

On the complement of the intensional transitive *want*

In a framework where *have*, *get*, and *give* decompose into a light verb and a P_{HAVE}-complement ([_vBE/BECOME/CAUSE P_{HAVE}]), with the P_{HAVE} incorporating into the little *v*, Harley (2004) proposes that apparent *want*+DP structures do not embed a null verb *HAVE/GET*, as in McCawley's (1979)/Ross's (1976) structure in (1), but just a null preposition P_{HAVE} (i.e. not a clausal complement [_vBE/BECOME P_{HAVE}]), as in (2). We argue, contra Harley (2004), that the nullness is made of more than just a P, namely, of either *HAVE* or *GET* (cf. McCawley 1979).

Prediction: Assume Harley's own account of the double object construction [DOC] (Harley 2003, Beck/Johnson 2004), which treats (3) as in (4). If the apparent *want*+DP and the DOC share the same structure—a verbal element embedding the P_{HAVE}P—they should behave alike.

Temporal Advs: The constructions behave differently with respect to temporal adverbials. Though the DOC allows result-state adverbials, showing that it contains a stative subevent (Piñón 1999), it disallows non-agreeing temporal adverbials, (5a). In contrast, the apparent *want*+DP structure allows them, (5b). (5b), but not (5a), contains two temporally independent events. If (5a-b) share the structure, the contrast is unexpected. And theoretically, Harley (2004) can only invoke adjunction to PP to account for the possibility of non-agreeing temporal adverbials in (5b), violating the intimate link between the existence of a temporally independent event and a VP/*v*P (e.g. Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria 2004).

Ellipsis: (6) is ambiguous, presumably since two VPs in the antecedent provide two sites for VP-ellipsis. The fact that (7), with the apparent *want*+DP construction, is ambiguous in the same way as (6) is expected if its antecedent also contains, covertly, two VPs (Larson *et al* 1997). If the apparent *want*+DP is parallel to the DOC, as in Harley (2003, 2004), we would expect (8) to be ambiguous too, which is not the case.

Intensionality: The *want*+DP, but not the DOC, is hyperintensional. While replacing *C. Kent* with *Superman* preserves the truth value in (9), the replacement needn't preserve the truth value in (10). The contrast is unexpected if the constructions are structurally parallel, and theoretically, treating (10) with only a null P_{HAVE}, as in Harley (2004), precludes one from preserving the stricter, sententialist approach to intensionality (cf. Larson 2002).

Co-composition: Harley (2004) shows that *compliment* is fine under *get* and *want* but not under *have*, (11). Rejecting co-composition (whereby *compliment* can affect the interpretation of its selecting verb) for theoretical reasons, Harley (2004) states that one can only explain (11a-c) if *want* embeds not simply a null *HAVE* but only the part that *have* and *get* share: a null P_{HAVE} (with no light verb). This conclusion seems flawed. Unlike *have*, *get* does combine with *compliment*, so we can posit a null *GET* (besides a null *HAVE*; cf. McCawley 1979). Contra Harley, this need *not* lead to co-composition; the aspectual make-up of the null *HAVE/GET* (as of the overt *have/get*) exerts selection restrictions over the aspectual make-up of its complement. *GET/get* selects *compliment*, *HAVE/have* does not. In fact, (11a-c) show precisely the fact that the element under *want* exhibits aspectual properties in the way that only (extended projections of) V's, but not P's, do.

Proposal: The ellipsis facts and the temporal-adverbial facts show that *want* takes a clausal complement, which includes a projection introducing a temporally independent event. With the co-composition objection argued away, we thus claim, with McCawley (1979), that apparent *want*+DP cases can contain either a null *HAVE* or a null *GET*. In fact, positing null versions of both *have* and *get* is even more plausible if, as Harley claims, *get* and *have* are indeed syntactically non-atomic; if P_{HAVE} is null, why should the combination of P_{HAVE} and the commonly null _vBE/_vBECOME be obligatorily overt?

The (resurrected) null-verb account fits in naturally with recent work postulating several semantically basic/primitive null verbs, such as Larson *et al.*'s null *GIVE* (1997), van Riemsdijk's (2002) *GO*, and Marušič & Žaucer's (2005) null *want*-like verb of desire.

- (1) [_{vP} *Mary*_i [_{VP} *wants* [_{XP} PRO_i [_{VP} TO-HAVE/TO-GET [_{DP} *a car*]]]]] (≈McCawley 1979)
 (2) [_{vP} *Mary*_i [_{VP} *wants* [_{PP} PRO_i [_{P'} P_{HAVE} [_{DP} *a car*]]]]] (Harley 2004)
- (3) *John gave Mary a book.*
 (4) [_{vP} *John* [_{V'} CAUSE [_{PP} *Mary* [_{P'} P_{HAVE} [_{DP} *a book*]]]]]
- (5) a. * *A week ago, John sent/gave Mary the book yesterday.*
 b. *A week ago, John wanted your car yesterday.* (McCawley 1979)
- (6) *John wants to have more toys than Ben.* ambiguous:
 (i) ‘more toys than Ben has’ (ii) ‘more toys than Ben wants to have’
- (7) *John wants more toys than Ben.* ambiguous
 (8) *John gave Bill more toys than Ben.* only ‘more toys than Ben gave Bill’
- (9) *I gave/may give C. Kent a cat.* ==> *I gave/may give Superman a cat.* [both T or both F]
 (10) *I want Clark Kent.* =/=> *I want Superman.* [one T one F possible]
- (11) a. *John got a compliment.*
 b. *John wants a compliment.*
 c. #*John has a compliment.* ((11a-c) from Harley 2004: 261)

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