan dijo en 2003 que María está embarazada (de su único hijo).
             Juan said in 2003 that María is pregnant (of her only son)

Double Access readings are viewed by authors like Abusch (1997) and Schlenker (2004) as instances of general operations where constituents in an embedded clause can choose to anchor their reference to the speech co-ordenates relevant for the main clause or make them relative to the main verb's frame. Abusch (1997), in fact, establishes a parallelism between consecutio temporum and the *de re / de dicto* distinction in semantics, applied in this case to the identification of temporal intervals.

3. Distinctions inside aspect

While tense can be deictic, because it locates a situation with respect to the time of utterance, aspect can never be deictic. Aspect, simplifying things a bit, is a notion that relates to how the situation denoted by a predicate is presented across time. There are two relevant notions of aspect: lexical aspect, internal aspect or Aktionsart has to do with the internal structure of the situation expressed by a predicate: how many temporal phases have to be distinguished there, in short. Does this predicate contain a culmination? Does it have a process, extended in time, that leads to that culmination? Is that culmination followed by a state where the effects of the culmination persist? Is that state reversible? These are just some of the questions that have to do with internal aspect or Aktionsart.

External aspect, grammatical aspect or viewpoint aspect, in contrast, refers to the perspective that one adopts in a clause to present the state of affairs presented in that predicate. Imagine we have a predicate that denotes a process that leads to a culmination. External aspect can impose different perspectives to that situation, in each case focalising and highlighting some of its aspects. We could focalise the time period that includes the process, but does not include the culmination, or we could focalise exactly that culmination; we could also focalise a time period that follows that culmination, or one that precedes the starting point of the process. All these choices, which are similar to what a film director does when placing the camera at some particular angle to shoot the same action, fall within viewpoint or external aspect.

3.1. External aspect

Let us start with external aspect, as its analysis has much to do with what we presented in the previous two sections. External aspect is treated as a relation between the time of event and the time of reference (Reichenbach 1947) or topic time (Klein 1994). From this perspective, then, external aspect is a way of profiling the event by selecting a temporal interval that includes (part of) the event, follows its conclusion or precedes it. This is a way of capturing what is considered now the standard definition of external aspect, due to Comrie (1976: 3), "aspects are different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of the situation".

Starting from this assumption, if we restrict the temporal relations to the predicates *within, before* and *after*, we expect at least three classes of aspect, depending on whether that relation is coincidence, subsequence or precedence. In fact, we will see that at least for classes need to be differentiated, which suggests again a shortcoming in a 'classic' Reichenbachian system.

3.1.1. Imperfective

The imperfective aspect expresses a 'within' relation where the reference or topic time is completely included inside the event time. In slightly different terms, the sentence talks about the time period during which the 'middle' part of the event, excluding its termination, is taking place. In the rest of this section we will use, as it is standard in these cases, a notation where '----' represents the running time of the eventuality (the event time); '++++' represents the time intervals where it is not the case that the eventuality takes place, and '[' and ']' define the topic time. (53) represents an imperfective external aspect:

(53)   ++++-----[-------------]-------++++++

In other terms, the topic time is properly included within the event time. Sentences where there is no claim about whether the event terminated or not, but which entail that the event started, are imperfective:

(54)   Juan corre por el parque (ahora).
        Juan runs by the park (now)
(55)   Juan corría por el parque (hace un momento).
        Juan ran by the park (one moment ago)

3.1.2. Prospective
    In the prospective aspect, the topic time completely precedes the starting point of the time of event. Thus, the sentence entails that (a) the event has not terminated and (b) that the event has not started.

(56)   ++++++++[+++++++++]+++++-----------------------

García Fernández (2000) and, specially, Bravo (2008) have argued that the future periphrasis *ir a + infinitive* in Spanish is a manifestation of prospective aspect, whereby one makes a claim about the present time and indicates that, if the current situation follows its expected course, a particular eventuality will take place.

(57)   Juan va a ir al cine.
        Juan is going to go to the cinema

3.1.3. Perfect
    In the perfect external aspect, the topic time follows the termination of the eventuality, not including its ending. Therefore, what the topic time refers to is the 'state' that follows the conclusion of the event, giving it a resultative flavour.

(58)   +++---------------------++[++++++]+++

Some uses of the perfecto in Spanish show a perfect external aspect, such as the one in (59), which is considered an experiential perfect –after having done something, the subject is in a state where she has the experience of having done it–:

(59)   Ya he visto esta película.
        Already I.have seen this movie
        'I have already seen this movie'

The so-called 'hodiernal' use of the perfect, whereby one locates a past eventuality in the same temporal frame where the utterance is being produced, is also an instance of this aspect.

(60)   Esta mañana he perdido el autobús.
        this morning I-have lost the bus

'This morning I missed the bus'

This use, however, is not acceptable in all varieties. Note that despite the terminology used traditionally not all uses of the Spanish perfecto are perfect in terms of their external aspect. The so-called continuous perfect (61) denotes situations that, having started in the past, in actuality continue in the present, without a termination. In this sense, (61) has imperfective aspect, despite the use of the perfect.

(61)   He vivido aquí desde 2007.
        I.have lived here since 2007

(62)   +++-[--]...
           2007   NOW
                    'living here'

3.1.4. Perfective

Using just the relators 'within', 'before' and 'after' produce, as we see, respectively an imperfective, a prospective and a perfect aspect. None of them properly accounts for the fourth generally accepted aspect, which is perfective (some authors prefer using the term 'aorist' in order to avoid confusion with 'perfect'; cf. Bertinetto 1986: 198 and García Fernández 2000: 48). In the perfective aspect, the topic time includes the termination of the event. There are two versions of this. The first one is due to Klein (1992), who proposes that the topic time focalises the transition between the final interval of the eventuality and the moment following its termination, as in (63).

(63)   ++++-------------------[-+]+++++

What Klein (1994) does is to propose that this kind of relation is expressed with a relator similar to the preposition AT. The proposal is reminiscent of Hale's (1986) and Hale & Keyser's (1993, 2002) proposal that there is a class of relators expressing terminal coincidence –that is, contact of an object with a boundary of another object, in our case, contact of the topic time with the final boundary of the time of the eventuality–. These relators (cf. for instance Mateu 2002) have been used in semantico-syntactic analysis to express perfective aspect.

Smith (1991), in contrast, notes that if the meaning of perfective aspect only made reference to the final boundary, it would not be possible to explain sentences like (64) (adapted from García Fernández 2000: 50), where one finds the so-called ingressive interpretation of the perfective. The interpretation of (64) indeed refers to a boundary of the eventuality, but it is not its termination, but its starting point. What happened at eight is not that the president finished her speech, or even that she both started and finished her speech, but that she started her speech:

(64)   La presidenta leyó su discurso a las ocho.
        The president read her speech at the eight
        'The president read her speech at eight o'clock'

For this reason she proposes the following temporal relational representation of the perfective, where the time of the eventuality is properly included within the topic time, and therefore both boundaries of the eventuality are contained inside it:

(65)   +++++++++[+------------------------+]++++++++++

If this representation is true, perfective would be the precise opposite of imperfective: in the imperfective, the topic time is included within the eventuality time; in the perfective, the eventuality time is included within the topic time.

It is interesting to consider how this relation can be captured in the Neo-Reichenbachian approaches that are available. We are aware of two solutions. The first one was already discussed in §1.7, and was proposed by Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria (2002) in their discussion of the passé composé in French: the interpretation in (65), where external aspect includes the total running time of the event, from the initial to the final boundary, emerges when AST-T (Topic / Reference / Assertion Time) is coindexed with Event Time, or in other words, when they are identified. The second option is to enrich the set of primitive relations so that there is a specific aspectual head that carries the semantics of the perfective: Arche (2014: 797) proposes the relation '(total) OVERLAP' to characterise the perfective aspect, understood as in Smith (1991).

3.1.5. Other aspects and some subdivisions
Even though these four are the most widely recognised external aspects, this does not exhaust the list of values for aspect that have been proposed in the literature.

Smith (1997: 62) proposed so-called 'neutral aspect', which "includes the initial point and at least one stage of the situation"; future forms, according to her, can represent this aspect. In (66), what we say is that the starting point of the event is located after the time of utterance, but we make no claim with respect to whether the book will be written wholly or not:

(66)   Juan escribirá el libro el martes.
        Juan will.write the book on Tuesday

Neutral aspect shares properties both with imperfective and perfective, because, as it is clear from the definition, the endpoint of the eventuality can be included or not. Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001) claim that Bulgarian distinguishes between neutral, imperfective and perfective:

(67)   a. Az stroix   pjasačna kula. [Neutral]
            I   build-neutral-past   sand   castle
        'I was engaged in building a sand castle'
        b. Az strojax   pjasačna kula. [Imperfective]
            I build-impf-past   sand   castle
        'I was building a sand castle'
        c. Az po-stroix   pjasačna kula. [Perfective]
            I   pfx-build-prtv-past   sand   castle

'I built a sand castle'

Like imperfective (67b), the neutral form (67a) does not assert that the sand castle came to exist. Also like imperfective, (67a) rejects completive adverbials measuring the time period between the initiation and the completion of the event (eg., *in two hours*). However, unlike imperfective, (67a) cannot be used to give the narrative background, and rejects a simultaneous interpretation when combined with a sentence in the perfective, which is what happens, for instance, in (68) –we locate the ringing event inside the time interval of the reading event–. A sequential interpretation is picked in such cases, as in (69), where we understand that each event happened in distinct time periods, one after the other.

(68)   Cuando leía el libro, sonó el teléfono.
        When I.read.impf the book, rang.prfv the phone
        'When I was reading the book, the phone rang'
(69)   Cuando leí el libro, sonó el teléfono.
        when I.read.prfv the book, rang.prfv the phone
        'When I read the book, the phone rang'

The representation of this neutral aspect would be the one in (70):

(70)   +++++[+----]------------------+++++

As it should be clear by now, it is quite difficult to find a (simple) relational head that picks precisely the initial boundary of the eventuality time, including at least one other stage of the event, but not including its termination.

Also, descriptively it is necessary to differentiate between sub-values of some of the core external aspects. One such case is imperfective, where at least the following values have to be differentiated (Boogaart 1999, Verkuyl 1999, Lenci & Bertinetto 2000, Deo 2009, Arche 2014):

a) Progressive: there is only one instance of an event, and the sentence focalises a point inside the internal development of the event; the event is understood as unfolding in time. Therefore, this interpretation is rejected with statives.

(71)   Juan estaba leyendo el libro.
        Juan was.impf reading the book
        'Juan was reading the book'
(72)   *Juan estaba odiando el pastel.
          Juan was hating the cake

b) Habitual: there is a plural set of instantiations of the event expressed by the predicate.

(73)   Juan fumaba cuando era adolescente.
        Juan smoked.impf when he.was.impf teenager
(74)   Íbamos a París todos los años.
        we.went.impf to Paris all the years

See Bertinetto & Lenci (2011: 854-860) for criteria differentiating habituality, which is imperfective, from iterativity, which can be perfective (cf. *John rang the door bell three times*). Among other criteria, they show that habituals, unlike iteratives, reject a numerical specification of how many instances of the event took place (in their view, iterativity produces complex events whose microevents can be enumerated). Iteratives, also, do not appear easily in the present tense.
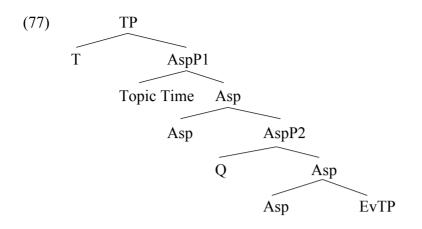
    c) Continuous: there is only one instance of an event, and there is no understood internal development of the situation. It is only asserted that the situation described by the predicate takes place during a time period, not asserting its termination.

(75)   Juan estaba enfermo cuando llegué.
        Juan was.impf sick when I.arrived.prfv
        'Juan was sick when I arrived'
(76)   He tenido fiebre desde el martes.
        I.have had fever since the Tuesday
        'I have had a fever since Tuesday'

The following table characterises the different readings, after Comrie (1976: 25):

Table 2. *Structure of the imperfective readings, according to Comrie (1976)*

Perfective	Imperfective		
	Habitual	Continuous	
John read the book	*John usually reads books*	Nonprogressive (purely continuous)	Progressive
		John has been sick since Tuesday	*John is reading the book.*

In terms of the primitive units that we have introduced in the previous sections, these three interpretations share the property that the topic time is within the eventuality time. How are these readings differentiated? The conclusion that most researchers have reached is that the imperfective readings have to be differentiated by introducing additional operators quantifying over the event variable. Arche (2014), in fact, argues that the existence of these three readings means that two levels of external aspect have to be differentiated. Consider (77), after Arche (2014: 810):

(77)

```
                    TP
                  /    \
                 T      AspP1
                      /       \
                Topic Time     Asp
                             /     \
                           Asp      AspP2
                                  /      \
                                 Q        Asp
                                        /     \
                                      Asp      EvTP
```

The existence of two aspectual heads has two consequences: the first is that we expect, correctly, that an auxiliary encoding external aspect can itself be inflected for aspect:

(78) a. Juan estaba leyendo.
          Juan was.impf reading
      b. Juan estuvo leyendo.
          Juan was.pftv reading

While the higher aspectual head would be responsible for the inflection of the auxiliary *estar* 'be', the lower aspectual head would carry the gerund morphology *-ndo*. Whenever the aspectual form is non-analytic, Arche assumes that the materialisation of one of the heads (typically, the lower one) is null.

