

Be/Have-Perfect Selection in Australian World War I Diaries

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1. Introduction

During the Late Modern English (LModE) period (eighteenth to nineteenth centuries), there was a significant shift in the use of English perfect constructions. Historically, there were two different types of auxiliaries denoting the perfect aspect. The *be*-perfect, which uses the auxiliary *be* and the past participle (PP) of a verb, used to be the dominant form of the perfect construction for a group of mutative intransitive verbs, which include verbs ‘typically with meanings in the area of movement and change of state’ (Denison 1993: 344), such as *go* and *improve*. The *have*-perfect, a construction made with the auxiliary *have* and the PP, had been an alternative to the *be*-perfect for a long time but started to replace it in the LModE period and is now the dominant form for all types of verbs, including mutative verbs. The alternation of *be/have* is shown in examples (1) and (2).

- (1) He has/is gone three miles.
- (2) He has/is gone the same way (Rydén and Brorström 1987: 23).

The loss of the *be*-perfect and the diffusion of the *have*-perfect for mutative verbs was a major trend during the LModE period affected by a number of factors. One of the factors Kytö (1997) examines is the regional variation between British English (BrE) and American English (AmE), and the results show ‘signs of an innovative tendency in late eighteenth-century American English’ (Kytö 1997: 39). However, to expand on this finding regarding regional differences through comparisons, it is necessary to investigate other variants of English.

In a corpus-based study by Moriya (2020), early Australian English (AusE) of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is examined, along with the rate of the *be/have*-perfect for two common mutative verbs: *come* and *go*. Using the Corpus of Oz Early English (COOEE), a historical corpus containing LModE Australian texts across different registers and including

authors of different backgrounds, Moriya (2020) finds that in the *be/have come* constructions, the *have*-perfect is present at rates of 80–90% across different author backgrounds and registers, while for *be/have gone*, the overall rate of the *have*-perfect is 60–70%; however, in texts written by authors of Irish origin, the *have*-perfect rate accounts for only 42.1%, indicating a difference in the rates of the *have*-perfect diffusion among settlers of different regional backgrounds.

Moriya (2021) uses another AusE corpus, AustLit, to examine 11 different types of mutative verbs. AustLit contains Australian literary works from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, calculating the rates of *be/have*-perfect constructions for each mutative verb used in the nineteenth-century portion of the corpus. Although the results show that the *have*-perfect rate increased after 1876 for most verbs, some verbs, namely *improve* and *recover*, illustrated the opposite tendency with increased *be*-perfect rates.

This study explores what happened to the *be/have*-perfect constructions in AusE after the LModE period. Therefore, the early twentieth century, the period immediately after that investigated by Moriya (2020) and Moriya (2021), is considered to determine whether the trends seen in those previous studies are still attestable in early twentieth-century texts. In particular, this paper examines the changes in the *have*-perfect rate for two mutative verbs frequently examined in previous studies, *come* and *go*, to determine whether there was any change in overall trends between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Likewise, the two verbs showing a peculiar trend of decreasing *have*-perfect rates during the late nineteenth century in Moriya (2021), *improve* and *recover*, will be examined closely using corpus data from the early twentieth century to see whether the same trend continued over this newer period.

2. Previous Studies

There have been many notable studies of the *be/have*-perfect constructions and the factors behind perfect auxiliary selection. Visser (1973) identifies two types of distinct constructions involving the use of [*be* + PP]: the passive construction of a transitive verb and the construction using the PP of an intransitive verb, which he calls the ‘Resultative Form’ that denotes ‘the result of a preceding action’ (Visser 1973: 2042). Visser (1973) also notes that the resultative *be*-perfect was frequently observed in Old English

(OE), while the *have*-perfect containing the notion of action was ‘introduced in the majority of cases at a later point of time than the resultative forms’ (Visser 1973: 2042–43), and eventually replaced the *be*-perfect form in nearly all intransitive verbs.

