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# Be is selected over have if and only if it is part of an A-chain

Sten Vikner

#### 1. Introduction.

In this paper, I propose to describe the facts of *have/be* selection in Germanic and Romance in the following way: *Be* is selected over *have* if the V<sup>o</sup> in question is part of an A-chain (i.e., if *be* governs a coindexed A-bound NP).<sup>1</sup>

I furthermore want to depart from previous accounts such as Hoekstra (1984), Haider (1985), and Burzio (1986) by attempting to assimilate the analysis of the perfect auxiliary have/be to that of other occurrences of have/be, including have/be of passive constructions and have/be of predicative adjective constructions. Such a step will furthermore allow more languages to be included in the analysis, as the languages so far considered not to have "auxiliary selection", e.g., English, Swedish, and Spanish, will also be accounted for.

# 2. Be-selection as an A-chain membership requirement

The leading idea of the analysis is that *have* and *be* are alike in that they represent the lexicalisation of an empty  $V^{O}$  node. *Have* and *be* are different in that *be* is selected when  $V^{O}$  governs an NP with which it (and its subject) are coindexed, and *have* is selected otherwise. The underlying intuition is that *be* is a reflex of a relation of identity.

The coindexed NP that triggers be is a trace in the specifier position of the maximal projection that is the complement of be. This trace is required by the empty category principle, reduced by Chomsky (1986:77) to a

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requirement that traces be antecedent governed. Contrary to Chomsky (1986), it is assumed here that coindexation does not obtain between an auxiliary and a main verb, and thus there is no such coindexation in the cases where *have* or *be* occur. The VP (or V') of the main verb is a barrier, and an intermediate trace is therefore needed which is antecedent governed and which antecedent governs the trace in object position, in, e.g., ergatives or passives. This intermediate trace (italicized below) is taken to be in the specifier of VP:

# (1) Engl. Peter<sub>i</sub> ... $[V' was_i [VP t_i [V' photographed e_i]]]$

The intermediate trace is motivated by the relativized minimality condition on government of Rizzi (1987). Assuming that the specifier of VP is a position which is always present, it is a "potential antecedent governor", and must itself govern the object trace, to save this from violating the empty category principle. In other words, A-movement out of any XP must go through the specifier of XP.

To sum up: (1) has be and not have because be is part of an A-chain in that it governs a coindexed A-bound NP (i.e., the italicized trace), "(head)-governs" as there is no intervening governor, "co-indexed" as be is co-indexed with the subject and the trace is a trace of the subject, and A-bound as it is a trace of the subject which is an A-position.

A'-bound NPs do not count for the selection of be, as be is not selected when the relevant trace is A'-bound, even if it is both coindexed with and governed by have/be. This is shown by the following examples, where the trace is A'-bound (it is the trace of a topicalization), coindexing obtains (the moved NP is a reflexive), and government obtains (no intervening governors/barriers) (cf. the partial structure in [4]). Government holds, irrespective of whether the relevant trace is in the specifier of VP, as assumed in (5), or adjoined to VP.

- (2) Ital. a. Se stessa, Maria ha sempre odiato
  - b. \*Se stessa, Maria è sempre odiata/odiato
     Herself, Maria has/is always hated
- (3) Dan. a. Sig selv har Peter aldrig kritiseret
  - b. \*Sig selv er Peter aldrig kritiseret
     REFL self has/is Peter never criticised

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(4) 
$$[CP NP_i C [IP NP_i ... have/be_i [VP t_i hated t_i]]]$$

The variation in *be*-selection observed across (some of) the Germanic and Romance languages can now be considered to depend on two things:

- (5) a whether (clitic) movement of the reflexive results in A- or A'-binding (French, Italian vs. German, Dutch) (section 3).
  - b whether a restriction on length of the chain obtains. In English, Swedish, Spanish *be* and the foot of the chain may only be separated by one maximal projection, in Danish and French they may only be separated by two, whereas in German, Dutch, Italian they may be separated by any number of maximal projections (section 4).

The specifier of VP is taken to be an A-position, in the sense that a theta-role (the "external" one) is assigned to it, except in the cases where this theta-role is absorbed by the past participle morphology, -en. This absorption leaves the specifier of VP empty, and it is thus possible for, e.g., an ergative or passive D-structure object (on its way to the subject position) to move through this position.