Second, the semantics of external aspect would have to be complicated: we would be talking about placing a topic time that is related with a time interval that is related to the eventuality time.

Interestingly, in Arche's (2014) theory, the different aspectual imperfective interpretations would be distinguished by the nature of the quantifier merged in the specifier of the lower aspectual head. The continuous reading involves an existential quantifier with no cardinality; the progressive one would involve a quantifier with cardinality |1| (cf. also Verkuyl 1999), and the habitual one would involve a quantifier with cardinality higher than one, |>1|.

There are other aspectual values, though. Genericity (79) has been interpreted as an imperfective aspectual value one of whose subcases is habituality (Krifka et al. 1995), but authors like Rimell (2004) have treated it as another kind of imperfective aspect expressing gnomic meanings. See Carlson (2011) for an overview of the facts and approaches, and a proposal that genericity is simple habituality involving noun phrases of a different nature.

(79) Lions eat meat.

We refer to the collection of articles in Binnick (2011) for further details about other potential aspectual values, and conclude this part of the presentation here.

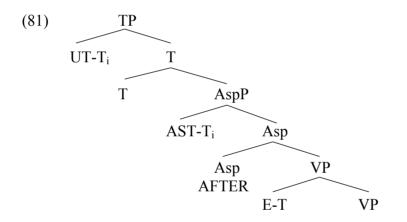3.1.6. When a form has more than one aspectual value

In the context of this discussion, the existence of such a fine-grained set of aspectual interpretations raises the question of what happens in the approaches

we are discussing here when there is one single morphological form that instantiates more than one (that is, the morphological problem that we presented in §1.7). In a Neo-Reichenbachian model, the analysis generally involves associating the same morphological spell out to different configurations, but, crucially, the features that the form spells out can be identical. One case of this is Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria's (2002) analysis of the two readings of the passé composé in French, the perfect and the perfective reading:
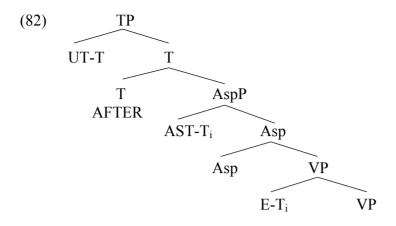
(80)   a. L'avion a aterri maintenant.   [Perfect]
            the plane has landed now
        b. L'avion a aterri hier.   [Perfective]
            the plane has landed yesterday

Their proposal is that the two readings are distinguished by two interrelated facts: (i) which temporal argument is coindexed with which temporal argument and (ii) the structural position where an AFTER relator is introduced. The way in which both properties are linked is that whenever the head is non-specified, its external argument must be coindexed with the internal argument.

The perfect reading is treated as an aspectual form, that is, inside a configuration where tense is underspecified and 'AFTER' projects as AspP:

(81)

```
                    TP
                  /    \
             UT-T_i      T
                       /    \
                      T      AspP
                           /     \
                      AST-T_i      Asp
                                  /    \
                               Asp      VP
                              AFTER    /   \
                                    E-T      VP
```

This produces a reading where the assertion time is ordered after the event time (follows the termination of the event), and the utterance time is identical to it; that is, a perfect reading. In contrast, as we advanced before, the perfective reading is treated as tense, that is, as in (82) a situation where aspect is non specified and tense is.

(82)

```
                    TP
             _____|_____
           /              \
        UT-T               T
                    _____|_____
                   /               \
                  T                AspP
                AFTER          ____|____
                              /         \
                          AST-Tᵢ        Asp
                                    _____|_____
                                   /           \
                                  Asp          VP
                                          _____|_____
                                         /           \
                                       E-Tᵢ          VP
```

Consider the way in which this approach solves the morphological problem, and the way in which it does not. One can associate the morphology of the French perfect systematically to the feature AFTER (with the other head non specified), in the same way that Arche's (2014) approach can account for the different readings of the imperfecto by excluding the operators from the lexical entry of the morphemes that spell out the heads. However, importantly, that spell out procedure must be not sensitive to the structural position where AFTER is projected, as T or Asp; if T and Asp have any meaning as grammatical labels, this is problematic to state the lexical entry of the morpheme, because (presumably) we would be talking about two different feature sets, {T, AFTER} and {Asp, AFTER}, or, alternatively, as two different features that share the same value, T^{after} and Asp^{after}. The morphological problem only disappears if the difference between Tense and Aspect is treated as not lexical, that is, not imposed by features of a different kind, but as emergent from the syntactic configuration as two different interpretations of the same head, call it Rel(ation), when appearing in different syntactic contexts. This is not far from what Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria's approach states, as they explicitly mention that their temporal predicates belong to the family of relator heads in Hale & Keyser (2002). The problem, however, is that unless the family of relators is further specified in some way, or the spell out rule is made sensitive to the syntactic configuration and not just to the feature 'AFTER', one could predict that in French prepositions expressing the same relation should be able to be spelled out also with the passé simple morphology, which is not the case. This is an aspect, in our opinion, where additional research can still be conducted in the Neo-Reichenbachian approach.
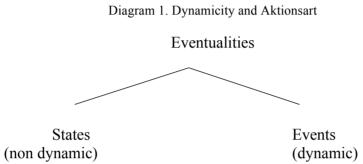
3.2. Internal aspect or Aktionsart

Note that in the diagrams we have used to introduce external aspect we have treated the running time of the eventuality as one single sequence of '------' without any obvious internal boundary. The reason is that external aspect is, to a great extent, independent of internal aspect, but this does not mean that the situation cannot have any internal structure.

The basic division inside internal aspect goes back to Vendler (1957) and Dowty (1979), and distinguishes between four major classes of predicates that are differentiated through the following three criteria:

a) Does the predicate denote a dynamic event or not?
b) Does the predicate denote an eventuality that has a natural endpoint or not?
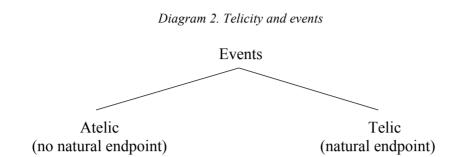c) Does the predicate denote a punctual eventuality or a temporally-extended one?

The first criterion refers to dynamicity, understood, intuitively, as involving some rate of change across time. An eventuality is dynamic if it denotes a state of affairs where, intuitively, the world changes while the eventuality takes place. This first criterion produces a macrodivision inside the set of predicates:

Diagram 1. Dynamicity and Aktionsart

Eventualities

States
(non dynamic)

Events
(dynamic)

States are those predicates that denote states of affairs not involving change in any of their participants; one property they fulfil, for this reasons, is the so-called Strict Interval Property: any instant in the running time of a state will exhibit exactly the same state of affairs as all the other instants, and the whole time period during which the state is valid. For instance, if John knows English since he was 8 until now, when he is 45, the 3rd of October of 2011, at 15:32 and 3 seconds, it is true that he knows English.

With some potential exceptions (cf. Fabricius-Hansen's 1975 notion of intransformative verb, such as *prevent* or *keep*) any predicate that is not a state is dynamic, and receives the general label of 'event'. Take, for instance, the event of running. Intuitively, it is not true that the state of affairs is identical during the whole duration of the running situation; it is also clear that if it is true that John runs, during the time that he is running, there has to be some rate of change in the situation –'something has to happen'–, although identifying that change might not be trivial: we could think that at least the change would be related to John's different locations as he runs, but one can run without changing one's location. But leaving these complications aside, it is clear that we cannot apply the strict subinterval property to events. Let us assume that running means 'moving the lower extremities fast and rythmically': a photo that we could take of an instant of John running will not show any movement, thus it won't be, stricto sensu, a picture of a running event, even though when looking at it we might be able to deduce that what John was doing when the picture was taken was running. Contrast this with a state: if we take the state of John being sick, any picture of any instant of John being sick will show John being sick. We could go as far as to say that a state can be shown in a photo, while an event will have to be shown in a movie, no matter how short, because events involve some change across time.

Let us now go to the second factor, which is applied only to events: whether there is a natural endpoint or culmination. This divides events in two classes: telic and atelic.

Diagram 2. Telicity and events

```
                          Events
                         /      \
                        /        \
                       /          \
                  Atelic            Telic
          (no natural endpoint)  (natural endpoint)
```

The notion of natural endopoint is quite intuitive. Some predicates denote states of affairs that cannot be extended indefinitely in time, because the change they involve culminates in a new state of affairs. Take a predicate like *read a book*: if one follows it, no matter how long the book is (provided it is not infinite), at some point one will be done reading the book. A book that was unread by someone is now read by someone. Prolonging the event of reading the book beyond that would not be possible, in the sense that what we do after it will not be 'reading the book', but rather 'rereading the book' or something else. Consider now the following predicate:

(83)   to make dinner

No matter how slowly we cook, at some point dinner will be made, and if we keep on cooking after it, what we are producing is not 'dinner', but something else, say a cake for our neighbour. These two predicates have a natural endpoint, because the change they involve culminates in a way that makes it impossible to continue applying that event to that participant. Such predicates are said to be telic.
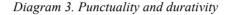
Contrast this with predicates that lack a natural endpoint. What this means is that, in principle, the state of affairs that they describe can be prolonged indefinitely because it is never going to trigger a change that culminates. Consider run or swim: in principle one is going to be able to run and run and run without boundaries. In the real world we know that eventually anyone running will stop, but one terminates the event at some arbitrary point, given that there was no culmination. Such predicates are atelic.
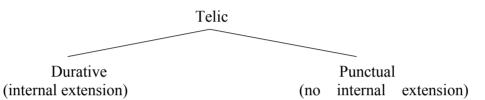
The reader might have noticed that in this presentation I am avoiding the term 'verb' and I am rather using 'predicate', ascribing each internal aspect class to predicates rather than verbs. The reason is that it has been repeatedly noted that what properly belongs to an internal aspect class is not a verb, but the whole verbal phrase, or predicate. *Running* is an atelic predicate, as we have seen, but *running to the shop* is telic, because at some point one will arrive to the shop, and after it, the event will no longer be 'running to the shop', even if one goes on running: there is a natural endpoint. *Running around the park* is atelic, but *running three kilometers around the park* is telic. *Reading a book* is telic, because the book will be done at some point, but *reading poetry* is atelic, because in principle the quantity of poetry that one reads there is unbounded;

contrast this with *reading all poetry available in the universe*, which is telic (even if it will take long to reach the culmination).

States are assumed to be atelic: if they do not involve any change, by definition there won't be any possible culmination leading to a new state of affairs. In principle, then, any state can be prolonged indefinitely in time, from knowing English to being sick; we know that people die, but this is irrelevant for the grammatical characterisation of these predicates.

The third factor is whether a predicate has internal duration or happens punctually. This applies only to telic verbs, given that the punctuality or durativity are assessed taking into account how long it takes between the starting of the event and the moment in which the culmination is naturally reached.

Diagram 3. Punctuality and durativity

Telic

Durative
(internal extension)

Punctual
(no internal extension)

The event of reading a novel, unless one has magic powers, is durative, because there is a non-trivial time period that goes between the moment in which one opens the first page and the time in which one reaches the last sentence. But contrast this with *dying*: one dies, technically, the second one stops being alive. Whatever happened before, while one was still alive, might be leading one to death (*agonising, being seriously ill, planning suicide...*), but we do not denote those states of affairs with the predicate dying, which is reserved exclusively for the second one stops being alive. The same goes for *reaching the door*: that predicate describes the instant in which the entity that moves is in contact with (what we pragmatically decide that counts as) the door, and whatever happened before might be *travelling, running, flying*, etc., but will not be part of what we call *reaching the door*. These predicates are punctual; contrast this again with *reading the book*: the activity that precedes the second one reads the last word of the novel is also called *reading*.

Atelic events are assumed to be durative, and not punctual, given that they lack a culmination; one can only be punctual if one has the possibility that the culmination happens as soon as the event starts.