Rydén and Brorström (1987) comprehensively record the shift from *be*-perfect to *have*-perfect for mutative verbs during the eighteenth to nineteenth century. They examine the use of the *be/have*-perfect in LModE letters and find that the *have*-perfect became the dominant form in the nineteenth century for most mutative verbs, as opposed to the eighteenth century, when the *be*-perfect use was more prevalent. However, for some verbs, *have*-perfect diffusion occurred later. For example, the verb *go* shows different *have*-perfect rates between the earlier part of the nineteenth century (49% for letters and 52.5% for plays) and the later (75% for letters and 94% for plays; Rydén and Brorström 1987: 109). For the verb *improve*, the *have*-perfect rate is 24.5%, ‘still rather infrequent in the 19th century’ (Rydén and Brorström 1987: 123), and also ‘the general progression of *have* with *recover* was slow’ (Rydén and Brorström 1987: 144), with a *have*-perfect rate of only 38%.

The *be/have*-perfect choice is further explored in Kytö (1997), who uses the Helsinki Corpus, The Century of Prose Corpus, and the ARCHER corpus to investigate and analyse various factors¹ affecting the choice of perfect auxiliaries. Some effects of the factors discovered by Kytö (1997) are as follows: the increase of the *have*-perfect is first seen for verbs denoting motion (e.g. *arrive* and *enter*), then for verbs denoting change of state (e.g. *grow* and *become*; Kytö 1997: 36). In the late eighteenth century, the *have*-perfect rate was higher in AmE than in BrE (Kytö 1997: 38–9). Furthermore, some text genres, namely fiction and diary/journal genres, have higher *have*-perfect rates (Kytö 1997: 41); the past perfect, the perfect infinitive, *-ing* constructions, and durative, iterative, conditional, and optative contexts promote the use of the *have*-perfect (Kytö 1997: 52–8); and the presence of complements that denote ‘the instances of process or

¹Among the factors she investigates are stative versus mutative verbs, action versus process uses, regional variation, text type variation, the level of formality, the relationship of the text to spoken language, oral versus other genres, men and women writers, perfect versus past perfect durative and iterative contexts, and negation and the presence of complements.

like uses' (Kytö 1997: 59) and of those 'indicating time, place, manner, and so forth' (Kytö 1997: 60) favours the use of the *have*-perfect.

McFadden and Alexiadou (2010) and McFadden (2017) are other notable diachronic studies of the selection of the *be/have*-perfect. In the former study, the authors argue that the *be*-perfect and the *have*-perfect were semantically distinct in Middle English (ME) and Early Modern English (EModE), with the *be*-perfect restricted to 'a particular kind of perfect of result' (McFadden and Alexiadou 2010: 421), while the *have*-perfect was used to express a wider array of meanings such as counterfactual, durative, and iterative contexts. McFadden (2017) focuses on what happened to the *be/have*-perfect after EModE, suggesting that the loss of the *be*-perfect in LModE is related to the loss of the stative-resultative use of the intransitive PP that formed a VP in perfect constructions after 1800, and 'the only constructions that still resemble the *be* perfect are adjectival uses of a small number of participles, especially *gone*' (McFadden 2017: 167).

Thus far, most studies of the *be/have*-perfect have used BrE and AmE texts, and the development of perfect constructions in other English-speaking areas has not been fully explored. A study of early Australian usage of the *be/have*-perfect by Tejedor (2020), which uses COOEE and AustLit as sources of diachronic analyses, finds that the *have*-perfect was already widely used in nineteenth-century AusE, but further sociolinguistic and syntactic analyses should be conducted of this matter. Moriya (2020) investigates the early AusE usage of *be/have come* and *be/have gone* using COOEE, which contains various types of texts written in Australia from the late eighteenth to the nineteenth century. Through sociolinguistic and syntactic analyses, Moriya (2020) discovers that texts written by authors of Irish origin show 'a slight preference for the *be*-perfect' (Moriya 2020: 8), and that Irish-origin texts in the COOEE illustrate a peculiar pattern of a sudden increase in the *have*-perfect rate for *go* during the last 25 years of the nineteenth century compared to texts of British origin in the COOEE and the ARCHER data. Moriya (2020) concludes that this pattern specific to Irish-origin texts was due to 'an influence by a new wave of Irish settlers, especially those after the late 1870s' (Moriya 2020: 13). Moriya (2020) also compares the *have*-perfect rate between registers and finds that the verbs *come* and *go* express different patterns: the former has a higher *have*-perfect rate in public texts like fiction, official correspondence, and public speeches