As for the theta-role absorbed by -en, it may be reassigned by have/be to their own specifier (cf. "deblocking" in Haider 1985), unless this is prohibited by standard well-formedness conditions (i.e., unless the specifier already has a theta-role).

# 3. Movement of unstressed pronouns (or: Romance versus Germanic)

#### 3.1. Be-selection

As mentioned above, one variation in be-selection distinguishes Germanic from Romance (at least French/Italian): Germanic reflexives select have, while Romance reflexives select be. This difference may be accounted for as a difference between the nature of pronoun movement in the two language groups, given the independently motivated assumption that havel be selection is insensitive to A'-bound traces discussed above.

Consider first the German example:

(6) Ger. ... daß meine Freunde<sub>i</sub> sich<sub>i</sub> [ $_{I'}$  [ $_{VP}$  t<sub>i</sub> [ $_{V'}$  t<sub>i</sub> getroffen]] haben<sub>i</sub>] ... that my friends REFL met have

The example is a subordinate clause to abstract away from verb-second effects. Though at first glance it may seem that *sich* in (6) has not moved at all, as direct objects in German always occur to the left of the verb, it is possible to see that *sich* has moved out of the VP if the sentence contains adverbials:

- (7) Ger. ... daß meine Freunde [sich<sub>i</sub>] gestern im Park t<sub>i</sub> t<sub>i</sub> getroffen haben
  - ... that my friends REFL yesterday in the park met have
- (8) Ger. a. ... daß meine Freunde gestern im Park [einen Mann] getroffen haben
  - ... that my friends yesterday in the park a man met have
  - b. ?\*... daß meine Freunde [einen Mann] gestern im Park getroffen haben
    - ... that my friends a man yesterday in the park met have

The examples in (8) show that when the direct object is not an unstressed pronoun (and in the absence of VP-internal topicalization and focus movement), it must occur adjacent to the verb. Thus (8a) is fine, and (8b) is ungrammatical. (8b) would be grammatical with a definite object like *den Mann* ('the man'), which may be seen as having undergone VP-internal

topicalization. Sich however is an unlikely candidate for this kind of focalization.

As the position of *sich* in (6), i.e. adjoined to I', is not one where arguments normally appear --cf. (8b)— we take it to be an A'-position, and its trace inside VP is thus A'-bound. This is further supported by the fact that an unstressed pronoun in this position may trigger a parasitic gap in German:

- (9) Ger. ... daß meine Freunde sie [ohne PRO t<sub>parasite</sub> kennen gelernt zu haben] t<sub>real</sub> einladen wollten ... that my friends them [without met to have] to invite wanted which is completely impossible in French:
- (10) Fr. \*Mes amis *les* ont invités e<sub>real</sub> [sans PRO avoir rencontré e<sub>parasite</sub>]

  My friends them have invited [without to have met]

Sich is thus different from Romance reflexive clitics, which I take to A-bind their traces, cf. the following structure:

(11) Fr. Mes amis<sub>i</sub> [
$$_{I}^{O}$$
 se<sub>i</sub> sont<sub>i</sub>] [ $_{VP}$  t<sub>i</sub> [ $_{V'}$  rencontrés t<sub>i</sub>]]  
My friends REFL are met

Romance object clitics are genuine clitics, as can be seen, e.g., from the fact that they cannot topicalize ("You I have not seen"), nor can they occur as single-word utterances ("Who did he see? You"), in contrast to German unstressed pronouns.

The reason why the trace of the Romance reflexive may be seen as A-bound is that it is bound from  $I^{O}$  (but not by  $I^{O}$ , even though  $I^{O}$  as mentioned above is taken to be an A-position, but rather "through"  $I^{O}$ , as discussed in the following paragraph). Note that binding directly from the clitic position presumably is excluded as there is an  $X^{O}$  category that dominates the binder, i.e. the clitic, and not the bindee, i.e. the trace inside VP.