The combination of these three factors produces the following taxonomy of internal aspect classes: states, activities, accomplishments and achievements.

Diagram 4. The taxonomy of internal aspect

Eventualities

States	Events		
Non-dynamic (Atelic) (Durative)	**Activities** (Dynamic) Atelic (Durative)	Telic	
		Accomplishments (Dynamic) (Telic) Durative	**Achievements** (Dynamic) (Telic) Punctual
know English *be sick* *own* *like Mary*	*run* *read poetry* *swim* *push a cart*	*read a book* *make dinner* *swim three meters* *burn the house*	*die* *arrive* *explode* *win a game*

Note that in this short introduction we have presented what can be considered 'the textbook version' of internal aspect, highlighting what has to be known as background to the correlation between internal aspect and the use of imperfecto and indefinido. There are several controversial issues about this 'standard' view, including among other things the nature of predicates which seem to alternate freely between telic and atelic readings (degree achievements, cf. Hay, Kennedy & Levin 1999), the controversy with respect to whether achievements are actually telic or even dynamic (Piñón 1997, Marín & McNally 2011), or the possibility of proposing subdivisions inside the state class (Maienborn 2005), among many others. The interested reader can check, among others, Dowty (1979), Tenny (1987), Krifka (1989), Verkuyl (1993), De Miguel (1999), Rothstein (2004) or Levin & Rappaport-Hovav (2005). With this background in mind, let us now move to the facts about imperfecto and indefinido.

4. Imperfecto and indefinido: facts and proposals

After introducing the relevant notions, here we will explore the contrast between imperfecto and indefinido. The first part of this section (§4.1) is devoted to the empirical facts, starting with imperfecto, whose uses are richer and more complex. The second part (§4.2) concentrates on the available proposals to capture these contrasts.

4.1. The facts

4.1.1. Imperfecto

There are three core temporoaspectual uses of imperfecto which are admitted by virtually any textbook, researcher and theory:

a) The descriptive or continuous use of the imperfecto, used whenever one uses the past to describe the properties of an entity, not to tell about the events where it participated (eg., *Juan era guapo* 'Juan was handsome'; *Hacía frío* 'It was cold')

b) The habitual use of the imperfecto, used to present typical actions of participants in the past, rather than specific events where they took part (eg., *En su juventud, Juan solía ir a Madrid* 'In his youth, Juan used to go to Madrid'; *Por esas fechas, Juan iba mucho a ese restaurante* 'Around those dates, Juan would often go to that restaurant').

c) The progressive use of the imperfecto, used to present one single event in the past as not terminated, as ongoing, when another event takes place (*Mientras viajaba a Madrid, perdí mi pasaporte* 'While I was travelling to Madrid, I lost my passport').

Let us see each one of these uses more in detail.

4.1.1.1. Descriptive or continious uses

The continuous interpretation of imperfecto –a time period during which a state of affairs holds– is typical with stative verbs, which do not denote dynamic eventualities with an internal development. For this reason, they are typically used to describe participants in a text, or frames and backgrounds. This use is associated to the imperfecto.

(84)　　a. Juan conocía a Luisa.
　　　　　 Juan knew.impf A Luisa
　　　　b. Juan tenía el pelo negro.
　　　　　 Juan had.impf the hair black
　　　　c.　Juan llevaba un abrigo azul.
　　　　　 Juan wore.impf a coat blue
　　　　d.　Juan odiaba la pizza.
　　　　　 Juan hated.impf the pizza

In copulative sentences, the nature of the attribute is crucial to determine whether the past tense used is imperfecto or indefinido. Ceteris paribus, and with the exceptions that are mentioned in §4.1.2., adjectives that express physical properties and adjectives that present the subjective opinion of the speaker (when they are not related to human behaviours) tend to appear in imperfecto. Note that if the adjective is Individual Level (that is, denotes a property that characterises the individual and not the state in which the individual is found; Carlson 1977) the use of the imperfecto can trigger the implication that the subject no longer exists, that is, that the person whose properties we describe is now dead (Musan 1995).

(85)　　a. Juan era guapo.
　　　　　 Juan was.impf handsome
　　　　b. Juan era maravilloso.
　　　　　 Juan was.impf wonderful

In general, as we will see, cases where a stative verb appears in the indefinido normally involve some notion of dynamicity (a change of state or reference to a dynamic event) or involve temporoaspectual modifiers that specify the termination of the state of affairs. When none of these factors are at play, statives appear in the imperfecto and are generally used to describe the

background of a narration –as opposed to the indefinido, used to introduce the different happenings that advance the narration leading it to a conclusion–.

The descriptive use of the imperfecto, then, is typical with stative verbs, but this does not mean that states are the only class of predicates that exhibit it. Activity verbs –dynamic but atelic– can also show it, and it has been claimed that when they do, those verbs are used to characterise a particular temporal period through the states of affairs that hold in it. Ducrot (1979) is an example of a researcher that makes this claim. In his view, the two sentences in (86) contrast with respect to whether we describe Tuesday by characterising it as a time period during which it rained (86a), or we introduce an event that happened in that time period (86b).

(86) a. El martes llovía.
      the Tuesday rained.impf
    b. El martes llovió.
      the Tuesday rained.pfcv
  ‘On Tuesday it rained’

(86a), then, in his view would be similar to a descriptive statement like ‘Last Tuesday was rainy’.

Telic verbs, like accomplishments –telic dynamic verbs with duration– and achievements –punctual verbs which take place in an instant– have also been claimed to have a descriptive use, the ‘narrative’ use (Fernández Ramírez 1986: 283-284), illustrated in (87).

(87) a. En 1904 nacía Dalí.
      in 1904 was.born.impf Dalí
  ‘In 1904 Dalí was born’
    b. En 1939 comenzaba la Primera Guerra Mundial.
      In 1939 began.impf the First World War
  ‘In 1939 WWI started’
    c. En 1616 se publicaba El Quijote.
      in 1616 SE published.impf the Quixote

This use is stylistically marked; in colloquial speech it is not frequent to find it. Again, this use has been related to situations where one introduces the background of a narration and characterises it by some states of affairs that are considered significant and relevant to establish the nature of that background.

4.1.1.2. Habitual uses

The second general use of the imperfecto is the habitual one, whereby one presents an unbounded number of instances of the same event. Remember that habituality is different from iterativity; in iteratives, which for instance allow the expression of a cardinality value of the repetitions of the event (88), the indefinido is used. Some examples with habituals are shown in (89).

(88) Juan {escribió / *escribía} la carta tres veces.
    Juan wrote.pfcv / wrote.impf the letter three times
(89) a. Luis desayunaba café todos los días.
      Luis had.breakfast.impf coffee all the days

b. Luis corría cinco kilómetros cada fin de semana.
Luis ran.impf five kilometers each end of week

c. En la Edad Media, un hombre se casaba si su padre lo permitía.
In the Middle Ages, a man SE married.impf if his father it allowed

Note that habituality and genericity can be very close. (89c) is generic in the sense that it is describing a situation that was typical during the Middle Ages, and each instance of the event would have different participants (*a man* has a generic interpretation). One interesting question is whether (89c) should be properly classified, then, as a descriptive use or as a habitual use. Bertinetto (2004) proposes that a subclass of habitual readings are actitudinals, that is, that they characterise some entity through its disposition to participate habitually in an event: *María cantaba* 'María sang.impf' would not just say that María used to sing, but also that this disposition to singing characterised María, be it because it was her job or be it because it was a hobby she was fond of.

In fact, we could also think that in (89a) we characterise Luis during a time period through the habit of having coffee for breakfast, which might again connect this use with the one discussed in the previous section.

Individual Level predicates are expected to reject habitual uses. It is impossible to interpret (90) as 'Juan used to be tall' or 'Juan is usually tall'.

(90)   Juan era alto.
         Juan was.impf tall

Stative predicates, provided they are stage level –that is, that they describe the state in which a subject is found, rather than characterise the subject– can get a habitual reading.

(91)   Juan estaba siempre enfermo.
         Juan was.impf always sick

There are two interpretations of this sentence. One is descriptive (continuous): Juan was constantly sick during some time period. The second one, which is the relevant one here, is that habitually Juan would get sick; hence, in this reading we interpret that Juan has had several different illnesses. (91) is adapted from García Fernández (2004: 41), where he attributes the observation to Ignacio Bosque (p.c.).

The contrast between (90) and (91) is likely to be related to the impossibility of quantifying over instances of Individual Level predicates (Kratzer 1995).

The habitual reading of (90) is impossible for the same reason that (92a) is ungrammatical.

(92)   a. *Cada vez que lo veía, Juan era alto.
            each time that him I.saw.impf, Juan was.impf tall
         b. Cada vez que lo veía, Juan estaba enfermo.
            each time that him I.saw.impf, Juan was.impf sick

Activity predicates can also have habitual interpretations, again with the possibility to understand some of their instances as generic or even actitudinal.

(93)   a. Llovía todos los martes.
          it.rained.impf all the Tuesdays
       b. En el cretácico, llovía intensamente.
          in the Cretaceous, it.rained intensely

The same goes for accomplishments (94) and achievements (95), which also contain an event variable that one can quantify over.

(94)   a. Todos los martes leía una novela policiaca.
          all the Tuesdays read.impf a novel crime
      'He read a crime novel every Tuesday'
       b. En 1936 las mujeres no leían normalmente una novela policiaca.
          In 1936 the women not read.impf usually a novel crime
      'In 1936 women didn't usually read a crime novel'
(95)   a. Todos los martes salía de casa.
          all the Tuesday came.out.impf of house
      'Every Tuesday he would go out'
       b. En 1936 las mujeres no salían normalmente de fiesta.
          In 1936 the women not went.out.impf usually of party
      'In 1936 women wouldn't usually go to parties'

In the case of events which –through their lexical meaning or world knowledge– are expected to happen only once to the same individual, the habitual reading is only possible provided some referential conditions in one of the arguments are met. Take, for instance, a verb of destruction like *quemar* 'burn'. If the direct object is a singular individual, the habitual reading is out because the same object can only be burnt once.

(96)   #Juan quemaba el libro cada lunes.
      Juan burnt.impf the book each Monday

The obvious two solutions are (i) to introduce a bare plural direct object, denoting an unbounded set of books or (ii) to assign a distributive or generic interpretation to the direct object, so that a singular can refer to more than one individual:

(97)   a. Juan quemaba libros cada lunes.
          Juan burnt.impf books each Monday
       b. Juan quemaba un libro cada lunes.
          Juan burnt a book each Monday

That this is a restriction based on our world knowledge is confirmed by the fact that with objects which can get burnt, but not destroyed in the process, the equivalent of (96) can easily get a habitual reading:

(98)   Juan siempre se quemaba la piel en la playa.
      Juan always SE burnt.impf the skin in the beach

In similar cases with unaccusative verbs, it is the subject that has to meet the referential conditions:

(99)   a. #Juan moría cada martes.
          Juan died each Tuesday
        b. En 1936, muchas personas morían cada semana.
          In 1936, many people died.impf each week
        c. En 1936, un hombre moría cada hora.
          In 1936, a man died every hour
        d. En 1936, un disidente moría fácilmente.
          In 1936, a dissident died.impf easily

Again, the restriction seems to be based on world knowledge. If we interpret (99a) metaphorically, with 'die' standing for 'having a strong negative reaction', the habitual reading is perfectly possible. Also, a singular individual which we assume to be able to die and be reborn an unbounded set of times is also acceptable in the habitual reading:

(100)   El Ave Fénix moría y nacía cada poco tiempo.
        the bird Phoenix died.impf and was.born.impf each little time
        'The Phoenix died and was born from time to time'

4.1.1.3. Progressive interpretation

In the progressive interpretation there is one single event and one point in the internal development of that event is focalised. The effect that comes naturally as a result of this is that the event is presented before its termination. The effect is particularly noticeable in constructions where an achievement verb is simultaneous to one of the temporal points included in the temporal interval denoted by another verb in the imperfecto, precisely because achievement verbs are themselves punctual. The sentences in (101) are equivalent to the sentences in (102), where the progressive periphrasis is used.

(101)   a. Cuando salí de casa, llovía.
         when went.out.pfcv of house, it rained.impf
       'When I came out, it rained'
       b. Cuando salía de casa, Juan leía el libro.
         when went.out.pfcv of house, Juan read.impf the book
       'When I came out, Juan was reading the book'
(102)   a. Cuando salí de casa, estaba lloviendo.
         when went.out.pfcv of house, it.was.impf raining
       'When I came out, it was raining'
       b. Cuando salí de casa, Juan estaba leyendo un libro.
         when I went.out.pfcv of house, Juan was reading a book'

Statives are expected to reject this reading, given that they lack any internal development; similarly, they reject the progressive periphrasis.

