Form-focused instruction and the acquisition of tense by Dutch-speaking learners of English: Experimental studies into the effects of input practice and output practice

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The following appendix contains some example slides that were provided to the participants during the treatment theory sessions in all three studies. This appendix does not contain all of the slides but simply a selection. The order of the slides represents the order in which they appeared during the sessions.

The cover term **SITUATION** will be used here to refer to anything that can be expressed using a verb:

- **ACTIONS**
  01. John *has dug* a hole.

- **EVENTS**
  02. The bomb *exploded*.

- **PROCESSES**
  03. Government pressure *has increased* dramatically.

- **STATES**
  04. He *was* extremely polite.
The cover term **BYGONE SITUATION** will be used here to refer to any **situation** (action, event, process or state) which can be located **before** the present time (‘now’). As is the case with any other situation, bygone situations may refer to a specific point (**red circle**) or to a period of time (**red line**) before the present time (‘now’):

![Diagram showing bygone situation](image)

**BYGONE SITUATIONS** (before ‘now’)

(05) John has dug a hole.  
(06) We talked to her for almost an hour.  
(07) We left after the film had finished.

A situation is considered a **NON-BYGONE SITUATION** if it in any way includes the present time and/or future time (**green circle or line**):

![Diagram showing non-bynone situation](image)

**NON-BYGONE SITUATIONS**

(08) Jayden is being extremely rude. (includes the present)  
(09) Next year, they will have known each other 30 years. (includes the past, present and future)  
(10) Susan will not be here in the summer. (includes the future)
OBSERVATIONS:

a) Both the PAST tense (I worked) and the PRESENT PERFECT tense (I have worked) can be used in English to refer to bygone situations but they are very seldom interchangeable.

b) The choice between PAST and PRESENT PERFECT is one which either has to be made by writers or speakers or may be forced upon the them (by the context, see examples later on).

c) The general idea is that the PAST tense focuses on ‘then’ (before the present), whereas the PRESENT PERFECT tense focuses on ‘now’ (the present).

d) Often, the deciding factor when choosing between the PAST tense and the PRESENT PERFECT tense is the context in which the verb is used (see observation (b) above and examples later on).

e) When a past context is provided, the PAST tense must be used in English. This is not necessarily the case in Dutch, which often uses the VOLTOOID TEGENWOORDIGE TIJD (vtt, Ik heb gewerkt) (see examples later on).

When a past context is provided (for example, by means of past-time indicators (in red below)), the PAST tense must be used in English (in blue below). As already mentioned, this is not necessarily the case in Dutch, which often uses the VOLTOOID TEGENWOORDIGE TIJD (vtt) (in green below):

COMPARE

(11) I saw him yesterday. (PAST)
(12) Ik heb hem gisteren gezien. (vtt)
(13) Two years ago we drove to Germany for the first time. (PAST)
(14) Twee jaar geleden zijn we voor de eerste keer naar Duitsland gereden. (vtt)
(15) As a child I never really did that. (PAST)
(16) Als kind heb ik dat nooit echt gedaan. (vtt) (said by someone who is now an adult)
(17) On 11 September 2001 many people lost their lives in New York. (PAST)
(18) Op 11 september 2001 zijn veel mensen om het leven gekomen in New York. (vtt) (said today)
Different kinds of context can be distinguished and for the PAST vs PRESENT PERFECT discussion the following two contexts will be investigated:

a) LINGUISTIC CONTEXT (= use of (explicit) past-time indicators but not necessarily in the same clause/sentence as the past verb form!)

(19) *I spoke* to my boyfriend yesterday.
(20) *Siobhan has waited/waited* for hours. (difference in meaning!)

b) PRAGMATIC CONTEXT (= general/specific world knowledge)

(21) *The Romans founded* the city of York.
(22) *Luciano Pavarotti was* a famous opera singer.

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a) LINGUISTIC CONTEXT (= use of (explicit) past-time indicators)

Past-time indicators can take on several forms and we will look at two of the most common past-time indicators: (i) TIME ADVERBIALS and (ii) PLACE ADVERBIALS. Often, the past-time indicators are mentioned explicitly in the same sentence in which the conjugated verb appears but in stretches of discourse/texts this may not always be the case. In such cases, the past-time indicators may be present elsewhere in the text (see examples later on).

(i) TIME ADVERBIALS (referring to a definite point or a period of time in the past)

* e.g., yesterday, two days ago, last month, in 1989

(23) She *saw him a couple of minutes ago.* (PAST)
(24) Ze *heeft hem enkele minuten geleden gezien.* (vtt)
(25) *She started taking swimming classes in June and it is now September.* (PAST)
(26) *Ze is in juni met zwemlessen begonnen en het is nu september.* (vtt)
(i) **PLACE ADVERBIALS** (*when I/you/he was in …*)

e.g., in Helsinki, during my childhood, whilst travelling through the States

(27) *In Helsinki, they went straight to the hotel.* (PAST)
(28) *In Helsinki zijn ze onmiddellijk naar het hotel gegaan.* (vtt)
    (Both sentences said after having returned from Helsinki)

(29) *When I was in New York I met many interesting people.* (PAST)
(30) *Toen ik in New York was heb ik veel interessante mensen ontmoet.* (vtt)
    (Both sentences said after having returned from New York)

Often, the **LINGUISTIC CONTEXT** (the adverbials) can be found in the same sentence in which the conjugated the verb is located (see also previous example sentences) but this is not necessarily the case in (longer) texts. In the following text, the past-time indicators (*1901-1971, all his life*) is located in both the first sentence and the third sentence, whereas the conjugated verb (*struggled*) is located only in the third sentence. Once gain, watch out for Dutch, which does not necessarily require the **PAST** tense in such contexts.

