

# Cross-linguistic variation and the Present Perfect: the case of Portuguese\*

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## Abstract

The Present Perfect in Portuguese has the curious property of forcing iteration of the eventuality described. This paper proposes an account of the iterativity in terms of selectional restrictions of the Present Tense and independent properties of the Perfect and argues against the account of Giorgi and Pianesi 1998 in which the Portuguese Present Perfect is treated as containing two main verbs.

## 1 Introduction

In recent work, Giorgi and Pianesi (1997) (henceforth G&P) make an important attempt to relate the morphological properties of different languages with particular tense interpretations, based on the well-accepted hypothesis that the source of variation is to be found in the lexical/functional heads. Bearing in mind learnability issues, they try to account for a set of interpretive properties of Romance, Germanic and Mainland Scandinavian. In this paper I raise problems for the specifics of their account particularly for the Present Perfect and the Present Tense in Portuguese. By focusing on Brazilian and European Portuguese, English and certain dialects of Spanish I will show that these problems damage some important generalizations made by G&P about the correlation between semantic properties and morphological properties, although I believe that the general approach is on the right track.

Instead, I will provide an alternative account of the facts based on the general idea that the semantic properties of a tense in a particular language cannot be directly correlated with whether or not overt morphology is present, but rather with the semantic features that these morphemes carry. I argue that properties of the Present Tense are crucial to account for most of the particularities of the Present Perfect in Portuguese.<sup>1</sup>

Unlike the other Perfect tenses in Portuguese and unlike the Present Perfect in Germanic or Scandinavian and other Romance (Spanish, Italian or French), the so-called Present Perfect in Portuguese has the striking property of forcing the iteration of the eventuality described. The examples below illustrate the iterative component of the Present Perfect in root clauses (1) and embedded clauses ((2) and (3)).

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\* This research has been supported by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft to ZAS. Thanks to Karen Zagana, Myriam Uribe-Etxebarria and Asuncion Martinez-Alberlaiz, Marisol Fernandez for discussion of the Spanish data, Alan Munn and Roland Hinterhölzl for the discussion on English. I also thank the European Portuguese audience in Lesbos for the confirming data. A version of this paper has been presented in Lesbos Greece in July 1999 at Chronos.

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this paper I will use 'Portuguese' to mean both Brazilian Portuguese and European Portuguese, since the data relevant to this present discussion are the same in both languages. Actual examples, however, are from Brazilian Portuguese.

- (1) O João tem saído tarde. (Portuguese)  
 the João has left late  
 a. 'João has been leaving late.'  
 b. 'João is into the habit of leaving late.'<sup>2</sup>
- (2) O Pedro disse que a Maria tem saído tarde.  
 the Pedro said that the Maria has left late.  
 'Pedro said that Maria has been leaving late.'
- (3) O Pedro acredita que a Maria tem saído tarde.  
 the Pedro believes that the Maria has left late.  
 'Pedro believes that Maria has been leaving late.'

(4) shows that if the predicate cannot be iterated, the result is unacceptable.

- (4) #O Pedro tem morrido. (P)  
 the Pedro has died.  
 a. ≠'Pedro has died.'  
 b. ≠'Pedro has been dying.'  
 c. 'Pedro has died many times.'

What is important here is that (4) cannot have the meaning in (4a) or (4b). (4) only has the pragmatically odd reading of many completed dying events (4c).

This forced iteration is not obligatory in other Perfect tenses. (5) illustrates the so-called Past Perfect and (6) an infinitival Perfect. Unlike (4), no odd result arises when the predicate cannot be repeated.

- (5) Ela tinha morrido e eu não sabia o que fazer. (P)  
 She had died and I not knew what to-do  
 'She had died and I didn't know what to do.'
- (6) Ela parecia ter morrido sem sofrer. (P)  
 She seemed to have died without suffer  
 'She seemed to have died without suffering.'

The examples in (7) and (8) show that infinitival Perfect complements embedded under Past or Present tense do not force iteration either.

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that although (1a) is the standard gloss for (1), clearly, however, this gloss is at best an approximation, since the progressive is also possible under the Perfect, as illustrated in (i). A better gloss for (1) might be (1b), which requires more than one event of leaving late for the sentence to be true.

(i) O Pedro tem estado falando com a Maria.  
 the Pedro has been speaking with the Maria  
 'Pedro has been speaking to Maria.'

- (7) O Pedro queria ter visitado Berlin pelo menos uma vez mais. (P)  
 The Pedro wanted to have visited Berlin at least one more time  
 'Pedro wanted to have visited Berlin at least one more time.'
- (8) O Pedro parece ter analisado os resultados antes da reunião. (P)  
 The Pedro seems to have analysed the results before of-the meeting  
 'Pedro seems to have analysed the results before the meeting.'

The questions addressed in this paper are the following: (i) what forces iterative readings in the Present tense; and (ii) why iterative readings are obligatory in the Present Perfect but not in the other Perfect tenses.

The idea is to tie the forced iteration to a property of the Present Tense in Portuguese to the inability of eventive verbs to show continuous readings. This property is shared by both English and Portuguese and is illustrated in (9).

- (9) a. Maria eats apples.  
 b. A Maria come maçãs. (P)  
 the Maria eats apples  
 'Maria eats apples.'
- (10) a. ≠Maria is eating apples.  
 b. Maria is an apple-eater  
 c. Maria eats apples (every day).

In both English and Portuguese, (9) cannot mean (10a). (9a,b) can only be understood as (10b) or (10c). Following de Swart's (1998) proposal for the Past Tenses in French, I argue that the Present Tense both in English and in Portuguese display aspectual restrictions much like other heads, selecting for stative predicates. I propose that this property is responsible for the obligatory iteration in the Present Perfect. The difference between English and Portuguese will be related to the differences in the output of the Perfect. While the Perfect morphology outputs a homogeneous predicate in English, it outputs a non-homogeneous predicate in Portuguese.

The outline of the paper is the following: section 1 gives an overview of the Portuguese tense system; section 2 summarizes G&P; section 3 presents some problems for their proposal; section 4 makes a proposal for the treatment of the Present Tense in English and Portuguese; section 5 presents discusses the differences between the Present Perfect in English and Portuguese; section 6 summarizes the results.

## 2 Basic facts about the Portuguese tense system

### 2.1 Indicative system for Portuguese

Portuguese has a tense system that is morphologically very similar to the Spanish system: there is a Present Tense, a Past Imperfective and Past Perfective, a simple Future and a

Conditional (11)-(15).<sup>3</sup> Portuguese and Spanish differ in that the Present Perfect and the Past Perfect are composed with the auxiliary *ter* 'have' in Portuguese (16) and (17) and the auxiliary *haber* 'have' in Spanish. This is relevant because both languages have verbs derived from the same Latin roots but with different distributions.<sup>45</sup> In the Portuguese and Spanish systems, there is no auxiliary selection for the Perfect. Another difference between Portuguese and Spanish is that Portuguese also has a synthetic Pluperfect, used only in formal written language (18).

*Present*

- (11) Maria fala francês com ele.  
 Maria speaks-PRES French with him.

*Past imperfective*

- (12) Maria falava francês com ele.  
 Maria speak-PAST.IMP French with him.

*Past perfective*

- (13) Maria falou francês com ele.  
 Maria speak-PAST.PERF French with him.

*Future*

- (14) Maria falará<sup>6</sup> com ele  
 Maria speak-FUT French with him

*Conditional*

- (15) Maria falaria com ele.  
 Maria speak-COND speak French with him.

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<sup>3</sup> PRES stands for Present Tense; PAST for Past Tense; PERF for Perfective; IMP for imperfective; FUT for Future; COND for conditional; PLUP for the Pluperfect, FEM for feminine; MASC for masculine; SG for singular; and PL for plural.

<sup>4</sup> The auxiliary *haver* 'have' is still used for the Past Perfect in Portuguese written language but not for the Present Perfect:

- (i) Ele havia falado com ela.  
 He have-PAST.IMP spoken with her  
 'He had spoken with her.'  
 (ii) \*Ele há falado com ela  
 He has-PRES spoken with her

<sup>5</sup> According to Harre 1991, in medieval Portuguese both *ter* +participle and *haver* +past participle are found. Initially both constructions appear only with transitive verbs and the participle agrees with the direct object. Until the XV Century both constructions are available. Gradually *ter* displaces *haver*. The participle ceases to agree with the direct object and intransitive verbs begin to appear in the construction. This development expands until *ter* can be used with the participle of all verbs. There is apparently a short period in which *ter* + participle mean past punctual. This is an important difference from the Spanish Present Perfect *haber* + participle, which can have a punctual past meaning. (See also Green 1987, Salvi 1987 and Vincent 1987.)

<sup>6</sup> The synthetic future is not very productive in Brazilian Portuguese.