(103)   a. #Cuando salí de casa, Juan odiaba la pizza.
          when went.out of house, Juan hated.impf the pizza
       'When I came out, Juan hated pizza' [continuous interpretation]
       b. ??Juan estaba odiando la pizza.
         Juan was hating the pizza

Achievements lack any internal duration, and as such they are not expected to allow progressive readings. However, they do allow for a 'preparatory stage reading' (Piñón 1997), whereby the 'progressive' interpretation focalises a point inside the state preceding the event.

(104)   Cuando salí de casa, María llegaba.
        when went.out of house, María arrived.impf
        'When I came out, María was arriving'

This is the so-called 'conative interpretation', whereby one presents an action as about to happen –as expected if the point focalised belongs to the state immediately preceding the event–. (104) is equivalent to (105), and note that no claim is made with respect to whether María eventually arrived or not; we interpret that María was close to arriving home, but (104) is true even if she turns back before reaching the door.

(105)   Cuando salí de casa, María estaba a punto de llegar.
        when went.out.pfcv of house, María was.impf at point of arrive
        'When I came out, María was about to arrive'

4.1.1.4. Interim summary: internal aspect and the three main readings
    Before moving to other readings, let us combine what we just saw with the four main classes of internal aspect in order to see how imperfecto and indefinido interact with the internal temporal constituency of a predicate. The following table summarises the facts.

Table 3. Internal aspect and interpretations in imperfecto

	Descriptive	Habitual	Progressive
States	Yes *Juan era alto.*	Yes, but only with Stage Level states *Juan estaba siempre enfermo.*	Not applicable. States lack an internal development.
Activities	Perhaps, in cases where the activity is used to characterise a temporal period (controversial): *El lunes llovía.*	Yes. *Juan corría cada lunes.*	Yes. *Cuando corría, sonó el teléfono.*
Accomplishments	No (but cf. narrative imperfecto).	Yes. *Juan leía una novela cada semana.*	Yes. *Cuando leía una novela, sonó el teléfono.*
Achievements	No (but cf. narrative imperfecto).	Yes. *Juan siempre llegaba tarde.*	No, achievements lack any internal duration; possible only if a preparatory stage preceding the event is understood: *Cuando moría, sonó el teléfono.*

Let us now move to the other uses of imperfecto that have been identified in the literature.

4.1.1.5. The intentional reading

The intentional reading (Cipria 1996, Zagona 2012: 363; called 'prospective interpretation' in RAE & ASALE 2009: §23.11j) has some similarities to the conative interpretation in that it typically emerges with achievement verbs. However, unlike the conative interpretation, the intentional reading asserts that a subject had the intention to perform that action or that the action was planned, with or without the meaning that additionally that action was supposed to start imminently.

(106) Hasta ayer,   María salía   de viaje mañana, pero lo
       Until yesterday, María went.out.impf of journey tomorrow, but it
       cancelaron ayer.
       cancelled.pfcv yesterday
       'Until yesterday, María intended to go on a journey tomorrow, but they
       cancelled it yesterday'

Interestingly, states reject this interpretation; note that it is not available in (107a); at least marginally it is allowed by activities and accomplishments.

(107) a. Hasta ayer, María vivía en París.
       until yesterday María lived.impf in Paris
       *'Until yesterday, María intended to live in Paris'
       b. Hasta ayer, María cantaba en la ópera.
       until yesterday, María sang.impf in the opera
       ?'Until yesterday, María intended to sing in the opera'
       c. Hasta ayer, María daba una conferencia en París.
       until yesterday, María gave.impf a conference in Paris
       'Until yesterday, María intended to give a conference in Paris'

4.1.1.6. Punctual imperfectos: exceptions inside Consecutio Temporum contexts

In the punctual imperfective, similarly to the narrative imperfective, the verb refers to completed and culminated single instantiations of events (Fernández Ramírez 1986: 281; García Fernández 2004: 83-90). One such case is the imperfective subordinated to a perception verb (108).

(108) Juan vio que María salía de casa.
       Juan saw.pfcv that María went.out.impf of house
       'Juan saw María go out'

In (108) a progressive reading is not possible, because *salir* is an achievement. We do not assume here that María was caught by Juan with half her body inside the house, and we can clearly assign (108) a reading where Juan saw the complete action of going out. Unlike narrative uses, however, there is no sense in which the imperfective here could be described as characterising a 'seeing' event or a time frame through the state of affairs that holds of it.

This takes us to an important fact: (108) is a particular instance of a Consecutio Temporum use where, intuitively, we are using the imperfecto in order to state that the action that Juan witnessed is simultaneous with the event of seeing it, which lies in the past. The type of main verb that is used in the sentence seems to play a role here, given that with non-perception verbs the interpretation is typically that the imperfecto states that the action had not terminated at the time that the subject of the main verb reports it, as shown in this table:

Table 4. Imperfecto in indirect speech

Verb of saying, subordinate state	Juana dijo que Juan estaba enfermo. *Juana said.pfcv that Juan was.impf sick* 'Juana said that Juan was sick' ??Juana dijo que Juan estuvo enfermo. *Juana said that Juan was.pfcv sick* Juana dijo que Juan había estado enfermo. *Juana said that Juan had been sick* 'Juana said that Juan had been sick'
Verb of saying, subordinate activity	Juana dijo que Juan corría. *Juana said that Juan ran.impf* 'Juana said that Juan vas running' ??Juana dijo que Juan corrió. Juana said that Juan ran.pfcv Juana dijo que Juan había corrido. *Juana said that Juan had run* 'Juana said that Juan had run'
Verb of saying, subordinate accomplishment	Juana dijo que Juan leía un libro. *Juana said that Juan read.impf a book* 'Juana said that Juan was reading a book' ??Juana dijo que Juan leyó un libro. *Juana said that Juan read.pfcv a book* Juana dijo que Juan había leído un libro. *Juana said that Juan had read a book* 'Juana said that Juan had read a book'
Verb of saying, subordinate achievement	Juana dijo que Juan venía. *Juana said that Juan arrived.impf* 'Juana said that Juan was about to arrive' ??Juana dijo que Juan vino. *Juana said that Juan arrived.pfcv* Juana dijo que Juan había venido. *Juana said that Juan had arrived* 'Juana said that Juan had arrived'

These facts, with a verb of saying, are well-behaved in the sense that the use of the imperfecto implies that what Juana reported was an ongoing event, or a change of affairs whose validity extended at least up to the moment that she reported it. The indefinido is restricted in its use here; whenever the report involved an already terminated state of affairs, it seems that the pluscuamperfecto (*había + participle*) has to be used. However, as García Fernández notes, there are cases where imperfecto can be used to denote states that are already terminated by the time that the subject presents the report, as in *Juana dijo que María estaba triste el día de su boda* 'Juana said that María

was.impf sad the day of her wedding'. Several things are worth noting with this example:

a) First, this use of imperfecto to refer to a time previous, and not simultaneous, with the eventuality time of the main verb is possible only when another temporal expression appears in the subordinate clause: *Juana dijo que María leía un libro el día de su boda* 'Juana said that María read.impf a book on her wedding day' allows for a reading where María was reading the book before Juana reported it, but *Juana dijo que María leía un libro* forces a simultaneous reading.

b) These are the only contexts where indefinido is natural (at least with states). Note that *Juana dijo que María estuvo triste el día de su boda* 'Juana said that María was.pfcv sad the day of her wedding' is much better than ??*Juana dijo que María estuvo triste*. When the predicate is not a state, imperfecto is less natural, but surprisingly not completely impossible provided there is a temporal modifier in the subordinate clause that delimits the duration of the event: (?)*Juana dijo que María leyó todo el libro en una tarde* 'Juana said that María read.pfcv all the book in one afternoon'.

Collectively, these facts seem to suggest several important factors about the distribution of imperfecto in subordinate clauses. First, that imperfecto typically presents ongoing states of affairs that are simultaneous with a past event of saying or perceiving, but nothing in principle prevents it from refering to a time interval which is also past with respect to the report (this is not possible, for obvious reasons, if the main predicate is a perception verb). Second, this does not seem to be doable without understanding that there is another temporal interval, which is introduced by overt constituents in the subordinate clause. Third, it is true that indefinido is rejected in indirect speech whenever one wants to present situations, culminated or not, that are simultaneous with the main verb; perhaps for this reason under certain conditions the imperfecto is used to present punctual culminated events, as in (104). Fourth, under the same conditions where imperfecto is allowed to refer to past time intervals other than those introduced by the main verb, indefinido can be used in indirect speech.

4.1.1.7. Modalised uses

Finally, there is a number or readings that involve some modal notion, all of them having to do, broadly, with the idea of 'non-actuality' of the state of affairs presented: it is assigned to a hypothetical situation, to a world distinct from the 'real' one or to notions of uncertainty and insecurity. See Fernández Ramírez (1986: 269 and folls) for further details about these readings.
There is a relatively numerous taxonomy of such uses.

a) The ludic imperfective, used typically by children to introduce states of affairs that they know are false in the real world, and are assigned to a fantasy situation. The imperfecto here refers to a 'pretend' reality:

(109) ¿Vale que yo era un policía y te perseguía?
       Fine that I was.impf a cop and you followed.impf?
       'Let's pretend that I am a cop and I am following you'

b) The oniric or figurative imperfective, also used to describe states of affairs refered to imagined worlds, like dreams:

(110) En el sueño, yo viajaba a Marte.
       In the dream, I traveled.impf to Mars

c) In connection with these imagined forms, it is not unusual that in colloquial speech the imperfecto is used to substitute the conditional in the apodosis of conditional sentences, to present the hypothetical consequence:

(111) Si tuviera dinero, te pagaba una casa.
       If I.had money, you paid.impf a house
       'If I had money, I would buy you a house'

d) The politeness imperfecto is used to present petitions and requests in a less impositive fashion. It can be broadly related, as RAE & ASALE (2009: §23.11e) note, to the notion of non-actuality or distantiation from what the speaker considers that should be true of the real world:

(112) Quería un café, por favor.
       I.wanted.impf a coffee, please
       'Please, I want a coffee'

e) The citative imperfecto is used to confirm information that one has received before, but of which is uncertain. The notion that seems relevant here is insecurity, real or not.

(113) ¿Tú vivías en Madrid?
       you lived.impf in Madrid?
       'Do I remember correctly that you live in Madrid?'

f) The desiderative imperfecto is used to express wishes; typical from colloquial language, it is another case where the conditional could have been used.

(114) Con mucho gusto me iba a la playa ahora.
       with great pleasure ME went.impf to the beach now
       'With great pleasure I would go to the beach now'

g) Imperfective used in exclamative sentences, sometimes providing the claim with a sense of 'epiphany' (something that the speaker has been inspired to consider a plausible state of affairs, 115), and sometimes associated to apologies (116):

(115) ¡Tenía que ser él!
       had.impf that be him!
       '[Of course now I understand], it must be him'
(116) ¡Perdona, no me acordaba!
        sorry, not ME remembered.impf!
       'Sorry, I didn't remember that!'

h) Imperfecto conveying surprise about some piece of information that one has received, or about the apparent mismatch between the received information and what the speaker thought was established in the current world:

(117)   ¿Pero tú no estabas casado?
          but you not were.impf married?
          'But you are married, aren't you?'

4.1.2. Indefinido

In contrast to the imperfecto, the indefinido has a narrower set of uses. Simplifying things considerably for the sake of the presentation, we could preliminary say –by opposition to the imperfecto– that the indefinido is used when:

i)   the utterance presents an event taking place in a time interval, rather than describing a participant or the characteristic state of affairs of a time period

ii)   one talks about a specific instatiation of an event, rather than about a habit involving an indeterminate number of repetitions of that event

iii)   one presents the event as terminated or completed in the relevant time period, rather than presenting it in its progression

Interestingly, there are no modal uses of the indefinido in Spanish. The previous list of preliminary rules explain several facts:

a) By virtue of (i), we expect Individual Level predicates, *ceteris paribus*, to appear in the imperfecto rather than in the indefinido, correctly.

(118)   a. La mesa era roja.
             the table was.impf red
          b. ??La mesa fue roja.
             the table was.pfcv red

We will see, however (§4.1.2.1) that this does not mean, at all, that statives in general or even individual level predicates cannot appear in the indefinido.

b) By virtue of (ii), we expect that we will use the indefinido whenever we have a temporal modifier that locates one specific instance of an event, or whenever the event is iterative and allows a specific number of repetitions:

(119)   a. Juan vino a las tres.
             Juan arrived.pfcv at the three
          'Juan arrived at three o'clock'
          b. #Juan venía a las tres.
             Juan arrived.impf at the three
          [Ungrammatical unless interpreted as conative or intentional]
(120)   a. Juan escribió la carta tres veces.
             Juan wrote.pfcv the letter three times

b. *Juan escribía la carta tres veces.
   Juan wrote.impf the letter three times

c) By virtue of (iii), we expect that we will use the indefinido whenever we have an implicit or explicit modifier that makes direct reference to the termination of the state of affairs (121), and that with durative predicates we will have contrasts like those in (122), where the event denoted by the main verb will be ordered after the termination of the subordinate event in the indefinido, but included inside the eventuality time of the subordinate clause with the imperfecto.

