

## **From Possession to the Portuguese Compound Perfect An unparalleled case of Grammaticalization with semantic import**

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Grammaticalization is a widespread phenomenon consisting of the change from lexical items to grammatical ones (Meillet 1912:131) or from the latter to more grammatical (Croft 2000: 62). This process entails a series of semantic (Traugott 1995), phonetic, morphological and syntactic consequences consisting of the loss of features at all levels except the syntax (Givón 1979).

In this paper, I analyse the temporal/aspectual construction *ter/haver* + past participle in Old and Middle Portuguese texts from *Corpus Informatizado do Português Medieval* (CIPM), and Ferreira and David's *Corpus do Português* (FDCP), in order to show a different grammaticalization path that occurred in Portuguese and that can be characterized by a two-fold gain, both syntactic and semantic.

Both 'haver' and 'ter' are, diachronically and synchronically, possessive verbs. Portuguese (1a-b) inherited the Latin variation between HABERE, an inchoative that expressed permanent possession and TENERE, the durative that indicated temporary possession. Diachronically, Ptg. *ter* generalised to all types of possession (2a-c), and became the auxiliary used in one modal periphrasis (3), one resultative construction (4) and the compound tenses (5a-c) (Hopper 2001). And in each construction the semantics of *ter* persist. (Ptg. *aver* specialized in existential constructions (6) and one modal periphrasis(7).)

In fact, in most cases 'ter' expresses imperfective aspect (Comrie 1976, Langacker 1987), marking stative predications, 'haver', used in non-stative predications, on the other hand, expresses perfective aspect, occurring in a compound tense construction almost pan-romance. The different functioning in Portuguese is due to the selection of 'ter' as an auxiliary.

This should then be a counter-example to the "desemanticization" constant, that calls for a multisystemic, interactive approach to the phenomenon of grammaticalization (Ataliba 1997) in correspondence to the more sequential ones proposed by Heine (1991) and Traugott (1993).

### **Examples**

- (1) a. Em mancebo solteyro ouvera três filhos ...  
As a single man he had had three children
- b. ... e tinha ua por barregãa...  
... and had one of them as a mistress ...
- (2) a. Ele não tem mãos.  
He does not have hands.
- b. Ele tem três irmãs.  
He has three sisters.
- c. Ele tem fome.  
He is hungry.
- (3) Ele tem de ir.  
He must go.
- (4) Ele tem a cama feita.  
He has his bed made.
- (5) a. Ele tem ido à escola.  
He has gone to school.

- b. Ele tinha feito o exame.  
He had done the exam.
- c. Ele terá feito o exame.  
He will have done the exam.
- (6) Há Deus.  
God exists.
- (7) Hei-de dar a volta ao mundo.  
(One day) I will travel around the world.

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