There is no conflict between different indices even when the clitic is not reflexive:

(12) Fr. Mes amis<sub>j</sub> [
$$_{1}^{0}$$
 l' $_{i}$  ont<sub>j</sub>] [ $_{VP}$  t<sub>i</sub> [ $_{V'}$  rencontrée t<sub>i</sub>]]  
My friends her have met

I here adopt a suggestion made by Chomsky (autumn lectures, M.I.T., 1987), based on Pollock (1988) and Baker (1988), to the effect that I<sup>o</sup> is "transparent" for the clitic, i.e. the clitic can govern as if it were in the position of I<sup>o</sup> but it cannot be governed as if this was the case. Then I<sup>o</sup> need not actually get the index of the clitic by percolation, and there is no conflict with I<sup>o</sup>'s own index.

Romance clitic reflexives are thus predicted to trigger *be*-selection (and past participle agreement), as the intermediate trace is A-bound, and therefore must be in an A-position.

That the clitic moves both into an XP-position and into an  $X^0$  one is not a problem, as the first movement is an NP (the object) moving into an XP-position (specifier of VP), and the second movement is an  $N^0$  (head of the object NP) moving into an  $X^0$  position (from head of specifier of VP to adjoin to  $I^0$ ).

#### 3.2. Derived subjects

Another difference between Romance and Germanic unstressed reflexives that can be accounted for in terms of whether the reflexive A-binds or A'-binds its immediate trace is the fact that only in German(ic) can the reflexive cooccur with a derived subject.

As discussed by, among others, Burzio (1986) and Rizzi (1986), Romance reflexive clitics are impossible in sentences where the subject is derived, i.e., base-generated inside VP with an internal theta-role. An example of this is given in (13a), as opposed to (13b) where there is a non-clitic anaphor. The examples are from Rizzi (1986:70):

- (13) Ital. a. \*I nostri amici si sono stati presentati

  Our friends to-each-other are been introduced
  b. I nostri amici sono stati presentati l'uno all'altro
  - Our friends are been introduced one to the other

Rizzi (1986) accounts for the ungrammaticality of (13a) by assuming a chain well-formedness condition that crucially depends on each link of the chain locally binding the next and on each chain only containing one argument. In (13a) a chain between *i nostri amici* and its theta-assigned

trace inside VP therefore cannot be generated, because the trace has a binder more local than the subject, namely si, and as si in this case is an argument, chain formation cannot include any other arguments, and thus *i nostri amici* does not get any theta-role. In other words, the theta-role assigned to the trace of the subject inside VP cannot reach the subject itself, because it cannot get any further than si.

In German, however, there are no restrictions on moved unstressed reflexives cooccurring with derived subjects:

- (14) Ger. ...daß deine und meine Freunde sich schon gestern vorgestellt wurden
  - ... that your and my friends to-each-other already yesterday introduced were

This is compatible with the approach of Rizzi (1986) as outlined above, provided it is specified that each link of an A-chain must locally A-bind the next one (this follows from Rizzi [1987] if local binding [Rizzi 1986] is replaced by antecedent government). Then *sich*, which, as argued above, is in an A'-position, cannot interfere with the chain formation.

- (13a) and (14) are analysed as follows:
- (15)  $NP_i \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$  si; sono  $[VP_i t_i t_i V'_j]$  stati presentati  $[VP_i t_i t_j]$
- (16)  $NP_{i}[I' \text{ sich}_{i}[I'] \text{ [VP } t_{i}[VP t_{i}] \text{ [VY } t_{i} t_{i} \text{ vorgestellt]]] wurden]]$

In both cases the two theta-roles are assigned to the two traces (one of the subject, and one of the reflexive) inside V'. In (15)(=13a) the theta-role assigned to the trace of the reflexive is transferred to one of the traces in the specifier of VP, and from there to si. The theta-role assigned to the trace of the subject is also transferred to one of the traces in specifier of VP, and from there also to si, which is the local binder, and therefore this theta-role cannot reach the subject, which is left without a theta-role. Thus the sentence with the structure (15) is ungrammatical.

In (16)(=14) the theta-role assigned to the trace of the reflexive is transferred to the trace adjoined to VP, and from there to *sich*. As argued above, *sich* is in an A'-position, and therefore it is possible for it to move out of the VP via the adjoined position, an option which is not open to *si*, which we took to A-bind its immediate trace. The theta-role assigned to the

trace of the subject is transferred to the trace in specifier of VP, and from there to its local (A-)binder, the subject. Thus the sentence with the structure (16) is grammatical.