(121)   a. Juan leyó poesía durante tres horas.
           Juan read.pfcv poetry for three hours
        b. *Juan leía poesía durante tres horas.
            Juan read.impf poetry for three hours
(122)   a. Encontré mi cartera cuando bajé las escaleras.
           I.found.pfcv my wallet when went.down.pfcv the stairs
        'I found my wallet after I went down the stairs'
        b. Encontré mi cartera cuando bajaba las escaleras.
           I.found.pfcv my wallet when went.down.impf the stairs
        'I found my wallet while I was going down the stairs'

In what follows, we will examine some apparent exceptions and some further contrasts, in order to see what are the relevant notions that, empirically, seem to distinguish between the two forms of the past.

4.1.2.1. Indefinido with stative verbs
Some of the instances where the indefinido is used with copulative verbs, *ser* or *estar*, can be explained away as containing, at some level, the notion that there is a dynamic event involved in the interpretation of the sentence. The most obvious case is when the subject denotes itself an event. In such cases, it is actually presupposed that that event took place:

(123)   a. La fiesta fue divertida.
           the party was.pfcv amusing
        b. ??Juan fue divertido.
             Juan was.pfcv amusing
(124)   El examen estuvo bien.
         the exam was.pfcv fine
        'The exam went fine'

This can be extended to other stative predicates, individual level or stage level: the indefinido is used whenever the noun denotes an event, because then one asserts that an event took place.

(125)   a. Hubo una explosión.
            was.pfcv an explosion
        'There was an explosion'
        b. *Hubo un coche.
             was.pfcv a car

'There was a car'

There are other cases, though. With nouns and adjectives that denote properties that are associated to activities or behaviours, the indefinite is allowed to the extent that it is easy to understand implicit events (the activities themselves, or the activity were the subject displays the behaviour).

(126)   a. Juan fue médico.
            Juan was.pfcv doctor
        'Juan was a doctor'
        b. ??Juan fue alto.
            Juan was.pfcv tall

Nouns denoting jobs allow this kind of interpretation easily, as do evaluative adjectives associated to human behaviours, with an interpretation close to 'at some point, Juan acted in a cruel way':

(127)   a. Juan fue cruel.
            Juan was.pfcv cruel
        b. *Juan fue mortal.
            Juan was.pfcv mortal

Reference to an activity that can be deduced from the lexical meaning of the predicate is not the only relevant factor here, though. This condition on the use of indefinido with statives (rather, fake statives if our presentation is correct) overlaps partially with a second condition, which is whether there is an implicit or explicit expression that delimits the state of affairs by introducing a termination. (126) is possible only to the extent that we assume one of the two following scenarios, both of them with an implicit termination point:

   a) Juan was a doctor during a particular period of his life, now finished
   b) Juan was a doctor until his death, that has already occurred (lifespan reading)

If none of these two interpretations is relevant, and we just want to associate the property of being a doctor to Juan, at some point in the past, without asserting its termination, (128) is used:

(128)   Juan era médico.
        Juan was.impf doctor

The examples in (123) and (124) also require this 'limitation' condition. By default, it is natural to interpret that when one refers to an exam or a party, one wants to refer to the whole party or exam until their conclusion, but this is not necessarily so. One can predicate the property only of some initial stages of the exam or party, as in (129), and then the imperfecto is used.

(129)   La fiesta era divertida, pero entonces llegó Pepe y se estropeó.
        the party was.impf amusing, but then arrived.pfcv Pepe and SE spoiled
        'The party was amusing, but then Pepe arrived and it got spoiled'

Some of the overt expressions that denote a termination, either by identifying that termination or by measuring the distance between the initial and final point of the eventuality are underlined here:

(130)   a. Juan fue guapo <u>durante su juventud</u> (durante-phrases)
             Juan was.pfcv handsome during his youth
         b. Juan fue guapo <u>hasta que tuvo el accidente</u> (hasta-phrases)
             Juan was.pfcv handsome until he had.pfcv the accident
         c. Juan fue guapo <u>unos años</u>. (measuring quantifier expressions)
             Juan was.pfcv handsome some years
         d. Juan fue guapo <u>la década pasada</u> (bounded time expressions)
             Juan was.pfcv handsome the decade past
         d. Juan fue guapo <u>antes de ganar peso</u>. (antes-sentences)
             Juan was.pfcv handsome before of gaining weight

For similar reasons, in a copulative sentence, if the subject is itself a nominal expression that denotes a definite timespan, its boundaries are used to set the termination point of the state of affairs.

(131)   El lunes fue frío.
        the Monday was.pfcv cold
        'Monday was cold'

Using imperfecto in (131), which is not completely natural in all cases, implies not asserting that the property held during the whole extension of the time period, that is, did not include the termination.

(132)   El verano era aburrido, pero a finales de agosto mejoró.
        the summer was.impf boring, but at ends of August improved.pfcv
        'Summer was boring, but at the end of August it improved'

This does not mean that the only source of limitation with time expressions is the one provided by their natural extension. It seems possible to interpret (133) as meaning that at some particular specific timespan inside Monday, it was cold:

(133)   El lunes hizo frío.
        The monday made.pfcv cold
        'On Monday, it was cold (for some time)'

4.1.2.2. Other effects involving reference to termination points
   Activity verbs also provide contrasts between imperfecto and indefinido that are related with whether the relevant time period includes the termination of the state of affairs or not. Consider (134):

(134)   a. Durante aquel año, María estudiaba historia de Italia.
             During that year, María studied.impf history of Italy
         b. Durante aquel año, María estudió historia de Italia.
             During that year, María studied.pfcv history of Italy

Note to begin with that here the position of the durante-phrase is different from the examples above; instead of being related directly to the measuring of the event, it is in a left peripheral position where it is interpreted as a frame adverbial. For this reason it is compatible with another measuring expression, this one internal to the verbal phrase.

(135)   Durante aquella semana, María estudió inglés durante dos horas.
          During that week, María studied.pfcv English for two hours

With respect to the interpretation, (134b) strongly implies that María was done with her studies of Italian history, perhaps because she learnt everything that was supposed to be part of her curriculum. This implication is not present in (134a). The reasonable explanation is that in (134a) it is not asserted that the temporal frame of that year includes the termination of the studies, while this is part of what is being asserted in (134b).

The progressive interpretation of accomplishment verbs also falls within this family of effects. Contrast the two sentences in (136).

(136)   a. María veía la película con unos amigos cuando llamaron.
             María saw.impf the movie with some friends when called.pfcv
          'María was watching the movie with some friends when someone rang'
          b. María vio la película con unos amigos cuando llamaron.
             María saw.pfcv the movie with some friends when called.pfcv
          'María had watched the movie with some friends when someone rang'

Again, we understand that María was at some point in the process of watching the movie in (136a) when a phone call interrupted it, while in (136b) the salient interpretation is that there is no coincidence between the two situations: either we assert that the state of affairs was terminated by the time the phone rang, or that the state of affairs began after someone phoned (perhaps to say that they should not wait any longer for him).

4.1.2.3. Simultaneity and succession

The effect in (136) also boils down to the fact that in (136a) we place the phone call at some point inside the event of watching the movie –simultaneous interpretation– while in (136b) the two events do not overlap temporally – succession interpretation–. These effects also emerge in minimal pairs where imperfecto and indefinido contrast. Consider the following sentences:

(137)   a. Juan leyó una novela y cocinó paella.
             Juan read.pfcv a novel and cooked.pfcv paella
          b. Juan leía una novela y cocinaba paella.
             Juan read.impf a novel and cooked.impf paella

In (137a) the interpretation we obtain is that first, Juan read a novel, and only when he was done with that action, he started cooking paella. The events are ordered with respect to each other in the temporal domain, and their temporal extensions do not overlap.

(138)   +++----------------------+++----------------------++++
              reading   cooking

In (137b), in contrast, we interpret that he was in the process of cooking paella at the same time that he was reading a novel; independently of whether he finished either, both or none of them, the two actions overlap.

(139)   +++++---------------------------------+++++
                        reading
                        cooking

In the same syntactic context, if we combine one verb in indefinido with one in imperfecto, a simultaneity interpretation also emerges. The event in indefinido, including its termination point, is located at some point inside the time period defined by the event in imperfecto, excluding its termination point.

(140)   a. Juan leía una novela y cocinó una paella.
            Juan read.impf a novel and cooked.pfcv a paella

        b.   reading
            ---------------------------------...

                        cooking
            ++++++-------+++++++++++++

(141)   a. Juan leyó una novela y cocinaba una paella.
            Juan read.pfcv a novel and cooked.impf a paella

        b.   cooking
            ---------------------------------...

                        reading
            ++++++-------+++++++++++++

4.1.2.4. Modal verbs
    A different class of contrasts emerges with modal auxiliaries. Consider the contrast in (142):

(142)   a. Juan podía ir a la fiesta, pero no fue.
              Juan could.impf go to the party, but not went.pfcv
            'Juan could go to the party, but he did not go'
          b. Juan pudo ir a la fiesta, (#pero no fue).
              Juan could.pfcv go to the party, but not went.pfcv
            'Juan managed to go to the party, (#but he didn't go)'
(143)   a. Juan tenía que estudiar, pero no lo hizo.
              Juan had.impf to study, but not it did.pfcv
            'Juan had to study, but he didn't do it'
          b. Juan tuvo que estudiar, (#pero no lo hizo).
              Juan had.pfcv to study, but not it did.pfcv

In (142), we see that in their most salient interpretation, the two sentences contrast with respect to whether Juan indeed performed the event denoted by the main verb. In imperfecto, (142a), that is not part of the assertion, and therefore the continuation is appropriate. We interpret, here, the modal verb as expressing permission ('he was allowed to go') or perhaps capacity ('he was the kind of person that would be able to go to a party of that kind'), or maybe just that Juan going to the party was in principle conceivable (in an epistemic reading). In (142b), with indefinido, the most salient interpretation –but not the only one, as we will see– is that in addition to having that permission or capacity, Juan in fact went to the party. The verb is then translated as 'manage', and the continuation is incoherent with that interpretation.

(143) contrasts in a similar way, again in the most salient interpretation of (143b). (143a) asserts that Juan had an obligation, but makes no claim about whether he fulfilled it or not. (143b), in contrast, is interpreted as meaning that Juan performed the event that he had to.

Both contrasts seem to fall within the first of the three factors that we preliminarily singled out as associated to the use of the indefinido in Spanish: instead of describing a stative situation, the indefinido tends to be associated with eventive readings involving dynamicity and actual occurrence of events in the relevant world.

However, note that this is by no means the only interpretation of indefinido with modal auxiliaries, and that in another reading the continuations are not impossible. This other reading is best identified in an example like (144):

(144)   Juan debió llamar a la policía, pero no lo hizo.
        Juan must.pfcv call A the police, but not it did.pfcv
        'Juan should have called the police, but he didn't do it'

This reading does not imply that Juan called the police. Instead, what it seems to assert is that at some particular point, an obligation that was not there before emerged. While at some previous point there was no need to call the cops, in the relevant timespan that (144) talks about, the necessity emerged. In other words: here we assert a change of state in the situation, related to the presence of an obligation component. The necessity comes to exist, and then disappears because it is too late. The use of the indefinido here is associated to a transition between two states, which is one of the typical interpretations of telicity and perfectivity.

Similar readings are allowed in (145).

(145)   a. Juan pudo ir a la fiesta, pero no aprovechó la ocasión.
            Juan could.pfcv go to the party, but not profitted.pfcv the occassion
        'Juan could go to the party, but didn't take advantage of the occassion'
        b. Juan tuvo que estudiar, pero no lo hizo.
            Juan had.pfcv to study, but not it did
        'Juan should study, but didn't do it'

This second interpretation, where the event does not take place, is facilitated by the perfect auxiliary:

(146)   a. Juan tuvo que haber estudiado, pero no lo hizo.

Juan had.pfcv to have studied, but not it did

'Juan should have studied, but did not do it'

b. Juan pudo haber ido a la fiesta, pero no lo hizo.

