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Definiteness Effects and Perfect HAVE*

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Benveniste (1971) surveys a striking overlap in the distribution of HAVE and BE in the world's languages, and suggests that the former may be a derived form of the latter. In this spirit, Freeze (1992) gives a syntactic account which unifies existential BE and possessive HAVE, and Kayne (1993) extends (a modified version of) this account to auxiliary uses of HAVE and BE. However, Freeze's analysis of existential and possessive HAVE/BE link relies crucially on the presence of definiteness effects (DE; Milsark 1974 *inter alia*), or the invariant presence of an indefinite object NP, for both constructions, while Kayne's analysis of auxiliary HAVE/BE makes no mention of them. Since it has been argued (Vincent 1983) that the periphrastic Perfect results from a historical reanalysis of main verb HAVE + adjectival passive, one would expect that auxiliary HAVE would also show DE. Thus, while Kayne represents a valuable addition to a promising line of research, the account will be strengthened if it can be shown that DE are relevant to auxiliary uses of HAVE /BE. I will provide additional data from the English Perfect which suggests that DE do affect its use. Thus, by filling in a problematic gap in the distributional HAVE/BE paradigm, this paper lends additional support to the Benveniste-Freeze-Kayne view.

In section 1, I give a brief survey of cross-linguistic facts in support of a HAVE/BE connection, and a sketch of some accounts of these facts. Section 2 is a discussion of DE in general, and in particular their role in the existential/possessive paradigm. In section 3, I show that DE are also present in the Perfect, and therefore, that auxiliary HAVE is consistent with main verb HAVE and existential BE in this respect.

1.0 THE HAVE/BE PARADIGM: SYNCHRONIC EVIDENCE

As auxiliary verbs, HAVE and BE show several patterns of alternation: in Germanic languages, each combines with the past participle to form a unique meaning:

(1) a. HAVE+past participle = Perfect (-en...)
b. BE+past participle = passive (-en...)

In French, both HAVE and BE are used in forming the Perfect, which the selection depending upon the type of verb:

(2) a. j'**ai** mangé ... HAVE (unergative)
b. je **suis** venue... BE (unaccusative)

As main verbs, HAVE and BE are both associated with existential sentences: while standard English uses BE in existentials, main verb HAVE is used by languages such as French and the French-influenced creole spoken in Trinidad:

(3) a. There **is** more than one kind of tea in China.
b. It **have** more than one kind of tea in China. (Trinidadian)

Possessives are also formed with both verbs:

(4) a. I **had** a book.

b. *u menya* ***byla*** *kniga*
by me was a book
'I had a book' (Russian)

1.1 DIACHRONIC EVIDENCE

Vincent (1983) traces the origin of the Romance periphrastic Perfect from Latin synthetic Perfect to the reanalysis of main-verb HAVE in environments like (4), in which main verb HAVE occurs with a small clause including an adjectival passive:

(5) *in ea provincia pecunias magnas collocatas habent*
in that province capital great invested they-have
'They have great capital invested in that province'
(Latin; Cicero, in Vincent 1983)

Over time, sentences such as (5) came to allow a second interpretation, "They have invested great capital in that province," in which the previously secondary predicate *invested* is the main verb.

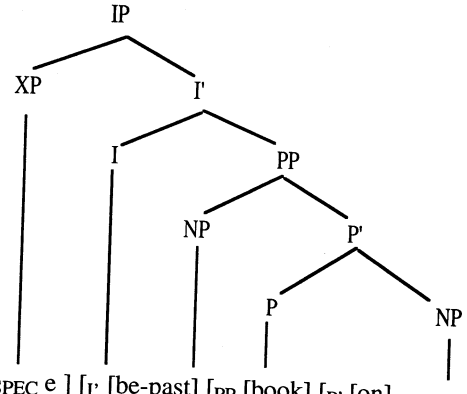
1.2 P-INCORPORATION: FREEZE AND KAYNE

Both Freeze (1992) and Kayne (1993) have proposed syntactic accounts which treat HAVE as a form of BE which is derived via the incorporation of a non-overt head. Freeze deals only with the non-auxiliary uses of HAVE/BE. His account unites existentials and possessives as instantiations of a more general locative construction. In a number of languages, here exemplified by Russian, existential sentences and locative predicates differ only in constituent order: when the theme *book* precedes the verb, the construction is locative (6a); when the theme follows the verb, the construction is existential (6b).