Summing up section 3, I have argued that the differences between *selsi* in Romance and their corresponding elements in Germanic may be accounted for in terms of the basic difference between cliticization (Romance) and A'-movement without cliticization (Germanic). This basic difference shows up in (at least) two ways: *have* is selected over *be* in Germanic constructions of movement of unstressed reflexives, whereas *be* is selected in Romance (section 3.1.). Derived subjects are allowed in these constructions in Germanic, but not in Romance (section 3.2.).

# 4. Other constructions (or Italian/German versus French/Danish versus Spanish/English)

Reflexives, as discussed in the previous section, do not necessitate any modifications of the basic idea from section 2. However, there are many other constructions that cannot be accounted for, unless the principle that be must be in an A-chain (i.e. govern a coindexed A-bound NP), and that have cannot be, is modified somewhat. What I will try to show in this section is that this principle applies to a different extent in the three following groups of languages: 1) German and Italian, 2) Danish and French, and 3) English and Spanish.

## 4.1. Framework: the AgrPanalysis

In Pollock (1988), it is argued that an extra layer of structure exists between IP and VP: an Agreement Phrase (AgrP) which is the sister of I<sup>0</sup> and the head of which, Agr, is the sister of VP.

A clause in the perfect tense is analysed in the following way:

In other words, AgrP is selected by I (Pollock's "T") as well as by (some instances of) V. As for the arguments for the AgrP selected by I, cf. Pollock's paper.

Pollock (1988:51) gives the following argument in favour of the lower AgrP (i.e. the one selected by V): Certain adverbials exist which only occur VP-initially in French (cf. Pollock 1988:14), e.g. à peine ('hardly'), presque ('almost'). In certain circumstances, a verb may occur either after or before such an adverbial. This is taken to be a case of optional movement of the V to Agr<sup>O</sup> (also in infinitives; cf. Pollock 1988:12), and is thus an argument in favour of this Agr<sup>O</sup>. Consider

- (18) Fr. a Pierre a à peine vu Marie
  - b. Pierre a vu à peine Marie Pierre has (hardly) seen (hardly) Marie

Given that a peine must be VP-initial, vu in (18b) must have moved around it and into  $Agr^0$  (if there was no  $Agr^0$ , there would be no landing site for vu, as it must move out of the VP, but it can only move to the closest  $X^0$  which would then be the  $V^0$  where a is base-generated).

I now want to show that there are no indications of a similar kind that an AgrP also exists immediately above VPs that are embedded below the main verb. The following type of analysis will thus be assumed:

- (19) Engl.  $[_{IP} NP I [_{AgrP} Agr [_{VP} has [_{AgrP} Agr [_{VP} been [_{VP} killed John]]]]]]$
- (19) is the structure of a passive construction at D-structure. The NP-movement involved in the derivation will be discussed below, in section 4.3. What is relevant here is the relative position of VP-initial adverbials and the participles. Consider now the following data:
- (20) Fr. a. Jean a presque été tué
  - b. Jean a été presque tué
  - c. \*Jean a été tué presqueJean has (almost) been (almost) killed (almost)

which illustrate the difference between the two participles: The participle of the main verb,  $\acute{e}t\acute{e}$  in (one possible analysis of) (20b), may move around the adverbial and into an Agr<sup>o</sup>, whereas the embedded participle,  $tu\acute{e}$  in

(20c), cannot do this. I will take (20c) to be an effect of the embedding of the VP of *tué* directly under the VP of *été* with no intervening AgrP. This means that AgrP is selected by I<sup>o</sup> or by V<sup>o</sup> if and only if this V<sup>o</sup> is an auxiliary, i.e., either a modal or a *have/be* with temporal interpretation (perfect/past perfect).

Consistent with this analysis, and in spite of the simplified structures in previous sections, I will assume that any verb (with the possible exception of English modals) that may end up in  $I^0$  is in fact base- generated under a  $V^0$ , including *have/be* and modals.

As opposed to, e.g., Kayne (1987), I do not see the presence of an  $Agr^{0}$  as in any way necessary for a participle in  $V^{0}$  being able to show agreement. Participle agreement is a reflex of the relation between specifier and head, and thus does not involve anything outside the XP in question.