*Present Perfect*

- (16) Maria tem falado francês com ele.  
 Maria have-PRES spoken French with him

*Past Perfect*

- (17) Maria tinha falado francês com ele.  
 Maria have-PAST.IMP spoken French with him

*Pluperfect*

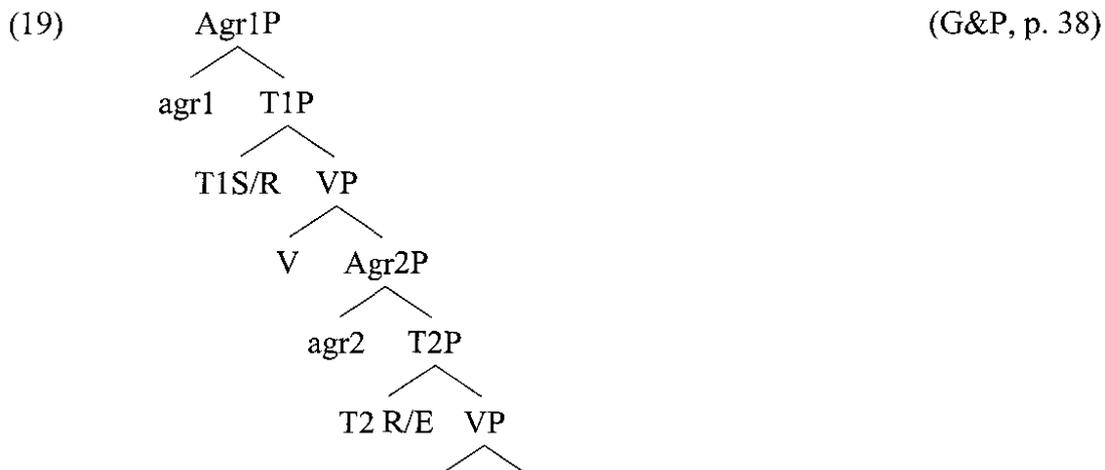
- (18) Maria falara francês com ele.  
 Maria speak-PLUP spoken French with him

### 3 Giorgi and Pianesi's account of the Portuguese system

In this section I summarize G&P's proposal paying special attention to their treatment of the differences between the interpretations of the Present Perfect in Portuguese compared to the other Romance Languages.

G&P's general goal is to develop a system of correspondences between morphology and semantics that can explain why some languages need auxiliary verbs to express the same thing that in another language is expressed by one single verb. They argue that some languages realize the meaning of the Present Perfect as a synthetic form, and other languages realize it as an analytic form. For example, while Latin and Portuguese have a synthetic Present Perfect (the Past Perfective form), Italian and Spanish have an analytic Present Perfect.

In their view, tenses are lexical heads that instantiate relations between events: the relation between the Speech event (S) and the Reference event (R) and between the Reference event and the Event (E) itself. (19) is the basic representation of tense assumed by G&P.



T1 and T2 are lexical categories assigning a T-role. T1 lexicalizes the relation between S and R, and T2 lexicalizes the relation between E and R. The notion of a T-role is meant to capture the observation that T must always have a VP complement and that T-roles, like Theta-roles, are assigned uniquely, as defined in (20).

- (20) T-criterion: every T-role must be uniquely assigned to an event position, and every event position can receive at most one T-role.

In complex tenses, the auxiliary is generated in the top VP and the main verb in the lower VP. Agr nodes check features of the T heads, which can be either nominal or verbal.

Languages diverge in whether they have a fused head with values for Agr and T or whether they have split Agr/T. In languages like English and Mainland Scandinavian, tense and number morphology never cooccur, which suggest that T and Agr are one single head. This means that, every time Agr1 (which checks person features) appears in a structure, T1 is also present. The semantic value of the Present Tense head assumed by G&P is that  $S=R$ , i.e., the speech event time is the same as the reference event time.

In Romance, however, Tense and Agr morphology can cooccur and T/Agr are different heads, which means that it is possible to select Agr1 without selecting T1. The so-called Present Tense in Romance, however, shows agreement morphology but not tense morphology. Compare, for example, the Portuguese form *pensamos* 'we think' with *pensávamos* 'we thought': *pensa* is the root plus a thematic vowel and *-mos* is the first person plural morphology. The past imperfective form has an extra morpheme to represent the past -*va* but no morpheme for the Present occurs in the present tense. According to G&P, T1 is actually absent in the syntax of the Present Tense in Romance and receives a default interpretation at LF. They assume that the default value is  $S \subseteq R$ .

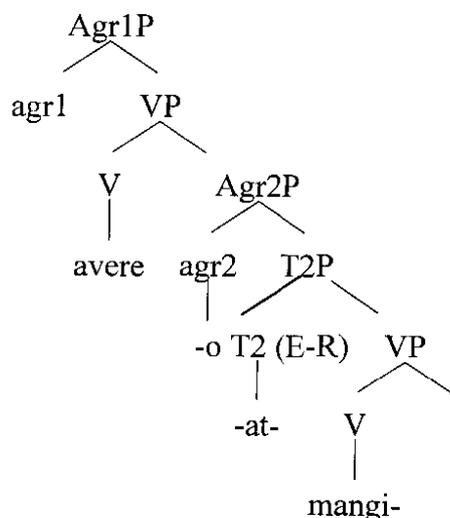
Thus, the present in English will have the structure in (21a) and in Romance (21b):

- |         |                 |    |  |
|---------|-----------------|----|--|
| (21) a. | Agr1/T1<br>/ \  | b. | Agr1<br>/ \  |
|         | Agr1/T1 VP      |    | Agr1 VP  |
|         | T1 value: $S=R$ |    | T1 value: $S \subseteq R$ (established at LF by default) |
|         | English         |    | Romance  |

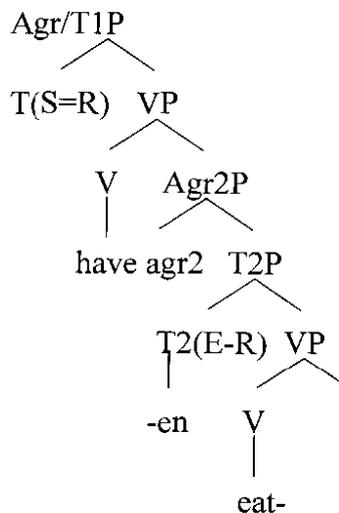
In the Perfect, according to G&P, the participial morphology, besides an aspectual value, has a temporal meaning and specifies that E precedes R. The distinction between the lack or presence of T1 carries over to the Perfect in Italian and English, as illustrated in (22a,b):<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Of course in the Past Perfect, however, T1 is present in Italian, since it has a past value where the reference time precedes the speech time. The structure is then very similar to English.

- (22) a. Ho mangiato. (I)  
I have eaten.



- b. I have eaten. (E)



(G&P, p.43)

Since the Present Tense morphology has the value  $S=R$  in English, we can explain why English (and Mainland Scandinavian) only allow a very limited occurrence of punctual adverbs in the Present Perfect. The only adverbs acceptable are those that match with the  $S=R$  value. The fact that the Present Tense receives the default value  $S \subseteq R$  at LF in Italian explains why its Present Perfect has no constraints on punctual adverbs (modulo some language specific idiosyncrasies).

- (23) a. \*John has left at four. (English)  
b. Gianni è partito alle quattro. (Italian)  
'Gianni has left at four.'

- (24) a. Now I have eaten enough. (E)  
b. Adesso ho mangiato abbastanza. (I)  
'Now I have eaten enough.'

(G&P p. 85)

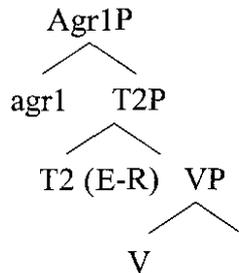
While the adverbial *at four*, for example, is acceptable in Italian, it is unacceptable in English, since it is incompatible with  $S=R$ .

In addition to having fused or split T/Agr, languages can also diverge on the nature of the T head. In Italian T1 is always verbal and T2 is always nominal. Therefore they require different types of Agr to check the relevant uninterpretable features: a verbal Agr for T1 and a nominal Agr for T2. Furthermore, since T2 is nominal and has to be checked by a nominal Agr, an auxiliary must be inserted to check the features of the verbal Agr1 even in the Present Perfect which has no T1 present in the syntax.

In Latin, the syncretic form *laudavit* 'I have praised' has the same semantic properties as the Present Perfect in Italian, according to G&P. T and Agr morphology can cooccur in Latin and it is therefore possible to pick Agr1 without picking T1. Thus, the Latin form *laudavit* 'I have praised' is like (22a) in that the Event time precedes the Reference time which forces T2 to be present. There is, however, one important difference between the Italian forms and the

Latin forms. T2 is verbal in Latin and thus can check its features in a verbal Agr1. In Italian, T2 is always nominal and therefore cannot check its features on a verbal Agr1. Therefore, the difference between Italian (22) and Latin (25) is not semantic, but syntactic.