(6) a. *kniga byla na stole*
book NOM.FEM. was on table LOC.
'The book was on the table'

b. *na stole byla kniga*
on table LOC. was book NOM.FEM.
'There was a book on the table' (Russian)

Freeze assigns these sentences the following underlying structure:



(7) [IP [SPEC e] [I' [be-past] [PP [book] [P' [on] [table]]]]]

THEME (± definite) LOCATION

The difference between (6a) and (6b) comes down to the movement alternatives available to the two arguments: if the NP in Spec, PP (the theme *book*) is definite, it moves to Spec, IP (as in 6a); if not, it stays in place and (optionally) the P' node moves to subject position (as in 6b), forming the existential. In other cases, such as English, the option of P' movement is more restricted— hence the constituent order: expletive BE NP PP.

Freeze analyzes both types of possessive constructions as locatives.[1] Therefore, they share with (6a) and (6b) the structure in (7). The derivation of BE-type possessives is obvious: a [+human] location moves to Spec, IP. The derivation of HAVE-type possessives requires some further elaboration. In many languages, PPs which are [+human] have a null preposition. Freeze argues that this is the case with languages (like English) which use HAVE-type possessives. He proposes that the HAVE form results from a movement which incorporates this abstract P with I (which, he suggests, takes place because the null P can't case-assign the NP in its Spec: Once the P moves, I may govern into the now-headless PP)[2]. The BE + P compound is spelled out as HAVE.

If Freeze is correct in characterizing existential and possessive constructions as underlyingly locative, we have an explanation for the alternation between HAVE and BE in possessives: HAVE is spellout of BE augmented by a null preposition.

The structure in (8) is Kayne's (1993) underlying possessive:

(8)

$[_{IP}\ e\ [I'_{D'}\ BE\ [_{DP}\ e\ [_{D'}\ [D/P^0][_{AgrP}\ [_{DPposs}\ LOCATION]\ [_{Agr'}\ Agr^0\ [_{NP}\ THEME]]]]]]]$

Here, the DPposs moves to Spec, IP because neither Spec, AgrP (where it is base-generated) nor Spec, DP (through which it moves) is a Case position. However, without incorporation, the intermediate trace in Spec, D/P will be in an A' position. Once P is incorporated, it is an A position, and the movement will be licit. Having adopted essentially the same analysis as Freeze for possessives, Kayne goes deeper into the HAVE/BE paradigm: in keeping with Vincent's reanalysis proposal, Kayne

argues that auxiliary HAVE is essentially the same as (8), except that the complement of BE is a VP. In the case of the auxiliary, however, it is the (VP-internal) subject which must move though Spec, DP to Spec, IP, thereby motivating the incorporation of P with D/P.

Though Kayne builds on Freeze's locative paradigm in order to relate auxiliary and possessive HAVE, his analysis does not make crucial reference to the definiteness of the THEME argument[3]. So while he extends the coverage of the incorporation account in a way that is clearly attractive, he loses the definiteness effect which so clearly links existentials and possessives.

Clearly, a unified account of the distribution of HAVE and BE would be enhanced if DE could be shown to extend to auxiliary HAVE. Unfortunately, there appears to be no restriction against indefinite object NPs occurring with auxiliary HAVE:

(9) Mary has solved a/the problem.

2.0 DEFINITENESS EFFECTS IN EXISTENTIAL SENTENCES

In the existential BE environment, the seminal account of DE drives from Milsark (1974, 1977). Milsark defines a quantificational class of 'weak' determiners which can occur in the object of *there is* sentences (10a), and a nonquantificational or 'strong' class, including the indefinite article, which cannot (10b):

(10) a. There is a man in the other room
There are a few men in the other room
many men...
some men...
five men...

b. *There is the man in the other room
every man...
each man ...
many of the men...
some of the men...