than in private texts like diaries and private correspondence, whereas the opposite is true for the *be*-perfect. Finally, the absence of complements favours the use of the *be gone* construction in the COOEE except for Irish-origin texts, which is characterised by ‘its relatively frequent usage of BE *gone* with complements’ (Moriya 2020: 18)

Expanding on Moriya (2020), Moriya’s (2021) scope of study includes not only *come* and *go*, but also 15 types of mutative verbs selected based on the data of Rydén and Brorström (1987): *arrive, become, come, fall, get* (action), *get* (process), *go, grow, improve, pass, recover, and return*. Moriya (2021) uses nineteenth-century texts from the AustLit corpus, which represents literary works written in Australia, showing that the following five verbs take the *be*-perfect form more frequently than other mutative verbs: *go, improve, return, pass, and recover*. When the results are analysed diachronically, a *have*-perfect rate increase was visible for all verbs except for *improve* and *recover*, for which the opposite pattern of a decreasing *have*-perfect rate was observed. Although Rydén and Brorström (1987) remark that those two verbs were resistant to the shift towards the *have*-perfect during the nineteenth century, Moriya’s (2021) finding of the decreasing *have*-perfect rate for those verbs ‘cannot be explained by those verbs’ simple resistance to the diffusion of the *have*-perfect’ (Moriya 2021: 13). An analysis based on the authors’ origins was also conducted by Moriya (2021), finding that Irish authors used the *be*-perfect more often than authors of other origins, while Scottish and Australian authors were more innovative in the *have*-perfect use. In the end, the reason why *improve* and *recover* illustrated a drastically different diachronic pattern cannot be fully elucidated, and Moriya (2021) concludes that further investigation is necessary, mentioning the possibility that ‘the trend which involves an increase in the use of the *be*-perfect may be characteristic of early AusE’ (Moriya 2021: 17).

3. Methodology

The current study is corpus-based, and the corpus used was compiled by the author. The World War I Diaries Corpus (WWIDC) consists of diaries and letters written by Australian soldiers who went to the battlefield during

World War I (1914–1918)². This corpus contains 69 texts and approximately 1,020,000 words in total. Although the text genre is limited to private writings such as diaries and letters, the corpus provides some insight into what happened to the *be/have*-perfect in the early twentieth century, the period on which the WWIDC focuses.

This study focused on four types of mutative verbs: *come*, *go*, *improve*, and *recover*. These four verbs were selected because *come* and *go* are common and typical mutative verbs that might have a major effect on the entire pattern of *be/have*-perfect occurrences, and *improve* and *recover* are verbs that showed a drastically different trend in Moriya's (2021) data. The verbs *come* and *go* are analysed separately by Kytö (1997), who comments that their occurrence 'influences the figures obtained for the textual distributions of *be* and *have*' (Kytö 1997:45). She also remarks that in the letters and drama texts she examined, '*be* is quite persistent with *come* and *go*, even during the nineteenth century', so considering the frequency of occurrences of those two verbs, there might be some *be*-perfect instances even in early twentieth-century data. *Improve* and *recover* are much less frequent than *come* and *go*, but they are nevertheless among the verbs identified by Rydén and Brorström (1987) as retaining more *be*-perfect instances in the nineteenth century and exhibiting a trend of decreasing *have*-perfect rates throughout the nineteenth century in Moriya (2021), unlike the other 13 verbs examined. Although the AustLit corpus used by Moriya (2021) and the WWIDC are not directly compatible, the WWIDC data might shed some light on how the *have*-perfect rate pattern for *improve* and *recover* developed in the early twentieth century.