- (25)    *Lauda-vi-t*  
          I have praised



From a learnability point of view, this proposal allows a child to infer from the cooccurrence of tense/agreement morphology that T and Agr are separate heads. From there, the child can verify that the Present Tense morphology in Romance, for example, is devoid of tense morphology, exhibiting only agreement morphology. Taking an economical approach, the child postulates no T1 for the Present Tense. Since T1 is not syntactically present, the default interpretation of the relation between S and R is selected ( $S \subseteq R$ ). For languages like Latin the child would have to rely on the behavior of adverbials to figure out that forms such as *laudavit* are actually instantiations of T2 and not T1.

### 3.1 Portuguese Past Perfective is a manifestation of T2

Portuguese has two synthetic forms labeled traditionally as Past: the Past Perfective and the Past Imperfective. The Past Perfective, according to G&P, is not a real past, since it patterns semantically with the Italian Present Perfect, allowing modification by *agora* 'now', as in (26a), unlike Italian or English Simple Past (§26b/c). In Italian and in English, modification by *now* requires the Present Perfect, as illustrated in (27).

- (26) a. *Agora comi o suficiente.* (P)  
       'Now I eat-PAST.PERF enough.'
- b. \**Adesso mangiai abbastanza* (I)  
       'Now I eat-PAST.PERF enough.'
- c. \*Now I ate enough. (E)
- (27) a. *Adesso ho mangiato abbastanza.* (I)  
       'Now I have eaten enough.'
- b. Now I have eaten enough. (G&P, p. 47-48)

The Perfective Past in Portuguese, as shown in (28a), can have also future reference. In this case, both English and Italian require the Present Perfect and not the Past Perfective.

- (28) a. Um exame mais e terminaste o curso. (P)  
 One more examination and you finish-PAST.PERF the course.  
 'One more examination and you have finished the course.'
- b. \*Un altro esame ancora e finisti il corso. (I)  
 One other examination and you finished with your course.
- c. Un altro esame ancora e hai finito il corso.  
 One more examination and you have finished with your course.
- (G&P, p. 51)

Since the Past Perfective in Portuguese has no obligatory Past reference and behaves like the Present Perfect in Italian, then it must have a structure in which T2 is present and the value for T1 is not S=R. This corresponds to the Latin structure in (25). Since T1 is missing, its value is set at LF by default. The main difference between Italian and Portuguese is that T2 can be verbal, as in Latin, and therefore can check Agr1 features.

According to G&P, the existence of a synthetic form for the Past Perfect (although in highly formal styles of Portuguese) supports the idea that T2 is verbal in Portuguese.

The second piece of evidence to treat the Past Perfective as a Present Perfect is the incompatibility of the auxiliary for the Perfect (in the analytic forms) with the Past Perfective. This is illustrated in (29). The auxiliary *ter* can appear in the Imperfective Past (29a) but cannot be inflected for the Past Perfective (29b).

- (29) a. Pedro tinha saído às 3. (P)  
 Pedro have.PAST-IMP left at 3  
 'Pedro had left at 3.'
- b. \*Pedro teve saído às 3.  
 Pedro had. PAST-PERF left at 3

Assuming that it is not possible to have two T2s in the same verbal complex, the contrast in (31) follows if the Past Perfective is the manifestation of T2 and the Perfect is also the manifestation of T2.

Now, if the simple Past Perfective in Portuguese has the same meaning and basic structure as the Present Perfect in Italian, a new question arises: what is the structure and meaning of the form *pres+ter+past participle*?

G&P argue that the *pres+ter+past participle* in Portuguese cannot have the structure of the Italian Present Perfect (22a) since such a structure would be blocked by the analytic form (equivalent to the Latin structure (25)).

Instead they propose that the verb *ter* in the Peresen Perfect form is in fact a main verb and not an auxiliary verb. Their analysis is schematized in (30):

- |         |   |                          |
|---------|---|--------------------------|
| (\$N30) | a. pres + have <sub>AUX</sub> + past participle     | Present Perfect meaning  |
|         | → blocked by Past Perfective                        |                          |
|         | b. fut/past + have <sub>AUX</sub> + past participle | Fut/Past Perfect meaning |
|         | c. pres + have <sub>MV</sub> + past participle      | Present Perfect form     |

*Ter* is thus lexically ambiguous. When it appears with a past participle it is only a main verb (MV); in all other tenses it is an auxiliary (AUX).

To capture the iterative reading of the so called Present Perfect, G&P assume that the participial clause contains a hidden habitual operator Gen which binds the temporal variable of the event time. They note, however, that the habitual meaning of the Present Perfect is not identical to the Simple Present property reading. It implies a change in habit.

- (31) a. O gato come peixe.  
'The cat eats fish.'
- b. O gato tem comido peixe.  
the cat has eaten fish  
'The cat has been eating fish.'

For example, while in (31a) we may be referring to a property of the cat, and the cat may never have eaten a fish, in (31b) the cat must have eaten fish more than once for the sentence to be true.

G&P explain this special meaning of the habitual, namely that it implies a change in habit, by assuming that main verb *ter* requires stage-level predicates.

In sum, G&P make three assumptions to account for *pres+ter+past participle* behavior in Portuguese: (i) the auxiliary form of *ter* is blocked in the Present Tense by the simple Past Perfective; (ii) *pres+ter+past participle* is a complex with two main verbs, unlike *past+ter+past participle*; (iii) the main verb *ter* selects for stage-level predicates; and (iii) there is a hidden Generic operator in the participial clause.

In the next section I present some empirical problems for this proposal.

#### 4 Some problems for G&P

The main assumption made by G&P is that auxiliary *ter* is blocked in the Present Tense by the existence of the Past Perfective which has the same semantic value. This also explains why the Past Perfective is blocked in the auxiliary *ter* of the Perfect. This property, however, must hold only of Portuguese, since, in some Spanish dialects and in Italian, auxiliaries can appear in the Past Perfective with the Perfect embedded under it, although the contexts are very restricted to temporal subordinate clauses preceded by certain types of adverbial subordinators such as *después* 'after' and *una vez que* 'once', as exemplified below:

- (32) a. Después que hubo vivido en España, ...  
 After he have-PAST.PERF lived in Spain...  
 'After he had lived in Spain, ...
- b. \*Durante la guerra, hubo vivido en España.  
 During the war, (I) have-PAST.PERF lived in Spain<sup>8</sup>

By this reasoning, the Spanish Past Perfective cannot behave like a Present Perfect, otherwise the Present Perfect analytic form should also be blocked. Section 3.2 shows that the Past Perfective in Spanish can behave like the Past Perfective in Portuguese, although the Present Perfect is not blocked. Section 3.3 and 3.4 raise problems for their attempt to solve the obligatoriness of iterative readings in the Present Perfect.

#### 4.1 Main verb vs. auxiliary verb status of *ter*

In this section I show that there is no empirical evidence that supports the treatment of the Present Tense form of *ter* + past participle as a main verb complex. First I show that the inability of an auxiliary-like verb to appear in the Past Perfective correlates with other independent tests for an auxiliary behavior and then I show that the *pres+ter* when followed by a past participle behaves like an auxiliary verb with respect to these tests, just as the *past+ter* does.

In Portuguese the verb *ter* cannot appear in the Perfect when it takes a non-agreeing participle as a complement. This is not a peculiarity of auxiliary *ter*. Other auxiliary-like verbs also cannot appear in the Past Perfective when the embedded main verb is itself in the Perfect.

The Perfective forms of *poder* 'can' and *ter que* 'have to', for example, cannot be followed by the Perfect, as illustrated in (33) and (34).<sup>9</sup>

- (33) a. Eu pude falar com ele.  
 I could- PAST.PERF speak with him  
 'I could (and did) speak with him.'
- b. \*Eu pude ter falado com ele  
 I could-PAST.PERF have spoken with him
- c. Eu podia falar com ele.  
 I could-PAST.IMP speak with him  
 'I could speak with him'. (possibility)

<sup>8</sup> The context is restricted to subordinate clauses that do not have predicates that are understood as instantaneous (i).

(i) \*Después que hubo muerto, ...  
 After he had died, ...

Interestingly only the simple Perfective Past is possible in (32a), while the Imperfective Past Perfect is acceptable in (32b). (I am very thankful to Karen Zagana and Heles Contreras for the description of the facts reported here.)

<sup>9</sup> The modal *dever* 'must' is defective. It does not have a perfective past form.