Milsark offers the following account of the ungrammaticality of the predicates in (10b): in keeping with its presentational meaning, *there is* contains a covert existential quantifier which needs a set to quantify over. The quantificational class of NP is ruled out because it does not supply an unbound variable: the object NP cannot be quantified by both the covert EQ and a strong determiner.

Milsark further observes that there is a class of predicates which cannot occur as secondary predicates with existentials:

(11) a. There is a man sick in the other room.
naked
drunk
dying

b. *There is a man intelligent in the other room.
green
blond
Canadian

He observes that the predicates which are permitted in this construction are those which "seem to denote *states*, conditions in which an entity finds itself and which are subject to change without there being any essential alternation of the entity," while the class disallowed in these small clauses "denote what might be called *properties* of the entities of which they are predicated" (p.12). He then accounts for the restriction on existential small clause predicates with a general principle: weak NPs cannot be the subjects of predicates denoting properties. The restriction against properties as secondary predicates follows from the fact that *there is* requires a weak determiner in its object position. (Since Milsark, the standard terminology for this distinction has been that of Carlson 1977: *Stage-level* (stages) vs. *Individual-level* (properties). For reasons of clarity, these terms will be used below.) Note that, in terms of Freeze's locative paradigm, possessives and existentials are both underlyingly instances of BE + indefinite THEME + LOCATION. Therefore, a Freezian interpretation would pinpoint not *there is* but rather existential BE (and therefore possessive HAVE) as the source of DE.

2.1 PRAGMATIC DEFINITENESS

The definiteness of DE should not be confused with morphological definiteness. As has often been noted, it is quite possible to have a morphologically definite object of an existential:

(12) a. There were the same people at both conferences.
b. There was the usual crowd at the beach.
c. There was the stupidest article on the reading list. (Prince 1992)

Corpus-based studies of English existentials (Prince 1992, Ward and Birner 1995) have examined the DE phenomenon in existential sentences more closely. It turns out that the occurrences of strong determiners are quite restricted, for the most part falling into one of two types: *reminders* (13a) and *list-type* NPs which newly instantiate a variable in a proposition already in the discourse[4] (13b).

(13) a. A: I guess we've called everybody.
B: No, there's still Mary and John. (WB 1995)

b. A: Who was at the party last night?
B: There was John, Mary, Fred, Susan, Xavier, and Ethel. (WB 1995)

Therefore, rather than a morpho-syntactic constraint, DE should be thought of as a requirement that the object introduce a new discourse entity. If we think of discourse entities as potential variables, this view is entirely consistent with Milsark's analysis.

2.2 MAIN VERB HAVE

Szabolcsi (1986) and Iatridou (1996) discuss DE with main verb HAVE. In its strictly possessive sense, main verb HAVE requires an indefinite NP as its complement. Where the reference is definite, possession cannot be indicated with HAVE:

(14) a. That's a nice car. Do you own/*have it?
b. Do you see all the antiques in this room? I own/*have most of them.
(Iatridou 1996)

Iatridou also discusses cases of main verb HAVE with small clause complements. It turns out that, in such cases, the predicate must be Stage-level:

(15) a. *echo to pedhi mu arosto/ *kondo*
I have the child my sick / *short

b. *echo tin valitsa mu sto aftokinito / *prasini*
I have the suitcase my in the car / *green
(Modern Greek; Iatridou 1996)

Of course, it is also possible for a definite NP to follow main verb HAVE:

(16) I have the car.

This use of HAVE, however, forces what Iatridou calls a "custodial" interpretation; in either Greek or English, (15a-b) and (16) denote only temporary possession.