Juan could.pfcv have gone to the party, but not it did

'Juan could have gone to the party, but didn't do it'

4.1.2.5. Aktionsart changes with indefinido

It has been noted that other stative verbs, beyond modal auxiliaries, change their interpretation in indefinido. Contrast (147).

(147)   a. Juan sabía (*en la escuela) que Colón descubrió América.

Juan knew.impf at school that Columbus discovered.pfcv América

'Juan knew (*at school) that Columbus discovered America'

b. Juan supo (en la escuela) que Colón descubrió América.

Juan knew.pfcv (at school) that Columbus discovered.pfcv America

'Juan came to know at school that Columbus discovered America'

The verb *saber* 'know' in the imperfecto is interpreted as a stative verb. As it is generally the case with (pure) stative verbs (Davidson 1967, Parsons 1990, Maienborn 2003, Rothmayr 2009), it rejects place modification. But in the indefinido it accepts it; interestingly, the interpretation that the verb receives now is similar to an achievement (see Fábregas 2015), the punctual transition 'come to know', or in other words, 'learn'. This is not a unique case:

(148)   a. María tenía cinco hijos (#en el hospital).

María had.impf 5 children in the hospital

'María had five children ([that were] in the hospital)'

b. María tuvo cinco hijos (en el hospital).

María had.pfcv 5 children in the hospital

'María gave birth in the hospital to five children'

(148a) forces an intepretation of the place modifier as the predicate in a small clause, taking the children as their subject: it does not modify the main verb, as this verb is stative. In (148b), with indefinido, the place modifier is taken to locate the event, and that event is one of change of state, again, 'come to have', or more precisely in the case of children 'give birth'. Here we see other cases of the same operation, whereby in the indefinido a stative verb denotes actually the corresponding change of state:

(149)   a. Juan conocía a Pedro.

Juan knew.impf A Pedro

'Juan was acquainted with Pedro'

b. Juan conoció a Pedro.

Juan knew.pfcv A Pedro

'Juan became acquainted with Pedro'

(150)   a. Juan quería responder.

Juan wanted.impf to.answer

'Juan wanted to answer'

b. Juan quiso responder.

Juan wanted.pfcv to.answer

            'Juan decided to answer'

(151)   a. Juan amaba a María.

           Juan loved.impf A María

        'Juan loved María'

        b. Juan amó a María (tras aquel incidente).

           Juan loved.pfcv A María after that incident

        'Juan started loving María after that incident'

It seems that this change of meaning is not allowed by any stative verb (cf. 152, which does not mean 'came to contain').

(152)   *El barril contuvo 5 litros.

         the cask contained.pfcv 5 liters

One interesting question is whether one has to lexically restrict these cases, accepting that there are idiosyncratic aspects in the meaning of the verbs that allow a change of meaning in indefinido, or whether some generalisations have to be made. Fábregas (2015) claims that statives allowing this change tend to express psychological states, or involve a psychological participation of the subject.

4.1.2.6. Quantification

Let us finish the empirical part by refering to a relatively controversial issue: whether imperfecto and indefinido contrast, furthermore, with respect to the variable interpretation of noun phrases. Doiz-Bienzobas (1995) presents contrasts like the following:

(153)   a. Todas las mujeres cogieron un tren que salió temprano.

           all the women took.pfcv a train that left.pfcv early

        b. Todas las mujeres cogieron un tren que salía temprano.

           all the women took.pfcv a train that left.impf early

        'All the women took a train that left early'

While (153a) is interpreted as meaning that the women, as a group, took the same train that left early, (153b) also has a distributive reading where each woman took a possibly different train that left early. From here, she argues that the imperfecto allows a semantic construal where the antecedent has narrow scope in the sentence, under the scope of the quantifier 'all' (thus, for each woman there is a train); indefinido forces a wide scope reading of the noun phrase, outside the scope of the quantifier 'all' (thus, there is one train for all the women), which is also allowed by the imperfecto.

García Fernández & González Rodríguez (2014) note, however, that the contrast is not so clean, and an indefinido does not block per se the distributive reading of the noun phrase. This is shown by examples like (154), where the normal interpretation is that each boy ate a different chocolate bar.

(154)   Todos los niños compraron una chocolatina que se comieron en el bus.

        all the children bought.pfcv a chocolate that SE ate.pfcv on the bus

        'All the children bought a chocolate bar that they ate on the bus'

However, García Fernández & González Rodríguez (2014) do note that there are some quantificational interactions between imperfecto / indefinido and the distribution of events across timespans. Their proposal is that imperfecto is incompatible with event quantification, in such a way that indefinido allows readings where there is more than one event (or more than one instance of the same event) occupying different, non overlapping, temporal intervals. Imperfecto is not compatible with a distributive interpretation of events across temporal intervals: maybe there are two events, but they have to occupy the same temporal interval. Consider as examples (155).

(155)   a. Dos niños pegaron a Juan.
              two children hit.pfcv A Juan
         'Two children hit Juan at the same time'
         'Juan was hit by one child first, and by a second child later'
         b. Dos niños pegaban a Juan.
              two children hit.impf A Juan
         'Two children hit Juan at the same time'
         *'Juan was hit by one child first, and by a second child later'

In (156a), we typically interpret that Juan had, sequentially, two different houses, while (156b) implies that Juan was the owner of two houses at the same time.

(156)   a. Juan tuvo dos casas.
              Juan had.pfcv two houses
         b. Juan tenía dos casas.
              Juan had.impf two houses

As the authors note, this difference with respect to whether instances of the same event can be distributed across time is related to the possibility of combining frequency expressions denoting specific cardinalities with indefinido, but not with imperfecto.

(157)   a. Juan estuvo en Madrid una vez.
              Juan was.pfcv in Madrid one time
         b. *Juan estaba en Madrid una vez.
              Juan was.impf in Madrid one time

It is also clear that this possibility of distributing instances of states of affairs across time relates to the succession reading allowed by indefinido, but not possible with imperfecto.

Thus, according to García Fernández & González Rodríguez (2014), the indefinido does not force a wide scope reading of a noun phrase, but it can force a distributive interpretation of the state of affairs across a temporal line.

4.2. Proposals and analyses

Let us now move to the presentation of the analytical proposals that deal with the imperfecto / indefinido opposition. The interested reader can consult, among others, Porto Dapena (1989), Gutiérrez Araus (1995), Brucart (2003)

and García Fernández (2004), where more systematic overviews of the analytical options are presented.

For reasons of space, here we will focus on the following three theories about the imperfecto / indefinido distinction:

a) The temporal view: imperfecto is always anaphoric, and refers to a time interval that coincides with a past time interval; indefinido is a deictic tense that directly identifies a past time interval (§4.2.1)

b) The aspectual view: imperfecto is a manifestation of imperfective aspect, while indefinido is a manifestation of perfective aspect (§4.2.2)

c) The discoursive or narrative view: inside a narrative, imperfecto is used to describe the background and indefinido is used to introduce the events and changes that develop the story (§4.2.3)

4.2.1. The temporal view

The temporal view was, historically, the first to appear. The Royal Academy Grammar of 1771 says in page 64:

> Quando aquella cosa de que se trata se considera como presente respecto de otra ya pasada, se llama pretérito imperfecto: v. gr. *llegó mi hermano al mismo tiempo que yo le escribía*.

> [When the issue one talks about is considered as present with respect to another issue that is already past, it is called 'pretérito imperfecto': for instance, *my brother arrived at the same time that I was writing to him*]

The proposal is developed in Bello (1841, 1847). His proposal, as we have advanced, is that imperfecto is a copreterite, that is, a form used to refer to a temporal interval that is coextensive with a past temporal interval. In other words, imperfecto is not able to refer, by itself, to a past tense, and always needs an implicit or explicit temporal antecedent with which it is coextensive. However, imperfecto is not marked with respect to the perfective / imperfective aspectual opposition. Bull (1968), Rojo (1974), Kamp & Rohrer (1983), Bertinetto (1986), Pérez Saldanya (1990), Giorgi & Pianesi (1997), Rojo & Veiga (1999) or Brucart (2003) are among the authors that have argued for this theory.

Let us first consider several arguments in favour of this proposal.

a) It is noted by several authors that, while a sentence in the indefinido does not need textual integration to be interpreted, a sentence in imperfecto requires (i) either to co-occur with other textual elements, one of which identifies the temporal period one refers to, or (ii) a mental operation whereby the speaker deduces what that temporal period refers to. Bertinetto (1986) suggests examples (for Italian) similar to those presented here in (158).

(158)   a. El teléfono sonaba.
             the phone rang.impf
         b. El teléfono sonó.
             the phone rang.pfcv

It is intuitively true that (158a) would be a weird first sentence in a novel, while (158b) would be more acceptable. The temporal theory explains this contrast by saying that while (158b) makes reference by itself to a past time, (158a) has to be coextensive with a past time that it does not introduce. As that past time is not defined yet in the first line of a novel, (158a) is expected to be weird in that context.

b) If imperfecto is an anaphoric tense, we expect precisely that in combination with an indefinido, the imperfecto will be unable to refer to a distinct past time interval. Therefore, the imperfecto will be interpreted as overlapping with the indefinido, as in (159).

(159)   Juan vino cuando yo leía una novela.
        Juan arrived.pfcv when I read.impf a novel
        'Juan arrived while a read a novel'

Two imperfectos, then, would have to be coextensive temporally, but two indefinidos, given that indefinido is not anaphoric, will be interpreted sequentially, because each one of them refers to its own time interval.

(160)   Juan vino cuando yo leí una novela.
        Juan arrived.pfcv when I read.pfcv a novel
        'Juan arrived after I read a novel'

c) Consecutio Temporum phenomena, where imperfecto indeed seems to be prefered to indefinido, and where the temporal interpretation of the subordinate clause depends on the identification of the eventuality time of the main clause, as in (161).

(161)   Juan dijo que María estaba triste.
        Juan said that María was.impf sad

(161) would just be a situation where the imperfective is coextensive with a past time interval, corresponding to the time where Juan said it; this corresponds to the intuitive interpretation of (161): we report something that was true when Juan said it.

d) Imperfecto tends to be used with some temporal connectors whose interpretation is forcefully simultaneous:

(162)   Mientras {cantaba / * cantó}, hicimos la cena.
        While sang.impf / sang.pfcv made.pfcv the dinner
        'While she was singing, we made dinner'
(163)   Conforme {llegaban / *llegaron}, hicimos la cena.
        As   arrived.impf/arrived.pfcv made.pfcv the dinner
        'As they were arriving, we made dinner'

e) There are uses of imperfecto, as we saw, that seem to be interpreted perfectively: narrative imperfecto, imperfecto with verbs of perception. This

theory claims that imperfecto can be either perfective or imperfective, the defining trait being just that it is anaphoric to a past time interval.

Let us see now, roughly, how the uses of imperfecto are explained. We will here follow closely Brucart (2003), who presents an integrated theory of imperfecto whose basis is the temporal interpretation. Brucart (2003: 8-9) proposes that if the basic meaning of the imperfecto is to be anaphoric to a past tense with a past time interval, the intuitive interpretation of 'coincidence' naturally defines a preference for an imperfective reading, but does not force it. Brucart notes that in a sentence like (160), the 'coincidence' does not imply complete temporal overlap between Juan and María, but just coincidence at some point. Crucially, we do not know if Juan and María's stay in the cinema was equally long, finished at the same time or started at the same time.

(164)   Juan y María coincidieron en el cine.
        Juan and María coincided in the cinema
        'Juan and María were both in the cinema'

Thus, we expect precisely that in the imperfecto one does not assert the termination of the situation, even though –if we follow Brucart– that termination is not excluded necessarily. The conative interpretation (reference to the state immediately preceding a punctual event) is explained by Brucart as a derived effect of the joint contribution of temporal connectors and the lexical aspect of the verbs involved in the construction. He claims that in the following example, proposed by García Fernández (1996), one has to interpret coincidence with the period preceding the event and not with the event itself because *while* and the main activity verb are going to trigger a durative interpretation that an achievement like *alcanzar* 'reach' cannot provide by itself.

(165)   Mientras Juan alcanzaba la cima, María leía tranquilamente.
         while Juan reached.impf the summit, María read.impf calmly
         'While Juan was about to reach the summit, María was calmly reading'

If these two elements, independent of the imperfecto, are substituted, the two events coincide:

(166)   Justamente cuando Juan alcanzaba la cima, María daba a luz
        precisely when Juan reached.impf the summit, María gave.impf birth
        a su segundo hijo.
        to her second child
        'Exactly when Juan reached the summit, María gave birth to her second son'

The incompatibility with time expressions that introduce termination points, for Brucart, derives from a selection mismatch: the prepositions used to introduce such complements and modifiers are not compatible with the coincidence value of the imperfecto. The combination of imperfecto with stative verbs is more natural, also, because statives have the property that they denote the same state of affair at any point inside their temporal extension;

coincidence in just one point, as the imperfecto expresses, matches well with the denotation of a stative verb. If the verb is eventive, in contrast, a single temporal point inside its internal structure would not denote the same state of affairs as the whole event; thus, indefinido is prefered.