- d. Eu podia ter falado com ele.  
 I could-PAST.IMP have spoken with him  
 'I could have spoken with him'. (possibility)

While the modal *poder* can appear in the Past Perfective in (33a), this is impossible in (33b), where the infinitival complement is itself a Perfect. (33c) shows the modal in the Past Imperfective, and (33d) shows that the imperfective is acceptable with an infinitival Perfect complement. The same pattern is found with *ter que* 'have to': while the Past Imperfective can have the Perfect embedded under it, the Past Perfective cannot, as illustrated in (34).

- (34) a. Eu tinha que falar com ele.  
 I have-PAST.IMPERF to speak with him  
 'I should speak with him.'  
 (Not necessarily I spoke with him.)
- b. Eu tive que falar com ele.  
 I have-PAST.PERF to speak with him  
 'I had to speak with him.'  
 (I necessarily spoke with him.)
- c. Eu tinha que ter falado com ele.  
 I have-PAST.IMP to speak with him  
 'I should have spoken with him.'
- d. \*Eu tive que ter falado com ele.  
 I have-PAST.PERF to speak with him

Not every verb that subcategorizes for an infinitival verbal complement exhibits this property. In (35) the verb *querer* 'want' does not show any restrictions. It can appear in the Past Perfective and have a Perfect form embedded under it. If the inability of a verb to embed the Perfect is a test for auxiliary vs. main verb, then this suggests that *querer* is not an auxiliary verb but rather a main verb.

- (35) a. Eu queria falar com ele.  
I want-PAST.IMP speak with him  
'I wanted to speak with him.'
- b. Eu quis falar com ele.  
I want-PAST.PERF to-speak with him  
'I wanted to speak with him.'
- c. Eu queria ter falado com ele.  
I want-PAST.IMP to-have spoken with him  
'I wanted to have spoken with him.'
- d. Eu quis ter falado com ele.  
I want-PAST.PERF to-have spoken with him  
'I wanted to have spoken with him.'

If G&P are correct in assuming that *pres+ter* is a main verb, then in principle, it should be able to embed a Perfect, as in (36), but this is clearly impossible.

- (36) \*Ele tem tido comido demais.  
He have-PRES had eaten too much.

However, it is possible that the presence of two participles in (36), rules it out on independent grounds.

We can, however, use the difference between *querer* 'want' and the auxiliary verbs to find other tests for main verb vs. auxiliary verb, and thus test the '*ter* as a main verb' hypothesis directly. There are two such tests: predicative clitics and questions. *Querer* 'want' can license a predicative clitic (37a), while modals and *past+ter* do not (37b,c):

- (37) a. Maria quer telefonar mas o Pedro não o quer.  
Maria wants to call but the Pedro not CLI want.  
'Maria wants to call but Pedro does not.'
- b. \*Maria tinha telefonado mas o Pedro não o tinha  
Maria had telephoned but the Pedro not CLI had
- c. \*Pedro pode telefonar mas a Maria não o pode  
Pedro can call but the Maria not CLI can

If *pres+ter+past participle* is a main verb, as G&P claim, it should license the predicative clitic. However, *pres+ter* (followed by a participial form) does not behave as a main verb. Its behavior is identical to the Past Perfect.

- (38) \*Maria tem telefonado, mas o Pedro não o tem  
Maria has called, but the Pedro not CLI has

Another case in which we can distinguish the behavior of auxiliaries is in questions. Consider (39).

- (39) a. O que ele quer? (P)  
 What he wants  
 'What does he want?'  
 b. Ele quer trabalhar.  
 He wants to-work  
 'He wants to work.'

(39a) is a reasonable question and can be asked out of the blue. (39b) is a good answer for (39a). Now consider (40a). Out of the blue, this is a very odd question if (40b) is supposed to be the answer for it.

- (40) a. #O que ele podia?  
 What he could-PAST.IMP?  
 'What could he?'  
 b. Ele podia trabalhar.  
 He could work.

Now consider (41a) uttered without a previous context. This question can be answered with (41b), using possessional *ter*, but not with (41c).

- (41) a. O que ele tinha?  
 What he have-PAST.IMP  
 'What had he?'  
 b. Ele tinha dor de cabeça  
 He have-PAST.IMP headache  
 'He had a headache.'  
 c. #Ele tinha trabalhado.

He have-PAST.IMP worked.

If *ter+pres* is a main verb we should expect the behaviour of *ter* to be like *querer*. In fact we can ask (42a). However, the only possible answer is with the possessive *ter*, as in (42b) but not (42c).

- (42) a. O que o Pedro tem?  
 What he has  
 'What does he have?'
- b. Ele tem dor-de-cabeça.  
 He has headache  
 'He has a headache.'
- c. #Ele tem trabalhado.  
 He has worked.

Yet again we find no difference between the *pres+ter* and the *past+ter*, when followed by a participial form, and in fact they both display auxiliary behavior with respect to the predicative clitic test and the question test.

The main reason for G&P to treat *pres+ter* as a main verb is to create a blocking effect. The idea is that both the Past Perfective and the Present Perfect only have morphological T2. Thus the synthetic form wins.

There are however many problems with the blocking approach as well, even if we were to accept that Past Perfective is a manifestation of T2 with the value that E precedes R. The data comes from both Portuguese and Spanish and is the object of the next section.

#### 4.2 Is *ter* (aux)+present + participle blocked by the Perfective?

Latin American Spanish has a Present Perfect that patterns with English in not allowing point in time adverbials. Many dialects of Peninsular Spanish behave like Italian and allow point in time adverbials. These facts have been discussed by Zagona (1993).

G&P associate the unacceptability of point in time adverbials in the Present Perfect in English and its acceptability in Spanish and Italian to the values of the Present Tense in each of these languages,  $S=R$  in English and  $S \subseteq R$  in Spanish and Italian. The different values are in turn associated to properties of T/Agr. Split Agr would have the value  $S \subseteq R$  because there is no T1 and the value set by default. When T1 is present the value is  $S=R$ .

This difference, however, cannot be attributed to the lack of cooccurrence of tense and agreement morphemes, as G&P claim. In both kinds of Spanish (Latin American and Peninsular) tense and agreement can cooccur and therefore according to their proposal T and Agr can be split.<sup>10</sup>

In dialects patterning with Italian, which allow point in time adverbials, Agr must be split. In some of these very same dialects the Perfective is acceptable in contexts where Italian only allows the Present Perfect (although this is not obligatory). In cases where Portuguese allows the Perfective Past and Italian requires the Present Perfect, some speakers of northern Spain<sup>11</sup> allow besides the Present Perfect, the Perfective Past, as illustrated in (43b).

<sup>10</sup> G&P may still be able to preserve a weakened version of their hypothesis, namely that since  $S \subseteq R$ , it is possible that languages diverge in whether they pick = or  $\subseteq$ . Once we weaken their proposal we lose the motivation for relating the behaviour of adverbs in the Present Perfect to lack or presence of T. In this case, we may assume that T may be present always in the Present Tense sentences.

<sup>11</sup> I thank Asunción Martínez-Alberlaiz for this data, confirmed by other speakers from the area. However, other speakers do not agree with this data. I suspect that there is a register difference in the use of the Present Perfect as well.

- (43) a. Un examen mas y has terminado el curso. (S)  
 One more examination and you finished the course.
- b. Un examen mas y terminaste el curso.  
 One other examination and you finished with your course.

(44) is another case in which English requires the Present Perfect but in Spanish and Portuguese the Past Perfective is perfectly acceptable.

- (44) a. Ya llegué! (S)  
 (I) already arrived  
 'I have arrived!' (Alonso, 1981)
- b. Já cheguei! (P)  
 (I) already arrived-PAST.PERF  
 'I have arrived!'

This data suggests that the Perfective in some dialects of Spanish patterns with the Portuguese cases.<sup>12</sup> However, in these dialects, the Present Perfect is similar to the Present Perfect in Italian with respect to the adverbial modification and with respect to most of its distribution.

The data in this section argues against the blocking explanation at least without a more thorough investigation of the properties of the Perfect and the Perfective. If the Present Perfect and the Perfective past differ aspectually then the lack of blocking could be explained. However, if it turns out that aspectually the Perfect and the Perfective are different also in Portuguese, then we need another explanation for the Present Perfect in Portuguese.

### 4.3 Problems with the Generic Operator

To capture the habitual/iterative reading and the differences between the Present Perfect and the Present Tense readings of eventive verbs, G&P propose a hidden generic operator in the participial clause that main verb *ter* selects. As stated, this is an ad hoc solution, particularly because it must be very limited in its application. The generic operator is obligatory only for the participles selected by Present Tense *ter* and it is restricted to only one type of participial forms.