To account for this, Iatridou invokes Kratzer (1989). Kratzer argues that there is a spatio-temporal argument (e) available with Stage-level predicates, and that this argument can satisfy a requirement on quantification which is at other times satisfied by indefinites. Conditional *when* clauses are said to contain *always*, an adverb of quantification, and therefore also must contain some sort of variable. Kratzer offers the following evidence that S-L predicates can contribute the necessary variable:

(17) a. *When Mary knows French, she knows it well.
b. When Mary speaks French, she speaks it well.
c. When Mary knows a language, she knows it well. (Kratzer 1989)

(17a) contains neither a S-L predicate nor an indefinite NP. As (17b-c) demonstrate, either one or the other will repair the sentence. Again, this is consistent with an approach which treats DE as a discourse constraint: S-L predicates, not being inherent properties, evoke events, and events are potential discourse entities. So Modern Greek main verb HAVE + NP must have either a nonspecific NP or an event variable in its complement. Custodial HAVE, Iatridou argues, contains an unpronounced event argument which is temporal and/or locative in nature:

(18) *Chthes*$_i$ *o Kostas*$_j$ *iche to aftokinito* $(e)_{i/j}$.
yesterday$_i$ Kostas$_j$ had the car TEMP$_i$/LOC$_j$
(Modern Greek; Iatridou 1996)

As in English, only the use of main verb HAVE with an indefinite NP denotes true possession, while the others uses are custodial in nature. Iatridou represents custodial HAVE as in (18): a small clause with an implicit complement. Alternatively, this meaning distinction can be thought of as the difference between a Stage-level HAVE and an Individual-level HAVE; in either case, a variable is present.

3.0 DEFINITENESS EFFECTS AND AUXILIARY HAVE

As was shown in (9), repeated here as (19), the English Perfect does not require an indefinite object:

(19) Mary has solved a/the problem.

However, if those since Milsark who correlate DE with a requirement for a variable (or a new discourse entity) are correct, indefinite NPs are only one way in which the requirement can be satisfied. In fact, the Perfect HAVE does seem to show DE in the other sense posited by Kratzer: Perfect HAVE is incompatible with Individual-level predicates. The verb *run* in (20a) is ambiguous between a Stage-level and an Individual-level reading, (20b) (by itself) does not mean that John has been a runner; rather, it evokes at least one event of running. That is, the simple Present in (19a) can mean something like "John is a runner," but the Perfect in (20b) cannot (by itself) mean "John has been a runner."

(20) a. John runs.
b. John has run.

Likewise, an adjective in the Perfect must be Stage-level. This is most readily apparent with a predicate which by itself is ambiguous between Stage-level and Individual-level:

(21) a. John is blond.
b. John has been blond.

Hair-color can be thought of as a permanent attribute or a changeable, ultimately temporary attribute (in the sense that one may go to the hairdresser and select a new hair-color). In (21a), *blond* can have either meaning, though the first is more readily available. In (21b), however, the second, Stage-level reading is forced: it can only mean that John has dyed his hair.

3.1 SOME APPARENT COUNTEREXAMPLES:

An Individual-level interpretation of the predicate combined with the Perfect is apparently available with the addition of temporally modifying material:

(22) John has for run for 30 years.

can mean "John has been engaged in a single event of running for 30 years," or (more likely) "John has been a runner for thirty years." However, as we have seen, the second reading is not possible without some added material. This is a general fact: whenever Perfect HAVE is formed with an Individual-level predicate, some sort of additional material must be included:

(23) a. *Mary has been tall.
b. Mary has been tall since she was 12.

(24) a. *Angus has known French.
b. Angus has known French for 10 years.

(25) a. *Felix has disliked going to the dentist.
b. Felix has disliked going to the dentist his entire life.

In all cases, the Individual-level predicate is bad by itself and needs some way of indicating a temporal boundary for the situation depicted. In other words, it seems to be necessary to stipulate that the otherwise Individual-level predicate cannot be assumed to be a permanent state. This is clearly parallel to the situation with main-verb HAVE: additional material such as the *since clause* in (23b) or the temporal PPs in (24b) and (25b) reflect a fix-up process of predicate 'level-switching' akin to the forced custodial interpretation of main-verb HAVE + definite NP. The predicates *tall, know,* and *dislike,* which are ordinarily interpreted as properties, become Stage-level in the sense that there is an implicit change-of-state (or, as in the case of 25b, a potential change-of-state).