Finally, the modal uses of the imperfecto –where it is used to present hypothetic, imagined and other non-actual situations– could be viewed as metaphorical extensions or reinterpretations of the notion of not introducing a deictic component. In essence, because the imperfecto would not directly refer to a time interval past to the 'actual' time when the utterance is produced, it would also have the capacity to introduce states of affairs that do not have actual existence in the 'actual' world where the utterance is located.

However, there are also some problems with the temporal view of the imperfecto / indefinido contrast; see García Fernández (2004: 51-72) for a more detailed presentation; here we roughly follow his structure and arguments.

a) First, it is not true that in every single case the indefinido is unable to corefer to the same time interval as another indefinido. In the same way that the two sentences in (167) can refer to the same past interval, (168) can, even though both verbs are in the indefinido.

(167)   Juan estuvo en mi casa. Se encontraba mal.
        Juan was.pfcv in my house. SE found.impf bad
        'Juan was at my place. He was feeling bad'
(168)   Juan estuvo en mi casa. Llevó el sombrero todo el tiempo.
        Juan was.pfcv in my house. Wore.pfcv the hat all the time
        'Juan was at my place. He wore his hat during the whole visit'

With some expressions that force a simultaneous reading, indefinido is very natural:

(169)   A la vez que estudié matemáticas, terminé mi novela.
        at the time that studied.pfcv mathematics, finished.pfcv my novel

It could be claimed that the fact that something can be deictic does not exclude that, accidentally, two deicitic elements can identify the same time interval. However, the point here is that it is difficult to restrict through the notions of anaphoricity and deixis what would be the expected temporal contrasts, in sequences or not, produced by each tense.

b) It is not always clear how the temporal interval that imperfecto has to be coreferential with is identified. Should we interpret that in (170) there is an implicit 'when he was alive' frame, to which the imperfecto refers?

(170)   Juan era guapo.
        Juan was.impf handsome

c) There are cases were the interpretation of the imperfecto is difficult to reconcile with the idea that it is anaphoric to some temporal frame. Consider examples like (171), adapted from Moléndijk (1994) (apud García Fernández 2004):

(171)   Juan entró en el café. El humo le asfixiaba.
          Juan entered.pfcv in the café. The smoke him asfixiated.impf

In (171) we do not interpret that the smoke asfixiated Juan as he entered the café. With similar examples, Molendijk (1994) is forced to propose that the temporal frame has to be deduced from the first sentence, and would correspond to something like 'Juan inside the café'. But once we allow this kind of mismatches, where one is freely allowed to apply world knowledge, the predictions of the temporal theory become much less clear; in order to restrict this kind of enrichment so as not to overgenerate, as García Fernández (2004: 61) notes, the temporal explanations typically need to introduce aspectual notions, such as 'result state'.

      d) The Consecutio Temporum facts are not always compatible with an anaphoric view of the imperfecto, as García Fernández (2004: 62-68) explains in detail. One first problem is how vague the identification of the referent of the time interval is. In (172), our interpretation is not that María was sad during the time that Juan told us about it, but that María was sad on her wedding day.

(172)   Juan nos contó que María estaba triste el día de su boda.
          Juan us told.pfcv that María was.impf sad the day of her wedding

The temporal theory would have to say that the past temporal interval to which the imperfecto refers here is defined by 'her wedding day'. But if the past temporal interval can sometimes be a constituent different from the one denoted by the indefinido in the main sentence, the principles that determine which temporal interval is used are unclear. Moreover, we would be forced to say that indefinido also is anaphoric to the same NP in (173), and the difference would dissolve:

(173)   Juan nos contó que María estuvo triste el día de su boda.
          Juan us told.pfcv that María was.pfcv sad the day of her wedding

Even when those overt time modifiers are missing, an example like (174) shows that a subordinate imperfective can refer to a past interval other than the one that the main verb defines, because Gala Placidia was quite dead when Obama said it and thus could not show any intelligence. Here presumably the time interval is not absent: probably it is understood as 'the time while Gala Placidia was alive', and it is introduced, therefore, in association with the subject.

(174)   Obama dijo que Gala Placidia era inteligente.
          Obama said.pfcv that Gala Placidia was.impf intelligent

4.2.2. The aspectual view
    The aspectual view, which actually divides into two proposals, has been argued among others by Lenz (1920), Gili Gaya (1943), Pena (1985), De Mello (1989), Alarcos (1994), García Fernández (1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2004) and Carrasco (1999).

Arguably, this is the standard approach nowadays, although the characterisation is subject to some discussion. One first view is that the imperfecto presents actions from a durative perspective (García Santos 1993), but it is well-known that this simple characterisation runs into immediate problems whenever the verb denotes a bounded, but temporally extended event:

(175)   a. *Iba dos años a la escuela.
              went.impf 2 years to the school
        b. *En la fiesta conocíamos a gente nueva.
            in the party met.impf A people new

The aspectual proposal that, nowadays, is recognised as the most succesful one is treating imperfecto as imperfective aspect, thus introducing a temporal interval that excludes the termination point of the eventuality. In contrast, indefinido is perfective aspect, and thus includes the termination point of the eventuality time. (175a) is ungrammatical because (irrespectively of whether there is more or less duration) the temporal modifier makes reference to the termination of that activity; in (175b), the party –an eventive noun– has a particular running time, and when it finishes, the eventuality of meeting new people has to conclude; thus, reference is made also to its termination.

Here are the arguments in favour of this view:

a) The problems associated with having to identify the temporal antecedent of the imperfecto disappear, and thus none of the problems of the temporal view apply to the aspectual view.

b) Given that the interpretation is aspectual, one automatically expects that different kinds of aspectual modifiers will affect the distribution of imperfecto / indefinido. Any modifier that introduces or makes reference to a termination point will be incompatible with imperfecto. If one wants to count events, and assign them a cardinality value, one has to be able to tell when the event starts and when it ends; in other words, the events have to be temporally bounded, and therefore one has to assert their termination moment. Hence, (176) is expected to be ungrammatical, because the imperfective excludes the termination:

(176)   *Juan cantaba tres veces.
           Juan sang three times

The temporal view does not clearly predict this.

c) If indefinido asserts the termination of the eventuality, then we expect that coordinating two indefinidos will give a succession reading: the first event has to terminate before the second has to start. If the sentences are independent of each other, then we do not expect this necessarily, because our world knowledge would tell us if their running times can overlap or not.

d) The aspectual view of imperfecto / indefinido in fact makes it completely expected that there will be an interaction between the lexical aspectual information of the predicate and the interpretation or availability of imperfecto / indefinido. Pure stative verbs do not describe situations with a natural endpoint, so we expect that, lacking modifiers that introduce those

endpoints, they will appear in the imperfecto. Achievement verbs lack an internal temporal duration, so any attempt to present them in imperfecto would require building a temporal line which is extensive enough so that a time interval can be focalised without including its punctual culmination: hence, in the imperfective the interpretation will be that one refers to the state preceding that culmination. Aspectual recategorisations with indefinido are expected as well: if indefinido involves reference to the boundaries of the event, and a stative verb by itself does not imply those boundaries, a reinterpretation of the verb as a change of state would provide those natural boundaries.

The modal uses of the imperfecto, for this theory, would be derived from a non-actuality or potential meaning that would be an extension of the notion of indeterminacy (Bazzanella 1990) associated to its imperfectivity, in combination with the meaning of past tense which implies that the state of affairs is not asserted to hold of the present time of discourse.
However, there are also problems to this aspectual view:

a) The narrative imperfecto (177) has a perfective interpretation, as we saw:

(177)   La misma mañana, Juan salía de su casa.
        the same morning, Juan left.impf from his house
        'That same morning, Juan left his house'

It is clear that in (177) we present the event as finished and culminated. This is unexpected if the imperfecto indeed excludes the termination point from the assertion. García Fernández (2004) suggests that the crucial factor here is that narrative imperfectos are stylistically marked; he proposes that they are not natural outside a rhetorical style inside narrations, setting the frame, precisely because they involve the neutralisation of the imperfective aspectual value of the imperfecto. In other words: these are cases that sound like imperfecto because that is the morphology used, but in actuality the syntactico-semantic representation of the verb would not be the one normally associated to the imperfecto.

b) The perfective imperfectos subordinated to perception verbs, as in the reading of (178) where we witnessed María wash the car up to the end.

(178)   Vimos que María limpiaba el coche en diez minutos.
        saw.pfcv that María washed.impf the car in 10 minutes
        'We saw that María washed her car in 10 minutes'

Again, García Fernández (2004) explains these cases proposing that the morphology of the imperfecto here is, in fact, not an instance of the imperfective aspect that it normally corresponds to. His claim is that in (178) the imperfective morphology corresponds to a modal head with dynamic meaning (Palmer 1979), something that correlates to some extent with the possibility of using the complementiser *cómo* 'how' without evident differences in meaning:

(179) Vimos cómo María limpiaba el coche en diez minutos.
saw.pfcv how María washed.impf the car in 10 minutes
'We saw that María washed her car in 10 minutes'

While this explanation correlates nicely with other properties of the construction, we want to point out that it solves a syntactico-semantic problem by introducing a morphological problem, which would be to determine the contexts where the imperfecto morphology would have to be used. Once the correlation between imperfecto, as a morphological exponent, and imperfective as a syntactico-semantic head is broken, the question is why there are no more cases of perfective or, say, even prospective imperfectos.

c) Some facts of the Consecutio Temporum do not receive a straightforward explanation. One of them is the difficulty of allowing indefinidos in some conditions:

(180) ??Juan dijo que María llegó.
Juan said.pfcv that María arrived.pfcv

One part of why (180) is marked is easy to understand: in its 'present' reading, where Juan said *María llega*, lit. 'María arrives', the event is imperfective, as it does not include the termination point. But why cannot (180) be interpreted as the equivalent of Juan saying *María ha llegado ahora*, 'María has arrived now'? In theory, if the indefinido just introduces a past event including its culmination, we should be able to say (180). It seems difficult to explain (180) unless, at least for the indefinido, a notion of 'deixis' is introduced, so that (180) cannot be used in a situation where the past has to be past with respect to a past event. But if that is the case, and indefinido has to be defined as deictic, wouldn't that imply saying that imperfecto is non-deictic, to explain why imperfecto can be used in a similar context?

4.2.3. The narrative view

Basing the contrast between imperfecto and indefinido in their respective contributions to a narration is an idea that is attributed to Weinrich (1964), who made a first distinction between tenses associated to 'the narrated world' (imperfecto and indefinido) and tenses associated to 'the commented world' (present, perfect and future).

The idea is that inside the narration, the imperfective would be the form used to describe the background. If we use the metaphor of a theatre play, the elements that have to do with the description of the stage and the characters that participate in the play would be the role of the imperfecto. The actions and events that happen with that stage as background and those characters as participants would be the role of the indefinido.

Not many authors have advocated this view, which Brucart (2003) characterises as the most recent of the three introduced here. Some examples are Alcina & Blecua (1975), Ducrot (1979) and Anscombre (1992). Let us see a bit more in detail Ducrot's proposal, to understand what this characterisation is related with.

Ducrot (1979) proposes two principles that relate the imperfecto with background information which is not highlighted inside a narration.

> a) A statement in imperfecto is a statement that takes as its topic a temporal object, either a period of time or an entity that existed in that past period
> b) The content of the predicate that is presented in imperfecto are taken as characterising of the topic

The intuitive idea is that all uses of the imperfecto are descriptive in some sense: they will describe a time period or they will describe a participant inside a past period. There are some facts that match nicely with the predictions of this theory, most significantly the narrative imperfecto, which typically appears at the beginning of narrations, where one can argue that the writer's intention is to set the stage for the events to come. It also introduces a nice framework to understand why imperfecto should have modal uses that indefinido lacks: as those uses present not facts and chains of events, but thoughts, imagined situations, etc., they are closer to descriptions than to happenings that will have an effect in the course of events of the real world.

However, this proposal has been noted to lack more formal and explicit definitions of the notions involved, something that would be necessary to assess how this general intuition can be extended beyond narrative imperfectos and the use of imperfecto outside pure stative verbs. For instance, in what sense could we say that the imperfecto in (181) is backgrounded, or used to describe a temporal period?

(181)   Luisa salía de casa cuando yo entraba.
          Luisa left.impf from home when I entered.impf
          'Luisa was about to leave home when I was about to come in'

Another unclear point is how are we to interpret contrasts like (182), which theoretically should mean, respectively, that Hitchock has the characteristic properties of a film director (182a) and that Hitchock is someone who happened to work as a film director (182b).