Portuguese has a construction like the Spanish *tener* +participle, in which the participle shows agreement with the object. What is particular about this construction both in Portuguese and in Spanish is that an iterative reading is unavailable. Consider (45):

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<sup>12</sup> Crucially I am not referring to dialects of Spanish that do not have the Present Perfect with *haber* at all. In these dialects the Past Perfective patterns with Portuguese and the form of *tener*+ participle. These dialects (in the region of Oviedo, Spain) also disallow continuous readings with the Present Tense.

- (45) a. Eu tenho feitas as camas desde segunda feira.  
I have made-FEM.PL the-FEM.PL beds-FEM.PL since Monday  
'The have the beds made since Monday.'
- b. Eu tenho feito as camas desde segunda feira.  
I have made the beds since Monday  
'I have been making the beds since Monday.'

In (45a) there is not a reading in which the beds are made over and over since Monday. The only reading is that the beds were made on Monday and haven't been made again, unlike (45b), which can only mean that the speaker has been the one making the beds every day since Monday.

If in both cases we have main verb *ter*, we have to explain why the generic operator can be missing from the participle in (45a) but not in (45b). Schmitt (1998) argues that Agreeing Participles in Portuguese and Spanish have a definite determiner incorporated into the verb. The complex V+def moves to the checking domain of the verb to have its features checked. This blocks the iterative reading and only a unique reading is possible for the VP. Although it is plausible that the definite determiner incorporated onto the verb blocks the generic operator, the appearance of the generic operator is still ad hoc and has no other purpose than to obtain the intended reading.

#### 4.4 Does main verb *ter* select for stage-level predicates?

G&P also claim that main verb *ter* selects for stage-level predicates (SLPs). However, this is not supported by the data: (46) shows that main verb *ter* can take individual-level predicates (ILPs), as well as SLPs.

- (46) a. Maria tem olhos azuis/ dois irmãos. (P)  
'Maria has blue eyes/ two brothers.'
- b. Maria tem dor-de-cabeça /problemas.  
Maria has headache/problems  
'Maria has headaches/problems.'
- c. Maria tem as chaves do apartamento.  
Maria has the keys of-the apartment.  
'Maria has the keys to the apartment.'

Given this data it will be necessary to postulate two main verbs *ter*: *ter1* that only selects for SLParticipials with a hidden generic operator; and *ter2*, which imposes no restrictions on the complement in terms of ILP or SLP.

In sum there are no empirical grounds to distinguish *pres+ter* from *past+ter* as a main verb or as an auxiliary. Moreover, there are no independent empirical ground for the generic operator in the participial form particularly because it will have to be (i) unique to the Present Tense and (ii) unique to the non-agreeing form of the participle when embedded under the morphological present tense. Finally the SL selection restriction is also ad hoc. There is, furthermore, no independent evidence that main verb *ter* selects only SLPs.

It should be noted, however, that any alternative account of the Present Perfect will have to capture the two properties described by G&P: the obligatory iteration and the lack of a property reading of predicates in the Present Perfect.

## 5 The Present Tense in Portuguese

The goal of this section is to try to account for the obligatory iteration of the Present Perfect in Portuguese by relating this iteration to properties of the Present since this is a property unique to the morphological Present Tense. In this section I examine this common property of the Present Tense in Portuguese and English and in section 5 I examine some differences between the Present Perfect in Portuguese and English. The goal is not to give a full-fledged account of the Present Perfect in English but rather to use it as a source of comparison to the Present Perfect in Portuguese. Throughout the next section I will remain agnostic as to what the correct semantics for the Perfect is (see Dowty 1979, Mittwoch 1988, Binnick 1991, Zagona 1991, Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria 1997, Klein, 1997, Wunderlich 1997, Anagnostopoulou et al. 1997, Musan 1998, von Stechow 1999, Naumann and others).

### 5.1 The Present Tense in Portuguese and English: similarities

G&P note that English differs from the rest of Romance languages in not allowing continuous readings of the eventive verbs. Data illustrating the difference between English and Spanish is exemplified in (47a,b). Assuming that perfective readings are incompatible with speech time for semantic reasons, namely that speech time is momentaneous and therefore incompatible with structured eventualities, i.e., eventualities that take time, they propose that English eventive verbs have always null perfective morphology added to them. The null perfective morphology of English verbs accounts for their incompatibility with the speech time. Spanish verbs, however, are not always perfective and they allow a continuous reading in the Present Tense.

- (47) a. Maria watches TV (\*right now).<sup>13</sup>
- b. Maria mira la televisión. (en este momento) (Zagona, 1992 p.391)  
 Maria watches TV right now  
 'Maria is watching TV right now.'

The child's trigger for postulating this zero Perfective morpheme is the fact that English verbs can be bare. The idea is that, only when some morphology is added to a verb, we can distinguish verbs from nouns in English. In Spanish, however, verbs always have some verbal morphology attached to them. Therefore there is no need for zero Perfective morphemes to be added and continuous readings are allowed.

The problem with this idea is that Portuguese verbs, unlike English verbs, cannot be confused with nouns. Verbs in Portuguese are bound stems and require obligatory verbal morphology to satisfy well-formedness conditions. Nonetheless the Present tenses of the two

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<sup>13</sup> In this discussion I ignore the historical present and any modal readings of the present forms in both English and Portuguese. For concreteness, I assume that the historical present is not a present tense and the modal readings of the present are the result of null modal operators.

languages behave alike: the Present Tense of eventive verbs disallow continuous readings (see also Oliveira & Lopes 1995).

- (48) a. Pedro corre. (P)  
 Pedro runs  
 'Pedro is a runner'
- b. O Pedro chega tarde.  
 The Pedro arrives late.  
 #'Pedro is arriving late (now).'
- c. O Pedro come a fruta.  
 The Pedro eats the fruit  
 #'Peter is eating the fruit (now).'

Clearly an alternative explanation for the distinction between English/Portuguese, on the one hand, and Spanish, on the other hand, is necessary. Either eventive verbs are different, both in English and Portuguese for reasons other than bareness, or the explanation for the lack of continuous readings has a different source.<sup>14</sup> In this paper I will pursue the second line of reasoning.

## 5.2 Accounting for the similarities between Portuguese and English

Based on de Swart (1998) and de Swart and Molendijk (1998), I would like to argue that the difference between English and Portuguese, and Italian and most dialects of Spanish has to do with the selection restrictions imposed by the Present tense head.

### 5.2.1 Tense selection and coercion

De Swart puts forward a proposal to distinguish the two Past Tenses in French (Imparfait and Passé Simple) in terms of their selection restrictions. She argues that both are Past Tenses, but while the Passé Simple selects non-homogeneous predicates, the Imparfait selects for Homogeneous (or unbounded) predicates. Consider, for example (49).

- (49) a. Anne jouait du piano pendant deux heures. (F)  
 Anne played-IMP the piano for two hours
- b. Anne a joué du piano pendant deux heures.  
 Anne played-PERF the piano for two hours (de Swart and Molendijk, 1998)

The Imperfective Past selects for homogeneous events (processes or states), but 'play the piano for 2 hours' is not homogeneous since a time boundary has been added. To satisfy the aspectual requirements, free aspectual transitions may be triggered by coercion, and the interpretation is that Anne had the habit of playing the piano for two hours. In (49b) no coercion applies since the Perfective selects for non homogeneous eventualities.

<sup>14</sup> Zagana (1992) discusses the differences in the Present Tense interpretation between English and Spanish and proposes that the difference lies in presence vs. lack of verb movement. The problem with this solution is that as far as movement to I is concerned both Spanish and Portuguese pattern alike. However the present tense interpretations differ. It is not implausible though that the verb in Spanish and Portuguese, which would be compatible with a version of Zagana's hypothesis. I leave the issue open for further research.

De Swart's (1998a) basic idea is that Tenses, like determiners, select for particular types of complements. Just as determiners can select for singular or plural, mass or count, tense heads can also select for particular aspectual properties.

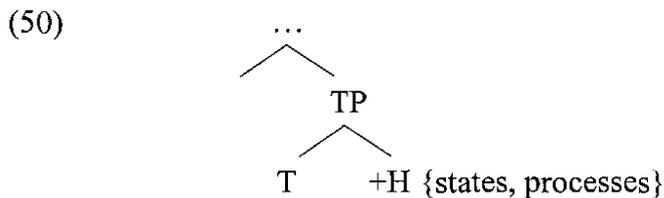
Tenses that have selection restrictions assume that the eventuality they take as complements is of the right type. If the eventuality is not of the appropriate type, coercion applies. The coercion operator can be viewed as a macro operator, which generalizes over a number of semantic operations.  $C_{eh}$  creates homogeneous predicates out of eventive predicates and  $C_{he}$  creates eventive predicates out of homogeneous predicates.