The idea that the A-chain membership requirement of be holds in one of three different degrees in the languages can now be expressed as a condition on the length of the chain: In English and Spanish (as well as Swedish, Rumanian and Portuguese) be and the foot of the chain may only be separated by one maximal projection, in Danish and French they may only be separated by two, whereas in German, Italian (and Dutch) they may be separated by any number of XPs. Below the separating XPs will be marked "XP•".

# 4.2. Predicative adjectives

A predicative adjective is assumed to assign one theta-role, which is external, to its specifier position (I consider it to be the standard case that an external theta-role is assigned by X' to the specifier of XP, as opposed to an internal theta-role which is assigned by  $X^0$  to the complement of XP). The subject in (21) is thus base-generated in the specifier of AP and then it moves (via the intervening specifier positions) to the specifier of IP. The full structure is:

be: Italian, German, French, Danish, Spanish, English

It is only the VP that is crucial here. V<sup>o</sup> is realised as be, as it is coindexed with an a A-chain.

As only one XP intervenes between the base-generated position of be and the foot of the A-chain, viz. the AP marked  $\bullet$ , be is selected in all six languages.

Evidence for the trace in the specifier position of AP can be found in the agreement between the adjective and (the AP-specifier trace of) the subject in Danish, Spanish, French, and Italian. This agreement is thus assimilated to past participle agreement in that both are a kind of specifier-head agreement, following Kayne (1985).

#### 4.3. Passives

As stated in section 2, I assume that a verb assigns its external theta-role to its specifier position (as was the case with adjectives in section 4.2.), and that this theta-role may then be absorbed by the past participle suffix -en, as discussed by for example, Jaeggli (1986), Roberts (1987), and Baker - Johnson - Roberts (1988). The internal theta-role is assigned to the complement NP.

(22) 
$$[\text{IP Mary is } [\text{AgrP tt} [\text{VP tt} [\text{VP}] \text{ t photographed t}]]]]$$

be: Italian, German, French, Danish, Spanish, English

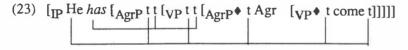
The subject in (22) is base-generated as the object of *photographed*, and then it moves through the specifier position of VP (as well as a host of other specifier positions) on its way to the subject position. Movement is forced because the suffix, -en, prevents Case from reaching the object, as -en itself is assigned the Case in question (cf. Jaeggli [1986], Roberts [1987], and Baker, Johnson, & Roberts [1989]). If the object may be assigned partitive Case, i.e., if it is indefinite, it does not have to move (cf. Belletti [1988]).

 $V^{O}$  is realised as be, as it is coindexed with an A-chain. As only one XP intervenes between the base-generated position of be and the foot of the A-chain, viz. the VP marked  $\bullet$ , be is selected in all six languages.

Evidence for the trace in object position is the fact that the subject has the theta-role of the object, and evidence for the trace in the specifier position of the lowest VP can be found in the participle agreement in Italian, French, and Spanish

#### 4.4. Ergatives

In ergative constructions, *be* is only selected in two of the three language groups. I assume, with Burzio (1986), Perlmutter (1978), that ergative verbs assign only one theta-role, an internal one, to the object position. This distinguishes them from transitives, which assign more than one theta-role, and intransitives, which also assign only one theta-role, but an external one.



be: Italian, German, French, Danish

have: Spanish, English

The subject of (23) is base-generated as the object of *come*, then it moves to subject position via the specifier of *come*. V<sup>o</sup> may be realised as *be*, as it is coindexed with an A-chain.

However, two XPs intervene between the base-generated position of be and the foot of the A-chain, viz. the AgrP and the VP marked •. Therefore be is only selected in those languages that allow more than one intervening XP between be and the foot of the A- chain, i.e. Italian and German, and French and Danish, whereas Spanish and English select have.