Louis Armstrong (*1901-1971*) was één van de grootste jazztrompettisten van de 20ste eeuw, maar hij eindigde zijn carrière toch als zanger. Lippen zijn niet geschikt om dag in, dag uit tegen het mondstuk van een trompet te trillen. Armstrong heeft zijn leven lang met dit gegeven geworsteld. Al op het hoogtepunt van zijn loopbaan, in de jaren ’30 van de twintigste eeuw, waren zijn lippen kapot geblazen door zijn energieke techniek.

Louis Armstrong (1901-1971) was one of the greatest jazz trumpet players of the 20th century, but he ended his career though as a singer. Lips are not suited to vibrate against the mouthpiece of a trumpet day in and day out. Armstrong struggled with this fact all his life. Even at the height of his career, in the 1930s, his lips had been ruined as a result of his energetic blowing technique.
Another example can be found in the text below, where the past-time indicator (in 1997 and 1998) is located in the third sentence, whereas the conjugated verb (met) is located in the fifth sentence. Once again, watch out for Dutch, which does not necessarily require the PAST tense in such contexts and often uses the vtt:

Varkenspest wordt veroorzaakt door een virus. De meeste besmette dieren bezwijken aan de ziekte. Tijdens de uitbraak van de varkenspest in 1997 en 1998 werden in Nederland ongeveer 13 miljoen varkens geruimd. Het merendeel preventief, dus zonder dat ze ziek waren. Dit heeft op groeiend verzet gestuit van de bevolking, omdat vaccineren ook mogelijk was. Geënte varkens zijn uitstekend tegen de ziekte beschermd. Alleen zijn ze een probleem voor de export.

Swine fever is caused by a virus. Most of the infected animals succumb to the disease. During the outbreak of swine fever in 1997 and 1998 some 13 million pigs were culled in the Netherlands. Most of them as part of a precautionary measure, in other words, without them being sick. This measure met with growing opposition from the population since vaccination was also an option. Vaccinated pigs enjoy perfect protection from the disease. The only problem then is exporting them.

(ii) PRAGMATIC CONTEXT (= world knowledge)

Very often the sentence/text in which the conjugated verb appears contains no (explicit) past-time indicators (e.g., adverbials) but the language user will be forced to rely on his/her general or specific knowledge of world events.

(31) Luciano Pavarotti was a famous opera singer. (PAST)
    (who died on 6 September 2007)

(32) The German Democratic Republic was a communist state. (PAST)
    (which ceased to exist after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989)
SUMMARY:

a) Both the PAST tense and the PRESENT PERFECT tense can be used in English to refer to bygone situations but they are very seldom interchangeable.

b) The choice between PAST and PRESENT PERFECT is one which either has to be made by the writer/speaker (focus on ‘now’ or ‘then’) or which may be forced upon the writer/speaker (by the context).

c) The general idea is that the PAST tense focuses on ‘then’ (before the present time), whereas the PRESENT PERFECT tense focuses on ‘now’ (the present time).

If there is no explicit context available, the PRESENT PERFECT tense can be used in English to refer to bygone situations. In such cases, the writer/speaker referring to the bygone situation is somehow concerned with the ‘now’ rather than with ‘then’. (red arrow)

(33) John has broken his leg. (PRESENT PERFECT)
(The writer/speaker may be telling you this because someone may have asked how John is doing right now and you as the writer/speaker want to focus on his situation now.)
If there is no context available, the **PAST** tense can be used in English to refer to bygone situations. In such cases, the writer/speaker is somehow concerned with the ‘then’ of the bygone situation. **(no red arrow)**

(34) John *broke his leg* (PAST)
(The writer/speaker is thinking of what happened to John at one point in the past, for example, when he was on holiday a week ago, and not about John’s situation right now.)

If there is a context available but the indicator of time can be interpreted in various ways, the writer/speaker must decide on what has to be communicated and can do so by selecting either the **PRESENT PERFECT** or **PAST**. **(red arrow)**

(37) Susan *has lived here for twenty years*?
(The writer/speaker may be saying this at a time when Susan is still living ‘here’ and so no break between the past and the present has been established. This must be expressed by using the **PRESENT PERFECT** tense.)
If there is a context available but the indicator of time can be interpreted in various ways, the writer/speaker must decide on what has to be communicated and can do so by selecting either the **PRESENT PERFECT** or **PAST**.

(38) *Susan lived here for twenty years?*

(The writer/speaker may be saying this at a time when Susan is no longer living ‘here’ and so a break between the past and the present has been established. This must be expressed by using the **PAST** tense.)

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Read the text below and try to understand the overall message of the text. Do not worry too much about the meanings of individual words right now. Simply go through the text and then read the answer to the question about the text carefully bearing in mind the 3-step summary chart that you saw earlier on.

At a speed of 360 kilometres per hour (approximately 225 mph) the French Automotrice Grande Vitesse (AGV) is said to become one of the fastest trains in the world. Recently, the French train builder Alstom presented the train as the successor to the TGV, which is manufactured by the same company and can travel at a speed of ‘only’ 330 kilometres per hour (approximately 205 mph). The AGV has its engine spread over the train carriages. Just like the German ICE train, the French AGV train has its engine built into the flooring of the train carriages. As a result, the first and last carriages no longer need to be dedicated to housing engine rooms.

However, whether train-spotters will be able to admire the new train on the French tracks remains to be seen though. *Tot nu toe heeft de Franse treinmaatschappij nog geen bestelling geplaatst.*

**Question:**

*Translate the sentence in red in the text above into standard formal British English.*

**Possible answer:**

*Up until now the French railway company has not placed an order yet.*