There are various ways of making events homogeneous: the event can be shifted into a process or into a state. In (49a) an habitual or iterative operator can be added creating a state that will be compatible with the Past Imperfective head.<sup>15</sup> Alternatively the  $C_{eh}$  can create a process out of an event by referring to the processual part of the event, ignoring its logical culmination.<sup>16</sup> Homogeneous predicates can be made non-homogeneous by the addition of a boundary (either at the beginning or at the end of a particular homogeneous predicate).

### 5.2.2 The Stativity Requirement

In this section I extend de Swart's proposal to the Present Tense. The idea is that the Present Tense head selects for homogeneous predicates in both English, Portuguese, Spanish and Italian. However languages may choose a particular type of homogeneous predicates: states and/or processes.<sup>17</sup>

While Spanish and Italian Present Tense select for Homogeneous predicates (states or processes), English and Portuguese, however, select only states.



When the complement of T is a state, Portuguese, English, Spanish and Italian behave alike in that no Coercion is necessary, since states are homogeneous predicates.

<sup>15</sup> HAB and ITER are defined by de Swart 1998 as follows ( $E_M$  stands for events;  $P_M$  stands for processes; and  $S_M$  stands for States in the Model):

ITER is a function from  $E_M \cup P_M \cup S_M$  to  $S_M$  which maps any eventuality description onto a state description in such a way that the state describes an unbounded number of eventualities of the type described by the predicate. HAB is a function from  $E_M \cup P_M \cup S_M$  to  $S_M$  which maps eventuality descriptions onto state descriptions. HAB functions like an implicit adverb of quantification similar to always and is interpreted as a default operator (universal quantification unless there is evidence to the contrary). (p. 383).

<sup>16</sup> PROC is defined as follows by de Swart 1998: PROC is a function from  $E_M$  to  $P_M$  which maps events descriptions onto process descriptions in such a way that the outcome describes the process underlying the event predicate without reference to any inherent culmination point.

<sup>17</sup> For the relevance of the notion of homogeneity in the aspectual domain, see Verkuyl 1972, 1993; Krifka 1989. For the notion of local homogeneity see Naumann 1998.

- (51) O Pedro está cansado. (P)  
 Pedro está cansado. (S)  
 'Pedro is tired.'
- (52) A caixa contém muitos papéis. (P)  
 La caja contiene muchos papeles. (S)  
 'The box contains many papers.'

When the complement is a process, however, coercion must apply in Portuguese and English, and we are forced into a stative reading. In Spanish and Italian the process reading is still available, besides the habitual or property reading.

- (53) a. Pedro canta (en este momento) (S)  
 b. Pedro canta (\*neste momento) (P)  
 c. Peter sings (\*right now). (E)

When the complement of T is bounded, coercion applies in all languages. However, while in Spanish and Italian the coercion operator can assume the form of PROC, which allows a continuous reading, this is impossible in Portuguese and English. In Portuguese only HAB or ITER can apply.

- (54) a. Pedro canta una aria (en este momento) (S)  
 b. O Pedro canta uma ária (#neste momento) (P)  
 c. Peter sings (#right now) (E)
- (55) a. Pedro come una manzana (en este momento) (S)  
 b. O Pedro come uma maçã (#neste momento). (P)  
 c. Peter eats an apple (#right now). (E)

It is possible to coerce the predicate into a process in Spanish, because processes are compatible with the selection restriction of T. In Portuguese and English the present tense selects for states only and the process reading is not a possibility.<sup>18</sup>

- (56) a. 
$$\begin{array}{c} \text{TP} \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ \text{T} \quad +\text{S} \\ \text{English/Portuguese} \end{array}$$
- b. 
$$\begin{array}{c} \text{TP} \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ \text{T} \quad +\text{H} \\ \text{Spanish/Italian} \end{array}$$

For issues related to learnability, we can appeal to a subset principle: it must be the case that the child assumes that the default is for the Present Tense to select for States. Only in the

<sup>18</sup> We have to distinguish the PROG reading from the PROC reading. The PROG is, according to de Swart 1998, a function from  $E_M \cup P_M$  to  $S_M$  which maps dynamic eventuality descriptions to a state in which an eventuality of a certain type holds. I assume that this is not a possibility for the Coercion operator in any of the languages discussed above, since all four languages have a productive overt progressive.

presence of positive data will the child make a wider hypothesis, namely that all homogeneous predicates are acceptable.

For the purposes of this paper I will assume that English and Portuguese Present Tense are only compatible with states, while the Present Tense in Spanish and Italian is compatible with processes and states. The difference between the two languages is a difference in terms of selection restrictions of T, which forces me in to assume (contra G&P) that, at least in the Present Tense, a T head is present in the syntax. Syntactically, this approach has the advantage of maintaining a uniform condition for nominative Case and person feature checking.

Semantically, by assuming that in all these languages the Present Tense can select for states, we can explain why in all these languages the scheduling reading is possible, as in the play-by-play reading, as in (57a) and (57b).

- (57) a. The train departs at 3 pm.  
 b. John kicks the ball to Bill. Bill passes it.

Scheduling readings are a particular type of habitual sentence, and thus stative. The so-called play-by-play constructions, Michaelis 1998 (following Hinrichs 1986) claims that these events are construed as lacking internal structure. Although they by themselves cannot be said to lack temporal structure, it is as if the internal temporal structure is overlooked as a consequence of the level of granularity at which the interpreter views some set of scripted proceedings. The conditions under which they can be viewed as lacking temporal structure is confined to events which represent formulaic occurrences within a certain domain as the oddity of (58) shows.

- (58) John hits a high fly to left field. Ryan chases it. ??A streaker appears on the field.

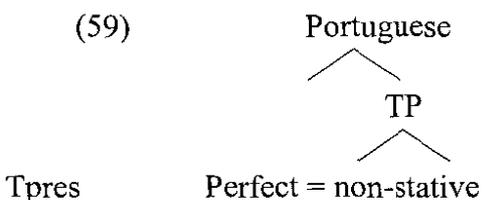
(Michaelis, 1998; p.27)

If states have no internal temporal structure, then it is no surprise that they are accepted as complements of the Present Tense.

## 6 The Present Perfect in Portuguese

Now we can come back to the questions related to the Present Perfect: (i) what forces iterative readings in the Perfect Present Tense, and (ii) why are iterative readings obligatory in the Present Perfect but not in the other Perfect tenses?

Given that the Present Tense morphology selects for states, the iterativity of the Present Perfect will follow if the output of the Perfect in Portuguese is not stative.



Thus in Portuguese Coercion will always apply, in order to make the Perfect compatible with the Present.

In (60) no problem arises in coercing the predicate into an iterative reading. (61), on the other hand, is odd, because the Coercion operator creates a pragmatically odd result, since we do not tend to die many times.

- (60) O Pedro tem discutido o problema com a Maria.  
The Pedro has discussed the problem with the Maria  
'Pedro has been having discussions with Maria about the problem.'
- (61) #O Pedro tem morrido.  
the Pedro has died.

One way of capturing the non-stative nature of the Perfect is to treat it as creating a temporal boundary. States do not have such temporal boundaries. The proposal that the Perfect in Portuguese outputs an eventuality with a boundary finds support when we compare the behavior of stative predicates and progressives in the Present Perfect with their behavior in the simple Present Tense and with their behavior in the Past Perfect.

### 6.1 Differences between the present tense and the present perfect tense

As G&P note, there is a difference between the Present Perfect readings and the regular Present Tense readings. The Present Tense allows a property reading in which the subject has the property described by the predicate. This is shown by the contrasts in (62).

- (62) a. Pedro fuma muito (#ultimamente)  
Pedro smokes a lot (#lately).  
b. Pedro tem fumado muito (ultimamente).  
Pedro has smoked a lot (lately).  
Pedro has been smoking a lot.

In (62a) Pedro has the property of being a heavy smoker. This is not the reading we obtain for the Present Perfect. In the Present Perfect it is necessary to quantify over times. (62b) is true if, for an interval relevant to the context (which includes the Present time), he has engaged in many smoking events. We never have the property reading. For example, although it is perfectly acceptable to add *ultimamente* (lately) to (62b), the result is odd in (62a).

#### 6.1.1 Stative Predicates

The differences between the simple Present Tense and the Present Perfect become more evident with stative predicates.

- (63) a. A Cláudia sabe francês.  
The Claudia knows French.  
b. A Cláudia tem sabido francês.  
The Claudia has known French

(63a) asserts that Claudia has the property of knowing French. There is no need to coerce the predicate *saber* 'know' in (63a) into a stative predicate (since it is itself a stative predicate). In (63b), on the other hand, we are not asserting that Claudia knows French, but rather that

there are many events of her showing knowledge of French, which requires a special context, for instance, a context in which we are surprised with her good grades in French.

There is then a major different between the predicates *saber Francês* 'to know French' and *ter sabido Francês* 'to have known French' in Portuguese. While the former is a state, the latter is not a state at all. The Perfect morphology imposes a boundary onto the state. The only way to make this bounded state compatible with the Present tense is to force quantification over times, so that a habitual reading can be derived.