All instances of the constructions *be/have come*, *be/have gone*, *be/have improved*, and *be/have recovered* within the WWIDC were collected using the concordance software AntConc ver. 3.5.9.0. After gathering the data and counting the total number of targeted constructions, the rates of the *have*-perfect usage were calculated as a percentage for each verb type. This method of calculating the degree of *have*-perfect diffusion through *have*-perfect rates follows the methods applied by Rydén and Brorström (1987) and Kytö (1997).

² The texts contained in the WWIDC are available at the New South Wales State Library website (<https://transcripts.sl.nsw.gov.au/collection/world-war-i-diaries>).

Some ambiguous instances were omitted from the data, such as *'d come* (*had come* or *would come*) and the abbreviated form *-’s* (*is* or *has*). There are also instances of the so-called double perfect (Denison 1998: 137), which involves the use of the construction [*have been* PP]. According to Rydén and Brorström (1987: 25), these constructions became rarer after the 1860 and 1870s except with *go*. Although double perfect constructions are considered a historically separate type of construction, this study counts them as a subtype of the *be*-perfect; however, instances of *have been* PP are noted in this paper and analysed separately from the other *be/have*-perfect instances.

4. Results

Overall, the *have*-perfect rates in the WWIDC are higher than the levels found in the LModE results of Moriya (2020) and Moriya (2021). As Figure 1 illustrates, the *have*-perfect rate for *come* is 98.83%, 90.20% for *go*, 75.00% for *improve*, and 90.91%, *recover*. It is worth noting that verbs such as *go* and *recover* have over 90% *have*-perfect rates.

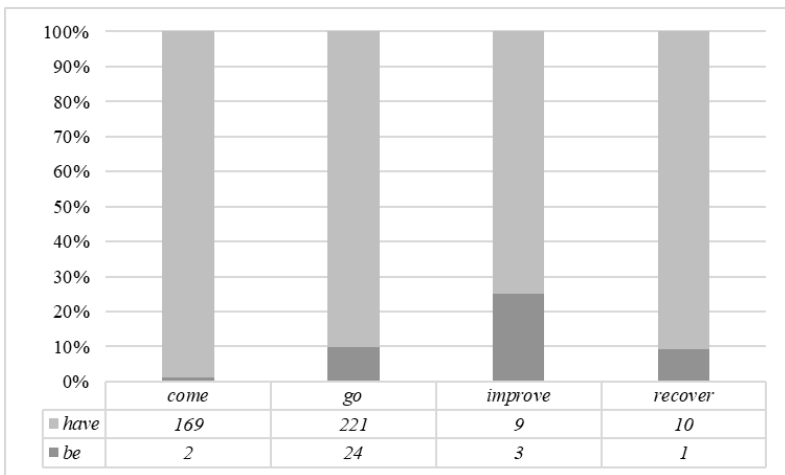


Figure 1. *Be/have*-perfect ratios in the World War I Diaries Corpus

Table 1. *Have*-perfect rates in the COOEE, AustLit, and WWIDC (COOEE data from Moriya (2020), AustLit data from Moriya (2021))

	COOEE	AustLit	WWIDC
<i>come</i>	88.77% (253/285)	91.77% (578/634)	98.83% (169/171)
<i>go</i>	63.36% (230/363)	64.49% (483/749)	90.20% (221/245)
<i>improve</i>	N/A	68.00% (17/25)	75.00% (9/12)
<i>recover</i>	N/A	74.58% (44/59)	90.91% (10/11)

When compared with the COOEE data from Moriya (2020) and AustLit data from Moriya (2021), as shown in Table 1, the increasing tendency of *have*-perfect rates from the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century becomes clear. This is especially evident for the verbs *go* and *recover*, for which the *have*-perfect rates in the nineteenth century were approximately 60% and 70%, respectively, but the *have*-perfect rates of both verbs exceed 90% in the WWIDC data.