3.1 EXISTENTIAL CLOSURE

It remains to be shown why the Perfect must force this switch from Individual-level to Stage-level; that is, why can't an indefinite object NP provide the variable required in the presence of HAVE? One explanation which suggests itself is built on Diesing's (1992) treatment of indefinites. Building upon Milsark's weak/strong distinction, she points out a further contrast between *presupposed* and *cardinal* indefinites. Presuppositional indefinite objects are bound by some (possibly non-overt) adverb of quantification, such as *usually* or *seldom.* These indefinites undergo QR, thereby leaving the VP. When an indefinite fails to be thus quantified, it is "closed off" by existential closure (EC), a fix-up process proposed by Heim (1982), whereby an existential quantifier is inserted to bind the leftover variable. (In terms of the discourse model, this essentially amounts to the introduction of a new discourse entity.) In many cases, there is an ambiguity between a "quantificational" (QR) and an "existential" (EC) interpretation of object indefinites:

(26) a. I usually read a book by Robertson Davies.
b. Usually x (x is a book by Robertson Davies) $\wedge$ I read x
c. Usually t (t is lunch time) $\exists$x (x is a book by R. Davies) $\wedge$ I read x by t
(Diesing 1992 pp. 109-110)

(26a) can have a quantificational interpretation (26b), in which *a book by Robertson Davies* is bound by the adverb *usually,* or an existential reading (26c), in which the adverb quantifies over something other than the indefinite—i.e. an implicit context variable such as *by lunch time*—and the indefinite is closed off by EC. In either case, the variable contributed by the indefinite NP will be inaccessible to the covert existential quantifier of Perfect HAVE.

Diesing shows that EC is not allowed with experiencer verbs such as *detest, like, love,* and *appreciate* :

(27) a. I generally detest an opera by Wagner/*by lunch time.
b. John usually likes a film by Roger Corman/* by lunch time.

(27a-b) can only have the quantificational readings; something like "Whenever I hear an opera by Wagner, I detest it" and "If a film is by Roger Corman, chances are John will like it." Further, because experiencer verbs are Individual-level predicates, they are not associated with Kratzer's e variable. However, since EC is blocked, the indefinite in the complement should be available at some point in the derivation. In this case, HAVE + experiencer verb should show a grammaticality contrast between definite and indefinite complements. Indeed, this seems to be the case: though somewhat odd, (28b) is considerably better than (28c).

(27) a. Felix liked a/the film by Fellini.
b. ?Felix has liked a film by Fellini.
c. *Felix has liked the film by Fellini.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In showing that definiteness effects obtain when HAVE is used to form the Perfect, I have identified a formal property common to all parts of the HAVE/BE paradigm; in doing so, I have provided additional evidence in confirmation of the B-F-K approach. Further, I would like to argue that this is evidence of a particularly useful sort. If the Freeze and Kayne incorporation accounts are to be taken seriously as explanations of the inter- and intra-linguistic distribution of HAVE and BE, the discourse behavior of these verbs must be considered. The synchronic evidence of a link between HAVE and BE concerns questions of semantic function: both verbs are used in possessive and existential sentences. Further, the historical evidence of a connection between main verb HAVE and auxiliary HAVE relies on the notion that a class of sentences can contain a token of HAVE which is ambiguous between a possessive use and a Perfect marker. This means that the conditions for their use must overlap sufficiently to permit such ambiguity and eventual reanalysis. All of this suggests that the paradigm shares at least some properties in terms of their information status. Definiteness effects are an area of grammar where morphology and discourse interact, and so it is not surprising that they represent a common thread in the HAVE/BE paradigm.

Notes

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[1] In support of his claim that possessive sentences are locative, he points out that possessors must agree with a pronoun occurring in a locative adjunct:
i. I have a needle on me.
ii. *I have a needle on you.

[2] Technically speaking, the possessor need not be [+human]:
My car has mud flaps.

[3] For Kayne, it is the abstract D/P which is [+/-definite], not the theme subject; in any case, for the English possessive, his use of DE is involved only in derivationally linking i. John's sister
ii. A sister of John's (cf. *The sister of John's)

[4] The Prince and Ward-Birner approach to DE regards the crucial feature of these complements to be Hearer-newness. An alternative, and one more in keeping with Milsark's semantic account, is that the complement must be Discourse-new (Lipson 1997 *Definiteness effects with possessive HAVE,* unpublished manuscript).

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