### 6.1.2 The Progressive

The Perfect progressive has the same bounded properties.

Consider (64), for example:

- (64) a. Pedro está morrendo.  
Pedro is dying.
- b. #Pedro tem estado morrendo.  
Pedro has been dying.

In (64b) there is a state in which Pedro is dying little by little and this state holds now. This is the reading we obtain for the progressive. In (64b), however, does not mean that Pedro is in a dying state. Rather the reading we get is a reading where there are various events in which Pedro is dying and this is pragmatically odd. A context in which (64b) would be plausible is a context in which Pedro is a hypochondriac and every time we meet him he is dying of some other disease.

If we assume that the progressive produces a state and the Perfect applies to this state, we do not find this interpretation unexpected. Rather it is the result of the property of the Perfect to bound a predicate, stative or non-stative.

### 6.1.3 Stative vs. non-stative

If the Perfect creates a bounded eventuality in Portuguese, then it must be the case that it does it also in the Past. Consider (65).

- (65) #A Maria tinha sabido francês por muitos anos, quando emigrou para a França.  
The Maria had known French for many years, when she emigrated to the France.  
'Maria had known French for many years, when she emigrated to France.'

(65) is in fact awkward with a stative predicate that is not easily made into a bounded interval, given the context. (66) provides further support.

- (66) Porque ele tinha conhecido a Maria há muitos anos, o Pedro podia dizer o que queria.  
 Because he had known the Maria it has many years, the Pedro could say what (he) wanted
- a. #'Because he had known Maria for many years, Pedro could say what he wanted.'
  - b. 'Because he had made an acquaintance with Mary many years ago, he could say whatever he wanted.'

Crucially (66) does not have the meaning in (66a). Rather it has an inceptive meaning, as illustrated by the gloss in (66b). This follows if one of the ways to create a bounded eventuality is by addition of a beginning point.

Eventive predicates and stative stage-level predicates do not produce awkward readings, since a temporal boundary can be imposed on them.

- (67) a. A Maria tinha estado descasada por 3 anos, quando nós fomos morar lá.  
 The Maria had been unmarried for 3 years, when we went to-live there.  
 'Maria had been unmarried for 3 years, when we went to live there.'
- b. O Pedro parece ter corrido demais hoje.  
 The Pedro seems to have run too much today  
 'Pedro seems to have run too much today.'
  - c. O Pedro pode ter corrido hoje.  
 The Pedro may have run today.  
 'Pedro may have run today.'

What is important here is that iterative readings are not obligatory in (67). This follows if there is no stative requirement to be satisfied. In (67a) we have a past tense and in (67b,c) we have an infinitival head. The stative requirement of the Present Tense is being satisfied by the verb *parecer* 'seem' and the modal verb *poder* 'can' in (67b) and (67c), respectively. (see Carlson 1977; Hornstein 1990 among others for the idea that modals can be easily construed as stative).

In Portuguese, the Past Perfect is always created with the auxiliary in the Past imperfective. De Swart proposed that the Past Imperfective in French had the property of selecting for homogeneous predicates. Assuming that the French *Imparfait* behaves like the Portuguese Imperfective, we should expect this tense to select for homogeneous predicates as well and force coercion: either iteration of a continuous reading. However, as we have seen, the Past Perfect in Portuguese does not seem to require iteration of the Perfect predicate nor allows a continuous reading.

There is an important difference between the Past Perfect and the Present Perfect. While the latter is always deictic in that the Reference time is equal or subsumes the speech time<sup>19</sup>,

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<sup>19</sup> All uses of the Present Perfect that do are not identified with the speech time in English are translated by subjunctive forms or simple present forms in Portuguese, as exemplified below:

the Past Perfect is always anaphoric. Being anaphoric it takes the value of some other tense element and is not really able to impose selection restrictions. Consequently the Coercion operator does apply, since although we have the Imperfective form, we do not have the imperfective semantics. To illustrate the point we need to compare the Imperfective Past with the Perfective Past.

As we know, the Coercion operator which applies every time the Past Imperfective has an event as a complement assumes a different form depending on the context. Consider (68).

- (68) a. Quando o Pedro telefonou ontem, a Maria comia uma laranja.  
 When the Pedro call-PAST.PERF yesterday, the Maria eat-PAST.IMP an orange.  
 ='When Pedro called yesterday, Maria was eating an orange.'  
 ?'When Pedro called, Maria used to eat an orange.'
- b. Quando o Pedro telefonou, a Maria comeu uma laranja  
 When the Pedro call-PAST.PERF, the Maria have-PAST.IMP eaten an orange.  
 'When Pedro called, Maria ate an orange.'
- c. Quando o Pedro telefonava, a Maria comia uma laranja.  
 When the Pedro call-PAST.IMP, the Maria have-PAST.IMP eaten an orange.  
 'When Pedro used to call, Maria used to eat an orange.'

When a *when*-clause with a Perfective Past is present, the Imperfective Past in the main clause cannot assume a habitual reading, as illustrated in (68a). Rather the Imperfective Past coerces the predicate into a continuous value and the eating of the orange partially overlaps with the calling. If the Past Perfective is used in the main clause, then the calling precedes the eating of the orange, as illustrated in (68b). For the habitual reading to be acceptable in the main clause, the when clause has to be also in the Past Imperfective.

Now consider the behavior of the Past Perfect in (69):

- 
- (i) Quando você tiver terminado o primeiro exercício, levanta a mão.  
 When you have-FUT.SUBJ finished the first exercise, raise the hand  
 'When you have completed the first exercise, raise your hand.'
- (ii) a. \*Sempre que ele tem bebido muito café, o nariz dele sangra.  
 Whenever he has drunk too much coffee, the nose of his bleeds
- b. Sempre que ele bebe muito café, o nariz dele sangra  
 Whenever he drinks too much coffee, the nose of his bleeds  
 'Whenever he has drunk too much coffee, his nose bleeds.'

- (69) a. Quando o Pedro telefonou, a Maria tinha comido uma laranja.  
When the Pedro call-PAST.PERF, the Maria have-PAST.IMP eaten an orange.  
'When Pedro called, Maria had eaten an orange.'
- b. #Quando o Pedro telefonava, a Maria tinha comido uma laranja.  
When the Pedro call-PAST.IMP, the Maria have-PAST.IMP eaten an orange.  
'When Pedro called, Maria had eaten an orange.'
- c. #Quando o Pedro telefonava, a Maria comeu uma laranja.  
When the Pedro call-PAST.IMP, the Maria eat-PAST.PERF an orange.  
'When Pedro called, Maria had eaten an orange.'

When the Past Perfect is used in the main clause, the reverse situation arises: the eating of the orange precedes the phone call (69a). Note that the Past Perfect in the matrix needs to be anchored in another Perfective Past tense. The Imperfective Past is unacceptable in the *when*-clause (69b), since in this case only the continuous reading would be possible, as we have seen above. Since we cannot force a continuous reading over the Perfect, for independent reasons<sup>20</sup> and the generic reading is blocked independently because of the *when*-clause, no Coercion operator applies. The question then is why the Past Perfect is acceptable at all in these sentences.

The reason is simple. Imperfective forms are the forms that allow sequence-of-tense effects. Since the Perfect is always dependent on some other Perfective Past and is anaphoric to it, in these cases the Imperfective Past is simply the dependent tense form.

## 7 Differences between the Perfect in English and Portuguese

In English, clearly the Perfect does not create the same boundary as the Portuguese Perfect. The examples below illustrate this point, since they are perfectly acceptable with no iteration being forced.

- (70) a. Claudia has known French since she was a child.  
b. Pedro has been dying for weeks.

In (70a) we are stating that Claudia has the property of knowing French since she was a child. There is no need to coerce the Perfect of 'know' in (70a) into a stative predicate (since it is itself a stative predicate). The same is true for (70b). In (70b) there is a state in which Pedro is dying little by little and this state holds now. The acceptability of sentences like (65) in English and their awkwardness in Portuguese points towards a distinction between the Perfect in Portuguese and English. In Portuguese the Perfect creates a bounded eventuality, even when the base predicate is a state. In English Coercion is never necessary in the Present Perfect. Therefore it must be the case that the output of the English Perfect is stative. If the English Perfect is stative, then the Present Tense does not need to do any coercion to accept the Perfect as a complement. If this is correct, then stative readings should be possible also in other Perfect tenses. The data below show that stative readings are indeed allowed in the Past Perfect. This is shown in (71a,b).

<sup>20</sup> See Parsons 1990 for an analysis of why the Progressive cannot embed a Perfect:

(i) \*John was having eaten the cake.

