

Between relevance and time reference: various trajectories of the "have-perfect" from Latin to Ibero-Romance

Daniel Jacob, Universität Freiburg
daniel.jacob@romanistik.uni-freiburg.de

This contribution traces the development of the "have"-perfect from Latin to Ibero-Romance (the latter being taken as an especially significant case within the Romance Languages). The paper will mainly focus on data from Classical Latin, Late Latin and Medieval Spanish. Contrary to most descriptions that have been given in the literature, I argue that the starting point is not a possessive construction, but a causative-durative one:

- (1) *Tum demum includere [apes] et ... triduo fere **clausas habere*** (Columella 9,9,1)
"to lock up the bees and keep them enclosed for about three days"

All over the Latin corpus, the construction seems to be limited to a quite restricted number of context types. In later occurrences, the construction is mainly used to refer to interpersonal, legally binding situations, typically based on a performative act:

- (2) *quae **pacta** iam cum Marcello **haberent*** (Liv. 25,28)
"what they had already agreed on with Marcellus"
(3) *rogo te, **habe** me **excusatum*** (Vulg. Luc. 14,18)
"I beg you: consider me excused"
(4) ***Promissum** enim habemus nihil sine eius consilio agere* (Greg. Tur. Franc. 9,16)
"because we have promised to do nothing without his advice"

We could speak of a "deontic" periphrasis, expressing an obligation/authorisation which is not related to an action that remains to be executed (as in classical deontic constructions) but to an action already carried out.

This deontic value of the construction can still be detected in the oldest texts of Spanish:

- (5) *por lo que **avedes fecho** buen cosiment y avrá* (*Poema de Mío Cid*, 1436)
"For what you have done, there will be a good compensation"
(6) *por partirme del mundo **voto he prometido*** (Berceo, *Vida de San Millán*, 16c)
"I have given my vow to part with the world"

The subsequent development from a more pragmatic (modal) use towards a more "semantic" use (preterite with present relevance) can be traced across different text genres (rather than across different decades or centuries) and some very characteristic uses of the periphrasis in these genres, e.g. a meta-discursive application ("as we have said above"), analogous to what is shown in (7) and (8) for Portuguese.

A brief overview of the further development shows that from 1400 a.d. onward, Standard Spanish and Standard Portuguese, which show a quite identical situation in Medieval texts, have taken nearly contrary directions. We first have to establish that the periphrasis with *ter*, upcoming in Portuguese, is not the starting point for a new grammaticalization cycle, but a mere allomorph for the *haver*-periphrasis:

- (7) *Acabado esto que **avees ouvido** (...) (ibid. 42, Irmen 225)*
"Once what you have heard is finished "
(8) *(...) depois que perdo Neyua como **teendes ouvido*** (Fernão Lopes, *Crónica del Rei Dom João I*, 28, Harre)
"After he lost Neiva, as you have heard"

While in Spanish, the form tends towards a more general anterior (with significant variants especially in American dialects), Portuguese ends up with a present perfect neatly restricted to

situations describing either an ongoing repeated action or an ongoing state brought about by a past action ("aspecto cursivo").

Hence, it seems that the idea of a universal cline for the evolution of the present perfect, which is classically assumed in manuals on grammaticalization or on history of language, supposing an evolution from possession via resultative and present perfect to a general anterior or even preterite, should be revisited.

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