Evidence for the trace in object position may be found in a corresponding transitive construction: The subject of (24a) is taken to be base-generated as object because of the transitive construction in (24b)(examples from Burzio [1986:54]):

- (24) Ital. a [Due navi nemiche]<sub>i</sub> sono<sub>i</sub> [  $t_i$  [affondate  $t_i$ ]] Two enemy ships(fem) were sunk(fem-pl)
  - b. L'artiglieria ha [affondato [due navi nemiche]]
    The army(fem-sg) has sunk(masc-sg) two enemy ships

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Evidence for the trace in specifier of *come* is again tound in the agreement in Italian (cf. [24a], and French, (as in the passive construction).

#### 4.5. Be itself

Be itself belongs in the third major type of construction, i.e. the type where only Italian and German have be, but French, Danish, Spanish, and English have have. As be does not assign any theta-role, I assume with Burzio (1986:148) and references therein that it is a raising verb. The analysis is as follows:

(25) 
$$[IP]$$
 He has  $[AgrP]$  tt  $[AgrP]$  t Agr  $[VP]$  t been  $[AP]$  t ill]]]]]

be: Italian, German

have: French, Danish, Spanish, English

The trace in the specifier of AP in (25) and the selection of *been* has already been discussed in section 4.2. That there is a trace in the specifier of *been* can be seen from the fact that *been* shows agreement in Italian:

V<sup>o</sup> may be realised as be, as it is coindexed with an A-chain.

However, three XPs intervene between the base-generated position of be and the foot of the A-chain, viz. the AgrP, the VP, and the AP marked  $\blacklozenge$ . Therefore be is only selected in those languages that allow more than two intervening XPs between be and the foot of the A-chain, i.e. Italian and German, whereas French, Danish, Spanish, and English select have.

## 4.6. Other raising verbs

The rest of the raising verbs pattern like be, i.e., Italian has be, and French, Danish, Spanish, and English have have.

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The traces in specifier positions of AP and of be were discussed in sections 4.2. (AP) and 4.5. (be). The evidence for the trace in specifier position of the lower IP is that this is where the subject Mary appears if the clause is finite:

(28) Engl. It seems that [Mary has been ill]

The trace in specifier position of *seemed* is taken to exist because of the agreement of Italian *sembrata* ('seemed'):

(29) Ital. Maria è sembrata essere malata

Mary is seemed(fem-sg) to be ill(fem-sg)

V<sup>o</sup> may be realised as be, as it is coindexed with an A-chain.

However, no less than six XPs intervene between the base-generated position of be and the foot of the A-chain, and therefore be is only selected in those languages that allow more than two intervening XPs between be and the foot of the A-chain, i.e., Italian, whereas French, Danish, Spanish, and English select have.

#### 4.7. Intransitives and transitives

I will finish the discussion of the various constructions in section 4 by briefly mentioning the intransitive and transitive constructions, which take *have* in all the six languages.

Intransitives and transitives both assign an external theta-role to the specifier of VP. This is then absorbed by the past participle ending, and may be reassigned by *havelbe* to its specifier position. Intransitives only assign this single theta-role, whereas transitives furthermore assign an internal theta-role to their object position.

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The analysis is as shown in (30) for intransitives and in (31) for transitives. In neither case could *be* possibly be selected, as there is no trace coindexed with and governed by *have/be*:

have: Italian, German, French, Danish, Spanish, English

have: Italian, German, French, Danish, Spanish, English

#### 5. Conclusion

I have argued that *be* may be considered to be some kind of signal of identity, as it requires a certain type of coindexation, i.e., it requires membership of an A-chain (i.e., coindexation with an A-bound NP that it governs), and *have* does not allow such a membership.

The language specific variations are accounted for by analysing Romance unstressed reflexives as clitics and Germanic ones as non-clitics (section 3), and by assuming a parameter determining the maximum possible distance between *be* and the foot of the chain that triggers *be* (English, Spanish: one XP; Danish, French: two XPs; German, Italian: any number of XPs) (section 4).

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#### **Notes**

- This paper builds on research carried out in collaboration with Rex Sprouse. For a more extensive treatment, see Vikner & Sprouse (1988).
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- 2. The fact that Spanish, Portuguese, and Rumanian select *have* in this construction is due to the interaction of the independent parameter discussed in section 4.1. below, as two XPs separate *have/be* from the foot of the chain, and these languages allow at most one XP to do this:
  - (i) Span. Maria; se; ha; [AgrP e; [VP e; fotografiado e;]] Maria REFL has photographed"

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