- (71) a. Maria had known French, when she emigrated to France.'  
 b. Because he had known Maria for many years, Pedro could say what he wanted.'

What is important here is that iterative readings are not obligatory in the Present Perfect in English. This follows if there is no stative requirement left unsatisfied both in cases of stative predicates which easily allow what has been called the experiential perfect (72a,b), and the Perfect of persistent situation (72c).

- (72) a. John has visited Paris once.  
 b. John has gone to America.  
 c. I have been waiting for three hours.

In all cases there is a state that holds at the speech time. It seems that the Perfect in English can create a State either by picking up a result state or by assigning a property to the subject. Although there are many analyses for the Perfect in English, all agree that the Perfect outputs a state (see Dowty 1975; Mittwoch 1982; Abusch & Rooth 1990; Michaelis 1998; Naumann 1999; and others).<sup>21</sup>

In sum there is a difference between the Perfect in English and the Perfect in Portuguese. While the former is stative, the latter is not. The source of the difference is hard to determine, however.

### 7.1 Possible sources of the difference

There is a lot of controversy with respect to whether the source of the Perfect semantics is non-compositional or whether it is compositional and can be located in the participial morphology and/or the auxiliary (see Binnick 1991; Klein 1997; Wunderlich 1997 and others). It is reasonable to ask whether we can locate the distinction between the Perfect in English and the Perfect in Portuguese in the one of their morphological components: the auxiliary or the participial form or whether it is better to associate the difference to the result of the combination of the individual parts.

Since both the auxiliary and the participles behave differently in English and in Portuguese, there are various possibilities to explore.

### 7.2 The auxiliary

Like English *have* Portuguese *ter* is used in possessive constructions, but unlike English *have*, Portuguese *ter* is the verb used in existential constructions, as exemplified below:

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<sup>21</sup> I am ignoring here the Recent Past reading of the Present Perfect illustrated below:

(i) I've lost my glasses.

For an interesting hypothesis, see Demirdache and Uribe-Exeberria 1997. They argue that this instance of the Present Perfect is actually a tense, rather than an aspect. The continuative reading and the existential reading are aspectual in nature.

- (73) a. O Pedro tem dois irmãos.  
The Pedro has two brothers  
'Pedro has two brothers.'
- b. Tem gente na sala.  
Has people in-the room  
'There are people in-the room'

We might assume that while *ter* has the property of introducing an existential quantifier, *have* does not have this property. If the association with the existential verb is what gives the Portuguese Perfect its bounded reading, we should expect no stative readings in the Present Perfect in Spanish, since the same verb is used both as the auxiliary and the existential verb, but not as the possessive verb.

There are some indications in the literature that suggest that this hypothesis may be correct. For example, according to Comrie (1987), Spanish disallows the Perfect of a persistent situation. In such a case the simple Present Tense is applied. However, it is unclear whether we should attribute this difference to properties of the auxiliary or actually properties of the participial form or even properties of the Present Tense itself, and only further studies that carefully tease apart dialectal differences will be able to tell whether this correlation is reliable.

### 7.3 The participial form

Rather than placing the source of the difference in the auxiliary verb, we might assume that the auxiliary is nothing but a form of a transparent copula verb. The source would then be in the participial form. Yet again the participial forms in Portuguese and English do not behave alike. As we have seen in (45), in Portuguese but not in English, there are two types of participial forms: agreeing participles and non-agreeing participles. Agreeing participles can also appear as complements of *ter* and as absolute constructions. Participles in English are non-agreeing participles and do not occur by themselves in absolute constructions.

Moreover, clearly the Participial forms in Portuguese are higher in the clause structure than the participial forms in English. This can be shown by the behavior of an adverb like *geralmente* 'generally' as in (74).

- (74) a. Naquela época, o Pedro GERALMENTE tinha GERALMENTE comido  
GERALMENTE naquele restaurante \*GERALMENTE  
In those times, Pedro GENERALLY had GENERALLY eaten \*GENERALLY in that  
restaurant \*GENERALLY
- b. Hoje em dia, o Pedro GERALMENTE tem GERALMENTE comido GERALMENTE  
naquele restaurante.\*GERALMENTE  
Nowadays, Pedro GENERALLY has GENERALLY eaten \*GENERALLY in that  
restaurant \*GENERALLY
- c. O Pedro GERALMENTE comeu GERALMENTE naquele restaurante \*GERALMENTE  
Pedro GENERALLY ate \*GENERALLY in that restaurant \*GENERALLY

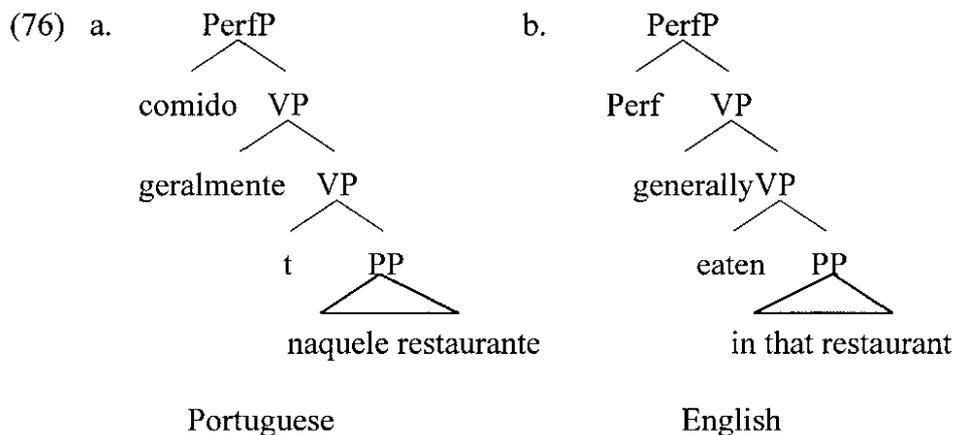
As in English, the adverb *geralmente* 'generally' cannot appear after the locative. In both languages it can appear between the auxiliary and the participial form or even before the auxiliary. This adverb can, however, appear between the participial form and the locative in

Portuguese but not English, which suggests that the participial form has raised to some position higher than the adverbial.

It should be noted that *geralmente* 'generally' cannot appear between the agreeing participle and the object, although it can appear between the non-agreeing participle and its complement, as illustrated below:

- (75) a. O Pedro GERALMENTE tem GERALMENTE resolvidos \*GERALMENTE os problemas  
 The Pedro GENERALLY has GENERALLY solved-MASC.PL \*GENERALLY the problems
- b. O Pedro GERALMENTE tem GERALMENTE resolvido GERALMENTE os problemas  
 The Pedro GENERALLY has GENERALLY solved GENERALLY the problems

This data suggests that the participial form in Portuguese has to raise higher than its English counterpart, as sketched in (76).



At this point however, it is unclear whether this difference in height has any semantic correlate. The differences between the Present Perfect in Portuguese and in English (ignoring the recent past readings of the Perfect in English) could also be purely related to the Perfect semantics which would be represented morphologically by a discontinuous morpheme *ter*+past participle and *have*+past participle. If this is the case, the distinction is between a stative Perfect and a non-stative Perfect. Since at this point it is very hard to pinpoint the locus of the difference, I will leave the matter for further research.

Without having to commit to an exact locus of the difference, it seems clear that while in English the Perfect creates a stative predicate that is mapped into an interval, the Perfect adds an interval with a boundary on its right edge, which coincides with the right edge boundary of the eventuality described by the participial form.

## 8 Summary

In this paper, I have presented evidence in support of the idea that tense heads are sensitive to aspectual properties. More specifically I have argued that Present Tense morphology in Portuguese selects for states, and that this explains why only in the Present the Perfect is forced into an iterative reading. Since the Present in English also selects for states, but the Present Perfect in English does not force iteration, the differences between the Perfect in

Portuguese and in English follow from the fact that the Perfect in Portuguese is not stative, unlike the Perfect in English.

Deriving the particularities of the Present Perfect in Portuguese from semantic properties of the Present Tense and the Perfect, proves to be superior to G&P's analysis, which depends on ad hoc properties of the verb *ter* in the Present Tense and ad hoc properties of the participial forms in the Present Perfect.

The implications for G&P's general approach are the following: we cannot associate morphological properties directly to interpretations, since there is no morphological property that distinguishes the Present Tense in Portuguese from the Present tense in Spanish, nor the Present Perfect properties of Latin American Spanish from the Present perfect properties of Peninsular Spanish. Rather we need to investigate the features of particular heads and examine how these features can be learned. G&P depart from the implicit assumption that it is impossible to learn the semantic value of a head by the kinds of modifiers it can appear with. If this is correct, it is not clear why it should be so. Moreover, it seems that it is necessary to admit that the space a particular form can occupy in terms of its uses is not the same in different languages and it will depend on what other forms are available and what within each language is the best fit for a particular value.

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