For *be/have come* constructions, the only instances in the WWIDC in which the *be*-perfect appears are examples (3) and (4), as shown below. Example (3) is coordinated with *and*, and Example (4) is an instance of *be have* PP, so neither might be considered proper examples of the *be*-perfect for *come*.

- (3) Just a PC to let you know that I am still alive and well and come out in one piece after the Battle of Oct 4 which we took part in. (VOLUME 2 LETTERS WRITTEN ON ACTIVE SERVICE, M-W, 1914–1919. All underlines added by the author)
- (4) /.../and engineers, and tube conductors, drivers and hotel & restaurant waiters & waitresses have been come out and all demanding higher wages and less work. (ITEM 07_HECTOR BREWER DIARY, 17 NOVEMBER–12 DECEMBER 1918)

The *be/have gone* constructions have a notably higher *have*-perfect rate than in the nineteenth-century data, with only two instances of *have been gone*. This high *have*-perfect rate in WWIDC will be discussed in detail in the next section, but it is likely that some factors, such as text genre and the presence of object-like complements (Kytö 1997: 62), as seen in examples (5) and (6), favour the use of the *have*-perfect.

- (5) /.../ I tell you if they had come, we were gone to the mountains. (VOLUME 1_LETTERS WRITTEN ON ACTIVE SERVICE, A-L, 1914–1919)
- (6) Unfortunately, I found he had gone to Italy on war work, and therefore had to be content with his partner,/.../ (ITEM 01_ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT DIARY, 1915–1917)

For the *bel/have improved* constructions, the tendency of the increasing *be*-perfect in the AustLit data is not visible in the WWIDC data. The *have*-perfect rate has increased since the nineteenth century, but the *be*-perfect, as in Example (7), can still be observed in the dataset. Some instances of the *be*-perfect might need closer examination because the construction [*be* + PP] is morphologically the same as the passive construction of the transitive meaning of *improve*. This will be discussed in detail in the next section. In addition, the small sample size compared with verbs such as *come* and *go* means that the data might be heavily affected by sampling bias, and the results might change if investigated with more samples including different uses of *improve*.

- (7) One could not help wishing that their environment could be improved. (ITEM 01_WALTER LAWRY WATERHOUSE DIARY, 15 JANUARY–27 MARCH 1916)

Similar to *bel/have improved*, the *bel/have recovered* constructions also show an increase in the *have*-perfect from the nineteenth-century data, contrary to the trend observed by Moriya (2021). With a small sample size, Example (8) is the only instance within the WWIDC to use the *be*-perfect for the verb *recover*. This verb can also have a transitive meaning; therefore, a distinction between the *be*-perfect and the passive construction must be made. This is examined in detail in the next section.

- (8) I slung my hammock on deck & was quite recovered the next day. (ITEM 01_WALTER LAWRY WATERHOUSE DIARY, 15 JANUARY–27 MARCH 1916)

In summary, the WWIDC data illustrate higher percentages of *have*-perfect rates than in the COOEE and AustLit data from the previous period. The reasons behind these higher *have*-perfect rates might just be a general trend towards *have*-perfect dominance, but considering that some remnant *be*-perfect constructions such as *be gone* are still commonly used in PDE, there might be other factors at work to increase the *have*-perfect rate, specifically in the WWIDC. In the next section, the effects of factors that may be specific to the WWIDC are discussed in detail.

5. Discussion

5.1 Analyses of *be/have come* and *be/have gone*

In this section, the data on *be/have come* and *be/have gone* are examined closely. Although Kytö (1997) remarks that these commonly used verbs affect the overall data and that ‘the rise of *have* is clearly less rapid with *come* and *go* than with other verbs’ (Kytö 1997:45), her data still show that the *have*-perfect was much more common for *come* than for *go* in the nineteenth century and onwards, with *come* the rate of the *have*-perfect reaching 97% in the latter half of the nineteenth century (Kytö 1997: 67). Furthermore, Rydén and Brorström (1987) find that the *have*-perfect rate for *come* in the nineteenth century was 79% (Rydén and Brorström 1987: 66), whereas the *have*-perfect rate for *go* in the same period was only 56% (Rydén and Brorström 1987: 109).