(182)   a. Hitchock era un director inglés.
              Hitchcock was.impf a director English
          b. Hitchock fue un director inglés.
              Hitchcock was.pfcv a director English
          'Hitchcock was an English film director'

Finally, it has been repeatedly noted that it is also unclear how this narrative difference should explain why the backgrounded information is incompatible with durante-phrases and frequency adverbs like *dos veces* 'twice'.

5. Conclusions and future prospects

Let us take stock of what we have. The first thing we will do in this section is to present a summary of the different phenomena related to imperfecto / indefinido and see how each one of these theories fares in explaining them.

Table 5. A summary of facts and theories

	Temporal view	Aspectual view	Narrative view
Descriptive uses of imperfecto (183a)	Perhaps. As there is no direct reference to an event, it is plausible that a description has to be necessarily dependent on identifying the time interval where the described entities exist.	Yes. A description implies ascribing to a participant a set of properties, and by definition that set of properties is presented as constant during the description.	Definitely yes. The theory is formulated to account specifically for these cases.
Narrative uses of imperfecto (183b)	Yes. Narrative uses could be instances of cases where one presents states of affairs that are simultaneous with a specific time period.	No. These cases are problematic, and have been treated as stylistically marked uses where the (im)perfectivity is neutralised.	Yes. They would be instances where the background of a narration is being presented.
Habitual uses in imperfecto (183c)	Not clearly, unless habits are taken to be sets of characteristics of participants that applied simultaneously to a specific time period.	Yes, to the extent that habituals are instances of imperfective aspect.	Not clearly, unless habits describe participants and are assumed to be always background information.
Rejection of specific frequency adverbs in imperfecto (183d)	Not clearly, unless an incompatibility with anaphora and specific frequency adverbs is identified.	Yes, to the extent that specific frequency adverbs involve counting instances of an eventuality and counting implies reference to termination points.	No.
Progressive uses of imperfecto (183e)	Possibly, to the extent that the progressive use presents an eventuality that is simultaneous to an event in indefinido	Yes, to the extent that progressive is an instance of imperfective aspect.	Yes, to the extent that the progressive eventuality is used as a background to frame an eventuality in indefinido.
Incompatibility between delimiters and imperfecto (183f)	No.	Yes, to the extent that those delimiters identify termination points at the VP level.	No.
Conative uses of imperfecto (183g)	Not clearly.	Yes, because the conative use excludes the termination point.	No.
Intentional uses of imperfecto (183h)	Not clearly, unless intentions are taken to be part of the states of affairs that are simultaneous to a time period.	Not clearly, except to the extent that having an intention to perform an event implies that the event has not terminated.	Not clearly, unless intentions are taken to be part of the background of a narration.
Imperfecto in indirect speech, simultaneous (183i)	Yes.	It is not incompatible, to the extent that these uses exclude the termination point	Only in some cases, whenever the subordinate clause can be understood as

		of the event.	the description of a situation, with the main verb as the event that is reported.
Imperfecto in indirect speech, previous to main verb (183j)	No.	Yes, at least whenever the termination of the event is excluded.	Perhaps, whenever that eventuality can be considered as backgrounded.
Indefinido in indirect speech, general rejection (183k)	Yes.	Not always.	Not clearly excluded; the subordinate clause should be able to present new information that advances the narrative.
Indefinido in indirect speech, accepted with temporal modifiers (183l)	Unclear; introducing these cases forces a reassessment of what it means for indefinido to be deictic.	Yes.	Not incompatible.
Punctual imperfecto (183m)	Yes.	No; imperfecto should never make reference to termination points.	Incompatible only when the punctual imperfecto is used to advance the narrative.
General interaction between internal aspect and imperfecto / indefinido (183n)	Not predicted.	Yes.	Not predicted, unless some internal aspect classes are assumed to be, in themselves, specialised for backgrounded information or advancing the narrative.
Aspectual recategorisation of verbs in imperfecto / indefinido (183o)	Not predicted.	Yes	Not predicted, unless some events can only be used to advance the narrative.
Existence of modal uses in imperfecto, but not in indefinido (183p)	Not clearly, unless the notion of 'not making deictic reference to a time interval' allows a direct connection with virtual realities	Not clearly, unless the notion of 'not making reference to a termination point' allows a direct connection with virtual realities	Not clearly, unless modal uses are always taken to belong to the background or description of imagined narratives

(183)　a. Ayer hacía frío.
　　　　　yesterday made.impf cold
　　　　'Yesterday was cold'
　　　b. En 1978 se votaba la constitución.
　　　　　in 1978 SE voted.impf the constitution
　　　　'In 1978 the constitution was voted'
　　　c. En su infancia Juan leía mucho.
　　　　　in his childhood Juan read.impf a.lot
　　　　'During his childhood, Juan used to read a lot'
　　　d. *Juan corría una vez.
　　　　　Juan ran.impf one time

e. Cuando Juan hacía la cena, Luisa llegó.
  when Juan made.impf the dinner, Luisa arrived.pfcv
'When Juan was making dinner, Luisa arrived'
f. *Juan estaba enfermo durante dos días.
   Juan was.impf sick for two days
g. María se iba de viaje cuando pasó esto.
   María SE left.impf of journey when happened.pfcv this
'María was about to go on a trip when this happened'
h. Hasta ayer, María se casaba con Pedro.
   until yesterday, María se married.impf with Pedro
'Until yesterday, María planned to marry Pedro'
i. Juan dijo que María estaba enferma.
   Juan said that María was.impf sick
'Juan said that María was sick'
j. Juan dijo que María estaba enferma el día del examen.
   Juan said that María was.impf sick the day of the exam
'Juan said that María was sick on the day of the exam'
k. ??Juan dijo que María llegó.
     Juan said that María arrived.pfcv
l. Juan dijo que María estuvo enferma el día del examen.
   Juan said that María was.pfcv sick the day of the exam
m. Juan vio que María salía.
    Juan saw that María left.impf
'Juan saw that María left'
n. Cuando Juan moría, su mujer lo llamó.
   when Juan died.impf, his wife him phoned.pfcv
'As Juan was about to die, his wife phoned him'
o. Juan supo en la escuela que su madre estaba enferma.
   Juan know.pfcv at school that his mother was.impf sick
'Juan got to know at school that his mother was sick'
p. Si tuviera dinero, te daba un millón.
   if I.had money, you gave.impf a million
'If I had money, I would give you one million'

Looking at the table we can see that the aspectual theory seems to be the one that, globally, is able to directly explain or at least has plausible potential explanations for most cases. It is particularly fit to explain why imperfecto / indefinido should interact with internal aspect, and why some aspectual modifiers force the use of one of the two forms. Its main challenges come from uses where imperfecto acts as a perfective form, while aspects of the use of imperfecto / indefinido in indirect speech seem to lack a direct explanation in this theory. The temporal view is almost the mirror reflection of this situation: its strongest position is in explaining the distribution of imperfect and indefinido inside indirect speech, although it finds problems in situations where the imperfecto can identify independent past temporal intervals. Its weakest spot is in finding explanations for the incompatibilities between aspectual modifiers / aspectual classes and the imperfecto or the indefinido under certain readings. The narrative view, in contrast with both theories, does not typically have clear conterexamples or clear predictions, in part, as we said, because the notions used in this proposal are somewhat coarse grained and lack a

formalisation that would allow to assess the specific tools that a theory with this properties would use to face potential counterexamples. At the very least, a simple and intuitive identification of imperfecto with backgrounded information does not seem to immediately explain the facts and constraints, even if we can always appeal to a 'general' intuitive notion of 'non specificity' that somehow would clash with specific frequency adverbs, or be vaguely associated to subordinate contexts, for instance.

To our mind, the modal uses of imperfecto are treated similarly in the three theories. The three of them appeal to a general notion of virtuality or non specificity that, through metaphorical extension, would move from the temporoaspectual domain to the modal domain, where it would denote notions such as 'hypothetic', 'imagined', 'indirect' or 'uncertainty'. Where each one of these theories contrast is in the source of that non specificity, which can be lack of deixis, lack of reference to termination points or impossibility to introduce facts that advance the narrative. From the three perspectives, imperfecto is defective in some sense. This defectivity, in combination with its past meaning, is reinterpreted in some sense as introducing states of affairs that do not correspond to the actual world –as opposed to corresponding to a previous time interval in the actual world–. None of the theories, however, is to the best of our knowledge explicit enough with respect to how this extension happens precisely in this case, but not in others that one could consider, from that perspective, similar. The following periphrases are also imperfective; no modal meanings are associated to them, as far as we know.

(184)   a. Juan estaba comiendo.
              Juan was eating
        b. Juan sigue comiendo.
              Juan continues eating

It could be argued, however, that these periphrastic forms do not codify always past tense, but are merely compatible with a past tense interpretation. But the combination of imperfectivity and past cannot be a necessary condition for using a temporoaspectual form as a modal form: (185a), the periphrasis that according to Bravo (2008) and others manifests prospective aspect in Spanish, does have modal uses (185b).

(185)   a. Juan va a salir.
              Juan goes to leave
        'Juan is going to leave'
        b. ¡Qué vas a saber tú!
              what goes to know you!
        'You know nothing!' (lit. What are you going to know!)

We could argue that what prospective and imperfective aspects have in common is that they never involve the termination, or a period that presupposes that the termination happened; this has the nice effect of predicting that perfect (at least in its resultative use) and indefinido would not have modal uses, while prospective and imperfective could. But (185) suggests that being fixed in a past time reference is not necessary for a modal reading to emerge. And this

takes us back to the problem of why (184) did not develop modal uses, at least, as far as the forms have been understood up to now.

For the temporal view, the problem is no less serious. The combination of past tense and anaphoric reference is not found just in the imperfecto, but also in a variety of other forms, like the pluscuamperfecto (*había* + participle) and some uses of the perfect (*he* + participle), where one describes a situation simultaneous with the present. Unless something else is said, one whould expect a similarly wide variety of modal uses to emerge with these forms as well, but to the best of our knowledge (with the exception of some restricted evidential uses of the perfect in multilingual areas), this is not the case.

Excluding the narrative view for the time being –which, remember, we do not claim to be wrong, but just to lack the proper specificity to allow a complete assessment of its predictions–, the two remaining major theories face a common challenge: to identify the set of features that are associated to the imperfecto morphology. The reason is that both theories have counterexamples, and as we have seen, both theories have proposed that in the apparent counterexamples what seems to be an imperfecto is actually the spell out of a distinct set of features, for instance, a past form with its aspectual value neutralised (as García Fernández 2004 proposed for the narrative imperfecto).

Finally, the aspectual view –which in this article we have argued that fares relatively better than the other two– has another set of specific challenges ahead. One that has been repeatedly noted is the imperfective use of the perfecto, also know as 'universal perfect' or 'continuous perfect':

(186)   He vivido aquí desde 1987.
        have lived here since 1987
        'I have lived here since 1987'

Here, as in the imperfecto according to the aspectual view, we present a situation excluding its termination; we make no assertion that at the moment of uttering the sentence that eventuality terminates, and clearly we make the assertion that it has not terminated at any point between 1987 and now. One clear difference between imperfecto and perfect in (186) is of course the time interpretation, past vs. present. However, the imperfective universal reading of the perfect forms can also appear in the past (with imperfecto in the auxiliary, precisely) in examples like (187), which seem to mean the same as examples with imperfecto (188) –in both cases there is no assertion that the state of affairs must have changed at the moment of utterance–.

(187)   Juan dijo que había vivido aquí desde 1987.
        Juan said that had.impf lived here since 1987
(188)   Juan dijo que vivía aquí desde 1987.
        Juan said that lived.impf here since 1987
        'Juan said that he had lived here since 1987'

Again, the problem is specifically about matching the morphophonological representation with the syntactico-semantic information so that it becomes possible to identify the contexts where each one of these forms would be used. See Mittwoch (1988), Inoue (1989), Abusch & Rooth (1990), Parsons (1990), Michaelis (1994), Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski (2001), Musan (2001),

Schmitt (2001), Kiparsky (2002), Portner (2003) and Xiqués (2015), among others, for the analysis of perfect tense forms and their meaning.

To conclude, it is probably fair to say that in current research we have reached a good and detailed description of the facts about imperfecto / indefinido. These facts are well-understood, and their relation with notions like indirect speech and internal aspect is, to the best of our knowledge, properly explored. What seems to be missing, still, is an integrated theory of the contrasts that does not face the counterexamples that each of the two main current theories has to face. Further research at the morphophonology / morphosyntax interface might illuminate these problems.

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