However, in the WWIDC, the *have*-perfect rate for *go* exceeds 90%, which is much higher than Rydén and Brorström (1987) and Kytö (1997) find in their nineteenth-century data, and also higher than the COOEE and AustLit data exhibited by Moriya (2020) and Moriya (2021). The construction *have come*, on the other hand, was already predominant in the COOEE and AustLit data, and the data obtained from the WWIDC are not so different. The only occurrences of the *be*-perfect for *come* are example (3), in which the PP *come* is coordinated with *and*, and example (4), which is an instance of *have been come*, which might be distinct from the proper *be*-perfect constructions. Therefore, from here on, *be/have gone* will be the focus of linguistic analysis.

Among the factors examined by Kytö (1997), the presence of object-like complements strongly correlated with the use of *have*-perfect is attested in

Moriya’s (2020) COOEE data. In the WWIDC, the same factor seems to have affected the exceptionally high *have*-perfect usage of the verb *go*. The instances of *be/have gone* with and without complements are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. *Be/have gone have*-perfect rate with or without complements

<i>go</i>	<i>be</i>	<i>have</i>	<i>have</i> -perfect rate
with complements	3	138	97.87%
without complements	21	83	79.81%

From Table 2, the effect of complements inducing the use of the *have*-perfect is visible; however, even without complements, the *have*-perfect rate reaches almost 80%, which is quite high compared to nineteenth-century AusE data of approximately 60%. In McFadden (2017), the PDE usage of *be gone* is stated to be not a perfect of result, because it implies that ‘the event that has presumably led to someone or something being *gone* is not accessible for modification in terms of manner or goal’ (McFadden 2017: 167), unlike in the nineteenth century. However, there were still uses such as Example (5) in the WWIDC, which includes a complement clearly indicating a goal (‘were gone to the mountains’), so the usage of *be gone* in the WWIDC is still somewhat similar to that of the nineteenth century than the PDE. As for instances without complements, the *have*-perfect rate is still higher than in the nineteenth-century data obtained from COOEE and AustLit, but it is closer to the data obtained from the twentieth-century ARCHER data (71% and 82%) in Kytö (1997: 67). Rydén and Brorström (1987: 109) also state that in the second half of their nineteenth-century data, the *have*-perfect rate was 75%. Therefore, the sudden increase in the *have*-perfect rate for *be/have gone* in the twentieth-century data can be partly explained by the presence of object-like complements. However, there is a possibility that other factors specific to the WWIDC are working to significantly raise the *have*-perfect rate, such as the genre of diaries and journals, in which the rise of the *have*-perfect was seen in earlier periods of the eighteenth century (Kytö 1997: 43).

Kytö (1997) also investigates how the past perfect, perfect infinitives, and

-ing forms favour the use of the *have*-perfect. However, as shown in Table 3, the forms of auxiliaries do not seem to promote the use of the *have*-perfect in the WWIDC except for the *-ing* form, which is rarely attested in the corpus.

Table 3. *Be/have gone have*-perfect rate according to the grammatical form of the auxiliaries

the form of <i>be/have</i>	<i>be</i>	<i>have</i>	<i>have</i> -perfect rate
present	7	126	94.74%
past	11	66	85.71%
infinitive	2	26	92.86%
<i>-ing</i> form	0	3	100.00%
imperative	2	0	0.00%
<i>have been gone</i>	2	0	0.00%
total	24	221	90.20%

Regarding the effect of negation on the selection of the *be/have*-perfect, Table 4 shows that the use of the *be*-perfect is attested only in constructions without negation. This contradicts McFadden and Alexiadou's (2010) finding that the 'apparent preference for *have* with negation was, thus, just a side effect of the counterfactual effect' (McFadden and Alexiadou 2010: 397). Although negated constructions are rare in the WWIDC, this may be one of the factors contributing to the high *have*-perfect rate in the corpus.

Table 4. *Be/have gone have*-perfect rate with or without negation

<i>go</i>	<i>be</i>	<i>have</i>	<i>have</i> -perfect rate
negation	0	16	100.00%
without negation	24	205	89.52%

5.2 Analyses of *be/have improved* and *be/have recovered*

Because there are few occurrences of both *improve* and *recover* in the WWIDC, and most of them are *have*-perfect instances, the *be*-perfect occurrences of these verbs will be the focus of this section. Both verbs can have transitive and intransitive meanings; therefore, it is important to distinguish between two morphologically similar constructions: the passive construction of a transitive verb and the *be*-perfect construction of an intransitive verb.

The instances of possible *be*-perfect constructions for *improve* are Examples (7), (9), and (10). In all three occurrences, a transitive reading is possible, especially in Example (9), where the PP *improved* is coordinated with another PP *rendered* and what seems to be the agent of the actions is marked with *by*. Example (10) is an instance of [*have been* PP], which, as mentioned previously, might be better treated as a construction distinct from the *be*-perfect. If the ambiguous instances in (9) and (10) are excluded, the *have*-perfect rate of *improve* is the same as the *have*-perfect rate of *recover*, exceeding 90%.

(9) /.../ the people feel that their lot will be improved rather than rendered worse by taking part in /.../ (ITEM 01_ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT DIARY, 1915–1917)

(10) The wells here have been greatly improved & watered all the horses of the Bde /.../ (ITEM 05_FRED HAROLD TOMLINS WAR DIARY, 19 MARCH–15 AUGUST 1916).

All three occurrences of *be improved* have inanimate subjects as opposed to the occurrence of *be recovered* with an animate subject ('I was quite recovered'). Moreover, the *be*-perfect of these verbs in the WWIDC appears in constructions without a complement. It is possible that in such particular contexts with inanimate subjects and without complements, 'the distinction might have been less important as ongoing actions are not visible, unlike verbs of motion' (Moriya 2021: 11). The higher *have*-perfect rate in the WWIDC may be the result of contextual preferences, which require a clear distinction between passive and perfect constructions using the perfect auxiliary *have*.

Finally, the text genre of diaries and journals favours the use of the *have*-perfect, but the genre of fiction also shows a high *have*-perfect rate, according to Kytö (1997: 43). This seems to contradict the data obtained from AustLit, a corpus largely composed of fiction, which exhibited a higher *be*-perfect rate towards the end of the nineteenth century. To examine the effect of register on the choice of the *be/have*-perfect, future studies should conduct more thorough synchronic comparisons between text genres using nineteenth-century and twentieth-century AusE data.

6. Conclusion

Some interesting data on the AusE uses of the *be/have*-perfect were collected using the WWIDC. As expected, for all four verbs examined, higher *have*-perfect rates were attested in the twentieth-century data in the WWIDC than in the nineteenth-century data from COOEE and AustLit. The *be/have*-perfect constructions for the mutative verbs investigated showed a *have*-perfect rate higher than 90%, except for *improve*.

Constructions using *have come* had already become the norm during the nineteenth century, and in twentieth-century data only two ambiguous *be*-perfect instances were found. For *go*, the most commonly found mutative verb in the WWIDC, the *have*-perfect rate exceeds 90%, which is exceptionally high compared to the nineteenth-century data. The presence of complements, negation, and the effect of text genre are likely to raise the overall *have*-perfect rate, but since the *have*-perfect rate is still high without complements, multiple factors might have contributed to the high *have*-perfect rate for *be/have gone* characteristic of the WWIDC.

For *improve* and *recover*, the WWIDC data did not illustrate the pattern found in the AustLit data of Moriya (2021), which shows an increase in the *be*-perfect rate instead of the *have*-perfect rate. This is likely because of the difference in text genres, the contexts in which the verbs are used, and some other factors characteristic of AustLit and WWIDC. To better determine whether the pattern observed in AustLit can be attested outside the corpus, more samples and a closer analysis of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century AusE texts are required.

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